

Collected Writings **VOLUME II** **1879-1880**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword
Chronological Survey

1879

Idées Incorrectes sur les Doctrines des Théosophes
Erroneous Ideas concerning the Doctrines of the Theosophists
The Indian “Public” and Theosophy
The Retort Courteous
Madame Blavatsky
Magic
Madame Blavatsky
Harichandra Chintamon
Buddhist Priests and the Title “Reverend”
[On the Infallibility of the Jewish Scriptures]
The Theosophists and their Opponents
Letter to the Editor of the “Indu Prakash”
Madame Blavatsky
Réponse Définitive d’une Théosophe à M. Rossi de Justiniani
Final Reply of a Theosophist to Mr. Rossi de Justiniani
Echoes from India
[H.P.B. on the Monsoon]
[The Founding of “The Theosophist”]
Namastae
What is Theosophy?
What Are the Theosophists?
The Drift of Western Spiritualism
Antiquity of the Vedas
Footnotes to “The Autobiography of Dayananda Saraswati Swami”
Persian Zoroastrianism and Russian Vandalism
“The Light of Asia”
The Magnetic Chain
Spiritualism at Simla
Buddhistic Exegesis
A Thunder Cloud with Silver Lining
Cross and Fire
War in Olympus
Footnotes to “The Brahmachâri Bâwa”
Miscellaneous Notes
[From the Caves and Jungles of India]
Christmas Then and Christmas Now
The Popular Idea of Soul-Survival

“Lieutenant-Colonel St. Anthony”
Footnote to “A Strange Revery”
An Old Book and a New One
Nocturnal Thoughts on Newspaper Clippings
Miscellaneous Notes
A Letter to the Editor of the “Banner of Light”
Lettre de Madame Blavatsky—“Dé couverte du Docteur Rotura
Letter of Madame Blavatsky—Dr. Rotura’s Discovery
Theosophy—the Essence of Philosophy and Science

1880

Introductory Note to “Yoga Philosophy”
Editor’s Closing Note to “Brahma, Iswara, and Maya”
Footnotes to “The Life of Śankaracharya, Philosopher and Mystic”
The Ensouled Violin
The Ensouled Violin (*longer version*)
Editor’s Note to “Swami *versus* Missionary”
Editor’s Note to “Nature-Worship”
Miscellaneous Notes
Armenians
Lo! The “Poor Missionary”
Footnote to “An Indian Aethrobat”
Footnotes to “Indra”
A Great Light under a Bushel
Editor’s Note to “A Mussulman Abdal (Yogi)”
Miscellaneous Notes
Letter from India
Comments on “Swami *versus* Missionary”
A Land of Mystery
Appendix by the Compiler
Which First—the Egg or the Bird?
Cup-Mark Inscriptions
Miscellaneous Notes
The History of a “Book”
Missionaries Militant
The Silent Brother
Note to “Radiant Matter”
The State of Christianity
Footnote to “Kaliya Mardana”
“A Personal Statement of Religious Belief”
Cock-and-Bull
Miscellaneous Notes
Compiler’s Notes
Journalist *versus* Missionary
Footnote to “Puzzles for the Philologists”
A Case of Obsession
Mr. Whitworth’s Gauntlet
Madame Blavatsky and her Opinions
A People’s Monthly
The Christian Art of War
The Number Seven

Miscellaneous Notes
The Theosophists at Maligawa
The Theory of Cycles
Our Second Year
“Spirit” Pranks Intra Caucasus
Notes on “A Land of Mystery”
[The Bewitched Mirror]
Sobs, Sods and Posies
Introductory Note to “Rahatship”
Comments on “The Theosophists in Ceylon”
Miscellaneous Notes
Closing Note to “Address of the President of the Ionian Theosophical Branch at Corfu”
Footnote to “Nanga Bâbâ of Gwalior”
Russian Superstitions
The Decadence of Protestant Christianity
Stone-Throwing by “Spirits”
The Number Seven and Our Society
Comments on “A Treatise on the Yoga Philosophy”
Miscellaneous Notes
Madame Blavatsky on The Theosophical Society at Bombay
[H.P. Blavatsky and Edward Wimbridge]
A Letter to the Editor of the “Bombay Review”
The Pralaya of Modern Science
[On Rahatship]
Occult Phenomena
Qu’est-ce que la Théosophie?
What is Theosophy?
[Sir Richard Temple and our Society]
Pranks of “Spirits” among Laymen
Miscellaneous Notes
A French View of Women’s Rights

APPENDIX:

Note on the Transliteration of Sanskrit

ILLUSTRATIONS:

Facsimile of the Famous “Pink Slip”
Facsimile of the Jhelum Telegram
Original Cover of *The Theosophist*
Entrance to Crow’s Nest, Breach Candy, Bombay
H.P. Blavatsky Around 1870
Norendronâth Sen
H. Sumangala
Judge Khân Bahâdur N.D. Khandalavala
Teotihuacán, Mexico—Pyramid of the Sun
Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico—Temple of Inscriptions
Chichén Itzâ, Yucatán, Mexico—Pyramid of the Quetzalcóatl-Kukulcan
Cuzco, Peru—Twelve Angles Stone
Facsimile of a Document concerning the Inca Treasures (*three pages*)
Trapezium Gate in a Wall on Ollantaytambo Hill, Peru
Machu Picchu, Peru—House of the Three Windows
Zigzag Walls at Sacsayhuaman, Near Cuzco, Peru
Monoliths on Ollantaytambo Hill, Peru
H.P. Blavatsky in 1880

Anâgârîka Dharmapâla
Tukaram Tatya
H.S. Olcott and Buddhist Priest in Colombo
H.P. Blavatsky in 1880 at Galle, Ceylon
General Dmitriy Karlovich von Hanh
Edwin Arnold
Dâmodar K. Mâvalankar

Collected Writings VOLUME II

FOREWORD

xxiii

FOREWORD TO VOLUME TWO

Most of the material in the present Volume appeared in print in collected form for the first time in 1933, when it was published by Rider & Co. in London, under the title of *The Complete Works of H.P. Blavatsky*. As was the case with original Volume I of the Series, a considerable portion of the stock of Volume II perished in the London “blitz” during the second World War. As a result of this, these earlier Volumes have been unobtainable for many years.

Discovery of hitherto unknown writings from H.P.B.’s pen required that the material be somewhat differently distributed, as far as the four original Volumes are concerned. The present Volume is made up of H.P.B.’s writings during the years of 1879 and 1880. It contains therefore some of the material of the original Volume I, and about two-thirds of the original Volume II.

The text contained now in Volume II has been checked with the original sources of publication, and most of the quoted matter compared with the originals and corrected whenever necessary. Some new material has been incorporated from the Archives at Adyar. A number of explanatory notes and comments have been added by the Compiler to clarify points of Theosophical history. Biographical and Bibliographical information has been collected in the Appendix, as is the case with all the Volumes of this Series, and a copious Index has been prepared.

The Compiler wishes to express his gratitude to all those who have helped in the preparation of this Volume, especially the following friends and associates.

Irene R. Ponsonby who checked all the editorial material and painstakingly read the page proof, and whose thorough knowledge of literary style and methods was of inestimable help; Zoltán de Álgya-

xxiv

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

Pap, of the Adyar Archives, whose willing assistance and readiness to help have been of such great value in the last few years; Dara R. Eklund who was responsible for the checking of a great many quoted passages in out of the way publications; Frances Ziegenmeyer who helped with the transcription of microfilm; and Margaret Chamberlain Rathbun whose careful proofreading of the galleys was a welcome contribution towards the accurate production of this Volume.

Boris de Zirkoff
Compiler.

Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.
January 26, 1967

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

IDÉES INCORRECTES SUR LES DOCTRINES DES THÉOSOPHES*

[*La Revue Spirite*, janvier, 1879]

Nous insérons cette réponse à M. Rossi de Justiniani, mais en nous réservant quant à la doctrine qui y est émise; notre frère de Smyrne pourra répondre à Mme. H. P. Blavatsky. [Editor.]

“La critique est aisée, et l’art est difficile! . . .”

—Destouches, *Philinte*, I D, Acte II, sc. 5.

La Société Théosophique de New York, fondée en 1875, et depuis, d’après les ordres de ses chefs aux Indes, entièrement reconstruite, est établie sur la base de toute société. Il est donc évident que ses doctrines ne peuvent courir les rues. Malgré cela, la presse américaine—les journaux spiritualistes surtout—les ont sans relâche, disséquées, critiquées et tournées, en ridicule, érigeant invariablement ce qui n’était que conjecture de leur part, en dogmes des Théosophes. Le peu, cependant, qu’il leur fut accordé de révéler, ils le firent aussi clairement que leur permit la langue anglaise d’ailleurs peu adaptée à l’expression des idées métaphysiques.

Mirabile dictu! Non seulement fit-on la sourde oreille à nos explications, mais sitôt que les critiques de nos adversaires commencèrent à avoir le dessous, on nous ferma poliment au nez la porte des journaux!

Il est bien temps, dans cette polémique de cache-cache, de jeter un peu de jour sur ces ténèbres cimmériennes où la

* [According to Col. Olcott, *Old Diary Leaves*, I, p. 283, this article was written a few days before the party left for India on December 17, 1878.—*Compiler*.]

lumière se trouve souvent éteinte — on dirait presque à dessein. Une critique, sur «les Élémentaires et les Élémentaux», publiée dans le No. d’août de la *Revue Spirite*, nous en fournit l’occasion.

Oui, «pour les Théosophes de New York, l’homme est une trinité et non une dualité». Il est plus que cela cependant: en y ajoutant le corps physique, l’homme est une *Tetraktys*, ou maternité.* Mais, aussi soutenus que nous fussions dans cette doctrine particulière par les plus grands philosophes de la Grèce antique—comme le remarque l’auteur de l’article—ce n’est ni à Pythagore, ni à Platon, ni encore aux célèbres *Theodidaktoi* de l’école d’Alexandrie, dont nous la tenons. Nous parlerons de nos maîtres plus loin. Prouvons d’abord que le critique de la *Revue Spirite* fait fausse route dans son article, sous tous les

rapports quant aux doctrines historiques de l'antiquité, et que—fort innocemment sans doute, et n'en jugeant que d'après les traductions abrégées—il défigure les nôtres.

Il se trompe, d'abord—selon nous—lorsque, croyant corriger nos idées, et ayant, un moment avant, traité sur les «âmes incarnées» (p. 291), il parle (p. 292) d'un «médiateur plastique et *inconscient*, ou le fluide périsprital qui sert d'enveloppe à l'esprit». Il pense donc que l'esprit et l'âme sont identiques, ou que le premier puisse être incarné ainsi que l'âme? Étrange erreur à nos yeux! Et si ce médiateur plastique est «inconscient» selon l'auteur, dans ce cas, l'âme aussi, qu'il croit immortelle, et même l'esprit doivent l'être, car, plus loin, nous le trouvons, établissant la même identité entre l'esprit et l'âme. «L'âme isolée est pour nous le périsprit», dit-il. Nous demanderions, d'abord, comment il se peut que quelque chose «d'inconscient»—donc, d'irresponsable—puisse, dans la vie future, être, soit récompensé, soit puni, pour des actes commis durant un état d'inconscience? Ensuite, vers la fin de l'article, l'auteur nous apprend que chez l'être imparfait, le *troisième* élément ou

* [A misprint for “quaternité,” though the ordinary word would be “quaternaire.” Cf. H. S. Olcott, *Old Diary Leaves*, I, 283, where the correction is noted.—*Compiler*.]

l'Esprit, peut non s'annihiler, mais perdre pour un temps indéfini la conscience de sa grandeur et s'abaisser au niveau de la brute! Ici—nous ne comprenons plus du tout! Nous ne savons si ces idées sont personnelles à l'auteur ou bien l'expression de la doctrine des spirites orthodoxes en général.* N'importe, pour nous, elles sont monstrueuses et incompréhensibles. Comment l'esprit, la suprême essence primordiale, la monade incréée et éternelle, l'étincelle directe du «Soleil central» des kabalistes, n'est plus qu'un troisième élément, aussi faillible que le périsprit? Il peut, ainsi que l'âme vitale—affligée, elle, d'une inconscience chronique, à ce qu'il paraît—devenir inconscient aussi, ne fût-ce que temporairement? L'Esprit immortel «s'abaisser au niveau d'une brute»? Allons donc! L'auteur ne peut avoir eu la moindre idée sur nos doctrines; ou il ignore ce que nous appelons «Esprit», car pour lui, l'Esprit et l'âme sont synonymes—ou bien, il est encore plus inconoclaste que nous. Nous nous empressons de répudier ces idées. Jamais nous n'avons professé rien de semblable.

On nous cite Platon, et on oublie en même temps ce que Platon enseignait. Selon le «divin» philosophe l'âme est binaire; elle est composée de deux parties constituantes primitives, l'une—mortelle, et l'autre éternelle; la première, façonnée par les dieux *créés* (les forces créatrices et intelligentes de la nature), l'autre—une émanation de l'Esprit suprême. Il nous dit que l'âme mortelle en prenant possession de son corps devient «irrationnelle»; mais entre la déraison et l'inconscience il y a une différence profonde. Platon, enfin, n'a jamais confondu le périsprit, avec l'âme ni l'esprit. En commun, avec tous les autres philosophes, il ne l'appelait ni le *nous* ni ψυχή, mais lui donnait le nom d' εἰδωλόν, quelque fois celui d'*imago* ou de *simulacrum*.

Essayons cependant, de rétablir un peu d'ordre dans ce désordre. Donnons à toute chose son vrai non, et établissons exactement la différence entre les opinions de notre érudit

* Il n'y a pas de spirites orthodoxes, mais de simples chercheurs, des investigateurs qui acceptent toute vérité démontrée [Editor].

critique et les nôtres. Pour tous ceux qui ont étudié les philosophes grecs, il est évident que l'auteur confond les termes. Sa question (p. 292) «la séparation de l'esprit, ψυχή, avec l'âme, *nous* ou périsprit . . . peut-elle être jamais cause d'une complète destruction . . . » nous fournit la clef du mésentendu. Il traduit les mots «esprit» et «âme» simplement *vice versa*.

Nous ne savons si les Grecs modernes traduisent ces deux substantifs ainsi, mais nous sommes à même de prouver qu'aucun des anciens philosophes, ne les ont jamais définis de cette manière. Nous nous permettons de ne citer que deux noms, mais ceux-ci suffiront. Notre autorité païenne est —Plutarque; notre autorité chrétienne,—ni plus, ni moins que saint Jacques, «le frère du Seigneur». Plutarque traitant sur l'âme nous dit que, tandis, que ψυχή est emprisonnée dans le corps, le *nous* ou l'intelligence divine plane audessus des mortels, en versant sur sa tête un rayon qui s'illumine plus ou moins, selon le mérite personnel de l'homme; il ajoute que le *nous* ne descend jamais, mais reste stationnaire. Saint Jacques est plus explicite encore. Parlant de la sagesse d'ici-bas (*vide* texte grec, *Épître générale*, ch. iii, 15), il la traite de «terrestre, sensuelle, *psychique* . . .», ce dernier adjectif étant traduit dans les textes anglais par le mot «diabolique». Et il ajoute (iii, 17), que ce n'est que la sagesse d'en haut qui soit divine et «*noétique*» (adj. Du sub.*nous*). Donc l'élément psychique ne semble jamais avoir été en odeur de sainteté, ni avec les saints du christianisme, ni avec les philosophes du paganisme. Puisque saint Jacques traite ψυχή de diabolique, et Platon en fait quelque chose d'irrationnel, peut-elle être immortelle *per se*?

Qu'on nous permette une comparaison, la meilleure que nous puissions trouver entre le concret et l'abstrait; entre ce que notre critique appelle «la triple hypostase», et nous «la *tetraktys*». Nous comparerions donc ce quaternaire philosophique, composé du corps, du périsprit, de l'âme et de l'esprit—à l'éther—si bien pressenti par la science, jamais défine—et, ses corrélations subséquentes, L'éther nous représentera l'esprit; la vapeur morte qui s'y formera—l'âme;

l'eau—le périsprit; la glace—le corps. La glace dégèle et perd pour toujours sa forme; l'eau s'évapore et se disperse dans l'espace; la vapeur, se débarrassant de ses particules grossières,

atteint enfin cet état où la science ne peut plus la suivre. Purifiée de ses dernières souillures, elle s'absorbe tout entière dans sa cause première, et devient *cause* à son tour. Excepté le *nous* immortel—l'âme, le périsprit et le corps, ayant été tous créés, et eu un commencement, ils doivent avoir tous une fin.

Est-ce à dire, que l'individualité est perdue dans cette absorption? Du tout. Mais entre l'*Ego* humain, et l'*Ego* tout divin, il y a un abîme que nos critiques comblent sans le savoir. Quant au périsprit, il n'est plus l'âme, que la peau délicate, qui enveloppe le fruit de l'amande, n'est le noyau, ou encore son écorce provisoire. Le périsprit n'est que le simulacre de l'homme.

Il s'ensuit, que les Théosophes comprennent l'hypostase, selon les vieilles philosophies, et d'une manière toute différente de Spiritistes. Pour nous, l'Esprit est le dieu *personnel* de chaque mortel, et son seul élément divin. L'âme, binaire, par contre, n'est que semi-divine. Émanation directe du *nous*, tout ce qu'elle a d'essence immortelle, son cycle sur terre une fois achevé, doit nécessairement retourner à sa source-mère et—aussi pure qu'elle s'en est détachée—c'est dans cette essence toute spirituelle, que l'Église primitive, aussi fidèle que rebelle aux traditions néo-platoniciennes, crut reconnaître le bon *daimon* et en fit un ange gardien; en même temps, flétrissant justement l'âme «irrationnelle» et faillible, le vrai *Ego* humain (d'où le mot *Ego*-isme), elle l'appela l'ange de ténèbres, et en fit plus tard un diable personnel. Son seul tort fut de l'anthropomorphiser, et d'en faire un monstre à queue et à cornes. Autrement, toute abstraction qu'il soit, ce diable est personnel, en effet, puis-qu'il est identique avec notre *Ego*. C'est lui, cette personnalité insaisissable et inaccessible, que les ascètes de tous les pays croient punir en mortifiant leur chair. L'*Ego* donc, à qui nous ne concédons qu'une immortalité conditionnelle, est l'individualité purement humaine. Moitié force vitale,

moitié agrégation de qualités et d'attributs personnels, nécessaires à la formation de tout être humain, distinct de son prochain, l'*Ego* n'est que le «souffle de la vie», que Jehovah, un des *Elohim*, ou dieux créateurs, souffle dans les narines d'Adam; et comme tel, et à part son intelligence supérieure, il n'est que l'élément d'individualité possédé par l'homme, en commun avec toute créature; depuis le moucheron qui se joue dans un rayon de soleil, jusqu'à l'éléphant, roi de forêts. Ce n'est qu'en s'identifiant avec cette intelligence divine, que l'*Ego* tout souillé d'impuretés terrestres peut gagner son immortalité.

Afin de rendre notre pensée plus clairement, nous procéderons par une question. La matière tout indestructible qu'elle soit dans ses atomes primitifs—indestructible, car, selon nous, elle est l'ombre éternelle de la Lumière éternelle, et coexiste avec [elle]—cette matière, peut-elle rester immuable dans une seule de ses formes ou corrélations temporaires? Ne la voyons-nous pas, dans ses modifications incessantes, détruire aujourd'hui ce qu'elle a créé hier? Toute forme, qu'elle appartienne au monde objectif, ou à

celui que notre intelligence peut seule percevoir, ayant eu un commencement, doit avoir une fin. Il fut un temps où elle n'existait pas; il arrivera un jour où elle aura cessé d'être. Or, la science moderne nous déclare que, même, notre pensée est matérielle. Que toute fugitive que soit une idée, sa conception et ses évolutions subséquentes, nécessitent une certaine consommation d'énergie; que le moindre mouvement cérébral réverbère dans l'éther de l'espace et y produit une perturbation à l'infini. Donc, c'est une force matérielle, quoiqu'invisible.

Et, s'il en est ainsi, qui oserait affirmer que l'homme, dont l'individualité est toute composée de pensées, de désirs et de passions égoïstes, qui ne sont particulières, qu'à lui, et en font un individu *sui generis*, puisse vivre dans l'éternité avec tous ses traits distinctifs, sans changer?

Et s'il change durant des cycles infinis, qu'en reste-t-il? Que devient cette individualité distinctive si prisée? Il n'est que logique de croire qu'une personne qui, déjà sur terre,

oubliant son *moi* précieux, fut toujours prête à se sacrifier pour le bien d'autrui; qui, dans son amour pour l'humanité, s'est rendu utile dans le présent, nécessaire dans la vie future, au grand œuvre incessant de la Création, de la Préservation et de la Régénération; et qui, enfin, aspirant à l'infini, et tâchant de progresser moralement, s'est individualisée avec l'essence de son Intelligence divine, et s'est, ainsi, forcée sur le courant de l'immortalité—il n'est que logique, disons-nous, de croire qu'elle vivra en esprit éternellement. Mais qu'une autre personne qui, durant son exil de probation sur la terre, n'a envisagé la vie que comme une longue série d'actes égoïstes; qui fut inutile à elle-même comme aux autres et pernicieuse comme exemple—soit immortelle ainsi que la première—nous nous refusons de le croire! Rien n'est stationnaire dans la nature; tout doit ou avancer ou reculer, et un ivrogne incurable, un débauché tout alourdi de matérialité, n'ayant jamais fait le moindre effort vers le bien, mort ou vivant, ne progressera jamais! Il aura à subir son sort, sans que son âme divine, elle-même, puisse le sauver. L'*Ego*, ou psyché terrestre, a le libre arbitre; en plus, les mystérieux avis de sa gardienne ici-bas, qui lui parle par la voie de sa conscience. Ne pouvant suivre l'homme abruti, dans sa descente rapide vers l'abîme de la matérialité, et l'homme devenu sourd à sa conscience, aveuglé à la lumière, et ayant perdu le pouvoir de s'élever vers elle, l'Essence divine, comme l'ange gardien dans les vignettes naïves de notre enfance, déploie ses blanches ailes et, laissant le dernier lien se briser entre eux, remonte vers sa patrie. L'individualité purement matérielle, peut-elle vivre dans le monde des esprits, abandonnée aux lois de la matière seulement? Nous disons non; pas plus que le poisson ne peut vivre hors de son élément naturel. Les lois sont universelles et immuables.*

«Ce qui est au-dessus, est comme ce qui est au-dessous», dit le grand Hermès. L'enfant à naître, ne peut vivre s'il manque de forces vitales, et meurt, avant de voir le jour; l'*ego*, entièrement destitué de forces spirituelles, n'aura pas, non plus, la force soit de naître ou

d'exister dans les régions

* Ceci doit être médité et discuté [Editor].

10

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

des esprits. S'il n'est que faible et étioilé—il pourra survivre, «ainsi que cela a lieu, soit sur la terre, soit au ciel.»

Mais, nous dira-t-on, les âmes méchantes ne restent pas impunies. Des siècles, des milliers de siècles, peut-être, de souffrances, sont certes une punition suffisante. Nous disons, nous, qu'une telle punition serait à la fois quelque chose de trop, et de trop peu. Elle est disproportionnée aux plus grands crimes, commis durant toute une longue vie humaine; elle serait diabolique et injuste. D'un autre côté, avec l'éternité devant l'âme souffrante, et une éternité certaine, une punition semblable serait une mauvaise plaisanterie. Que sont des milliers de siècles dans l'infini! Moins qu'un clin d'œil.

Il se peut que cette doctrine—comme toute autre dure vérité—semble répulsive à beaucoup de monde. Quant à nous, nous y croyons. Le sentimentalisme n'a rien à faire dans nos rangs; celui qui ne se sent pas prêt à sacrifier ses plus chères espérances personnelles à la vérité éternelle, peut devenir membre de la Société Théosophique, mais n'appartiendra jamais à notre cercle ésotérique. N'imposant à personne nos opinions, nous respectons celles des autres sans les partager. Et cependant notre Société compte des milliers d'Européens et d'Américains dans ses rangs.

On assure que cette doctrine d'immortalité conditionnelle n'a été répandue parmi les masses que «pour effrayer les âmes basses et viles». Encore une erreur. Elle n'a jamais été un dogme populaire: ni aux Indes, ni en Grèce, ni en Égypte. On n'en offrait les preuves au novice, que durant les grands mystères, lorsqu'une boisson sacrée le mettait en état de quitter son corps et, planant dans l'infinité des mondes, lui permettait d'observer et de juger par lui-même. Divulguer ce qu'il avait vu était une mort certaine, et les serments qu'on exigeait de lui, à l'*Epopteïa* suprême, lorsque le grand Hiérophante lui présentait le *Pétroma*, ou tablettes de pierres où étaient gravés les secrets de l'initiation, étaient terribles. Seul Platon en parle en termes couverts, mais toujours il en parle. Si dans un sens il dit que l'âme est immortelle, dans un autre il nie positivement que *chaque*

IDÉES INCORRECTES

11

âme individuelle soit pré-existée, ou qu'elle existera par la suite et pour l'éternité. La même chose a été enseignée dans tous les sanctuaires. Les égyptologues modernes en ont toutes les preuves. Mariette-Bey traduit plusieurs passages du *Livre des Morts*, et des inscriptions

sur les sarcophages, où l'immortalité conditionnelle, et une annihilation complète sont en réserve pour les méchants. Une hymne à Osiris dit du mort: «Il voit par toi, vit en toi, et ce n'est que par toi qu'il peut échapper à l'*annihilation*». Les Égyptiens enseignaient aux multitudes que l'âme animale, appartenant au corps et étant indépendante de l'âme immortelle, ne les rejoignait qu'après un certain laps de temps passé dans la momie. Mais aux initiés, ils disaient qu'une annihilation complète attendait l'âme dépravée qui n'avait su devenir *osirienne*, ou divine. M. F. Lenormant l'affirme, ainsi que Mariette-Bey. Gotama, le philosophe indou, dit dans sa *Nyâya-Sûtra* (Tarkalamkara): «Le siège de la connaissance du soi (ou individualité) est dans l'âme humaine (jîvâtman), qui est binaire, mais l'âme suprême (paramâtman) est la seule qui soit omnisciente, infinie et éternelle».

Pour en finir, on nous objecte, que ceux qui *ont foi* dans l'immortalité, comme loi générale, regardent nos opinions comme «contraires sous tous les rapports à la justice divine». Nous répondons: Qu'en savez-vous de cette justice? Sur quoi basez-vous vos idées en supposant que les lois du monde invisible soient tout autres que celles d'ici-bas, tout en laissant de côté la loi, bien constatée par la science, de la survivance du plus apte, loi, qui certe ne serait pas de mince valeur dans notre argument? Nous ne demandons que des preuves valables à l'appui du contraire. On peut nous faire remarquer, qu'il nous serait peut-être aussi difficile qu'à nos critiques de prouver la vérité sur nos doctrines, à nous? D'accord, nous confessons de suite que, tout en y croyant, nous n'en savons que ce qui nous en a été enseigné. Mais notre doctrine à nous est appuyée du moins sur la philosophie et sur la psychologie expérimentale (comme celle du système des *Yoga* indous), fruits des recherches de long siècles. Nos maîtres sont Patañjali, Kapila, Kanada, tous ces systèmes et écoles de l'Aryâvarta (l'Inde antique)

qui servirent de mines inépuisables pour les philosophes grecs, depuis Pythagore jusqu'à Proclus. Elle est basée sur la sagesse ésotérique de la vieille Égypte, où Moïse comme Platon sont allés se faire instruire par ses hiérophantes et adeptes; elle s'est développée enfin, sur la méthode si sûre qui ne procède qu'inférentiellement, ne juge que par la stricte analogie et qui, se basant sur l'immuabilité des lois universelles, ne déduit que par induction. Nous sera-t-il permis de demander à nos adversaires, de nous montrer quelles sont leurs autorités à eux? Est-ce la science moderne? Mais la science docte se moque de vous comme de nous. Est-ce la Bible mosaïque? Nous en doutons, car elle n'en souffle pas un mot, et toutes les tortures appliquées à son texte pendant de longs siècles de recherche, et malgré toutes ses éditions *revues et corrigées*, elle reste muette à ce sujet. Mais dans plusieurs endroits touchant la survivance de l'âme, elle nous coupe l'herbe sous les pieds. Dans les *Ecclésiastes* (chap. iii, 19) la Bible n'accorde à l'homme aucune prééminence sur la brute; comme l'une meurt, ditelle, ainsi meurt l'autre, car le souffle qui les anime tous deux *est le même*. Quant à Job, cet illustre affligé nous affirme que l'homme, une fois mort, «s'enfuit comme une ombre, et — *ne continue pas*» (*Job*, xiv, 2).* Est-ce le Nouveau Testament? Ce livre nous offre le choix, entre un paradis philharmonique, et un enfer — qui est loin de l'être. Il ne nous donne aucune preuve irrécusable, nous défend de raisonner,

et nous enjoint *une foi aveugle*. Est-ce les phénomènes du spiritisme? Nous y voici. Ici nous sommes sur un terrain solide, car les preuves sont palpables, et ce sont les «esprits» qui sont nos maîtres. Les Théosophes croient aux manifestations et aux «esprits» autant que les spiritualistes. Mais—lorsque vous aurez fini par prouver au monde entier, la science sceptique y incluse, que nos phénomènes sont produits par les âmes des décédés — qu’aurez-vous prouvé? La *survivance de l’homme* tout au plus; son immortalité vous ne la prouverez *jamais*: pas

* [In Ostervald’s French Bible, the wording is: “. . . .et il ne s’arrête point».—*Compiler.*]

plus comme loi générale, «que comme une récompense conditionnelle». Trente ans d’expérience avec les «esprits» ne nous ont pas impressionnés en faveur de leur véracité comme «loi générale», non plus donc, vous n’avez à nous opposer que votre *foi aveugle*, vos émotions et l’instinct d’une minorité de l’humanité. Qui, une minorité, car, lorsque vous auriez mis de côté les 450 millions de Bouddhistes, qui ne croient pas à l’immortalité et redoutent comme une calamité terrible, même la survivance de l’âme, et les 200 millions d’Indous, de toutes les sectes, qui croient à l’absorption, dans l’essence primordiale, qu’en restera-t-il de cette doctrine universelle?

«Notre doctrine», dites-vous, «est inventée pour les âmes basses et viles». Nous sommes à même de vous prouver, les statistiques à la main, que ces âmes «basses et viles» prédominent dans les pays civilisés et chrétiens où l’immortalité est promise à tout le monde. Nous vous renvoyons à l’Amérique, puritaine et pieuse, qui promet à chaque criminel qu’elle pend, un paradis éternel, s’il croit; et cela, immédiatement, car, selon les protestants, du pied du gibet au pied de l’Éternel, il y a moins qu’un pas. Ouvrez un journal de New York; vous y trouverez la première page tout couverte des nouvelles de crimes les plus atroces, les plus inouïs, commis par douzaine, tous les jours, et depuis un bout de l’année à l’autre. Nous défions de trouver rien de semblable dans les pays païens, où l’on ne s’occupe même pas de l’immortalité, et où l’on ne demande qu’à être absorbé pour toujours. L’immortalité comme «loi générale» est donc plutôt un stimulant qu’un préventif contre le crime pour toute âme «basse et vile»?

Nous finissons, croyant avoir répondu à toutes les accusations de l’auteur de l’article sur «les Elémentaires».

Si nos doctrines intéressent le lecteur, dans un prochain numéro nous tâcherons d’être plus explicite.

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

14

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

ERRONEOUS IDEAS CONCERNING THE DOCTRINES OF THE THEOSOPHISTS

[*La Revue Spirite*, Paris, January, 1879]

[*Translation of the foregoing original French text*]

We insert this reply to Monsieur Rossi de Justiniani, but we express no opinion upon the doctrines expounded therein; our Smyrna brother may reply to Mme. H. P. Blavatsky. [Editor.]

“Criticism is easy; art is difficult!”

—Destouches, *Philinte*, I D, Act II, sc. 5.

The Theosophical Society of New York, founded in 1875, and later, according to the orders of its heads in India, entirely reconstructed, is established on the plan of every secret society. It is plain, then, that its doctrines cannot be common property. In spite of that, the American Press—above all the Spiritualistic papers—have incessantly dissected, criticized and turned them into ridicule, invariably setting up as doctrines of the Theosophists what are nothing but conjectures on their own part. The little that it was permissible to reveal to them, however, was done as clearly as is possible in the English language, which is rather poorly adapted to the expression of metaphysical ideas.

Mirabile dictu! Not only did they turn a deaf ear to our explanations, but as soon as the criticisms of our opponents began to be crushed, the doors of the papers were politely shut in our faces!

It is indeed time, in this blindman’s buff polemic, to throw a little daylight into this Cimmerian darkness where the light often has been extinguished—one would almost say by design. A criticism on “The Elementaries and the Elementals,” published in the August number of *La Revue Spirite*, offers us an opportunity.

ERRONEOUS IDEAS

15

Yes, “for the New York Theosophists, man is a trinity and not a duality.” But he is more than that, however; by adding the physical body, man is a *Tetraktys*, or maternity.* But, supported as we are in this particular doctrine by the greatest philosophers of ancient Greece—as the author of the article remarks—it is neither to Pythagoras, nor Plato, nor the famous *Theodidaktoi* of the Alexandrian School, that we owe it. We will speak of our own teachers later on. We will first prove that the critic in *La Revue Spirite* strays from the facts in his article, concerning all that relates to the historical doctrines of antiquity, and

that—quite innocently no doubt, and, as the result of judging only from abridged translations he disfigures ours.

First of all, he is deceived—according to us—when, believing himself to be correcting our notions, and having a moment before treated of “incarnated souls” (p. 291), he speaks (p. 292) of a “plastic and *unconscious* mediator, or the perisprital fluid that serves to envelope the spirit.” Does he consider then, that the spirit and the soul are identical, or that the former can be incarnated like the soul? A strange mistake in our eyes! And if that plastic mediator is “unconscious,” according to the writer, in that case, the soul also, which he thinks immortal, and even the spirit, must be so, because further on we find him establishing the exact identity of the spirit and the soul. “The soul, isolated, is for us the *périsprit*,” he says. We will ask, first, how can it be that anything “unconscious”—hence, irresponsible—can be, in a future life, either rewarded or punished for acts committed during an unconscious state? Later on, towards the close of the article, the author tells us that, in an imperfect being, the *third* element, or the Spirit, cannot be annihilated, but for an indefinite period loses the consciousness of its greatness and may be degraded to the level of the brute. Here we completely fail to understand him! We do not know if these ideas are personal to the author or rather the expression of the teaching of the

* [A misprint for “quaternity.”—*Compiler*.]

orthodox spiritists in general.* No matter; for us they are monstrous and incomprehensible. How can the spirit, the supreme primordial essence, the uncreated and eternal monad, the direct spark from the “central Sun” of the Kabalists, be no more than a third element, as fallible as the *périsprit*? Can it, like the vital soul—afflicted with a chronic unconsciousness, it would appear—become unconscious also, be it but temporarily? Can the immortal Spirit “be degraded to the level of a beast”? Nonsense! the author cannot have the least notion of our teachings; either he is ignorant of what we call “spirit,” because for him the spirit and the soul are synonymous—or rather, he is still more iconoclastic than ourselves. We hasten to repudiate those ideas. We have never professed anything like them.

Plato is quoted to us and, at the same time, what Plato taught is forgotten. According to the “divine” philosopher the soul is dual; it is composed of two primitive constituent parts: one—mortal, the other eternal; the former, fashioned by the *created gods* (the creative and intelligent forces in nature), the other, an emanation from the supreme Spirit. He tells us that the mortal soul, in taking possession of its body, becomes “irrational”; but between irrationality and unconsciousness there is a profound difference. Plato, finally, never confused the *périsprit* with the soul or the spirit. In common with every other philosopher, he called it neither the *nous* nor ψυχή, but gave it the name εἰδωλόν, sometimes that of *imago* or *simulacrum*.

Let us try, then, to re-establish a little order in this confusion. Let us give everything its true name, and state precisely the difference between the opinions of our learned critic and our own. For all who have studied the Greek philosophers, it is clear that the author confuses terms. His question (p. 292), “Can the separation of the spirit, ψυχή, from the soul, *nous* or périsprit, ever be the cause of a complete destruction . . .?” provides us with the key

* There are no orthodox spiritists but simply researchers, investigators who accept every demonstrated truth [Editor].

to the misunderstanding. He translates the words “spirit” and “soul” simply *vice versa*.

We do not know if the modern Greeks so translate those two nouns, but we are able to prove that none of the ancient philosophers have ever defined them in that way. We will allow ourselves to quote two names, but those will suffice. Our pagan authority is—Plutarch; our Christian authority is no more and no less than Saint James, “the brother of the Lord.” In treating of the soul Plutarch tells us that while ψυχή is imprisoned in the body, the *nous* or the divine intelligence soars above mortal man, shedding upon him a ray that is more or less luminous according to the personal merit of the man; he adds that the *nous* never descends but remains stationary. Saint James is still more explicit. Speaking of the wisdom from below (*vide* the Greek text, *General Epistle*, iii, 15) he treats it as “terrestrial, sensual, *psychic*,” this last adjective being translated in the English text by the word “diabolical,” and (iii, 17) he adds that it is only the wisdom from above that is divine and “*noetic*” (adj. of the sub. *nous*).^{*} So the psychic element never seems to have been in the odor of sanctity, either with the Saints of Christianity or with the Philosophers of Paganism. Since Saint James treats ψυχή as diabolical and Plato makes something irrational of it, can it be immortal *per se*?

May we be allowed a comparison, the best we can find, between the concrete and the abstract; between what our critic calls “the triple hypostasis” and we “the *tetraktys*”? Let us compare this philosophic quaternary, composed of the body, the périsprit, the soul and the spirit—to the ether—so well foreseen by science, but never defined—and its subsequent correlations. The ether will represent the spirit for us; the dead vapor that is formed therein—the soul;

* [This sentence and explanation are somewhat confused. King James’ version gives the following text for chapter iii, verse 15: “This wisdom descendeth not from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, devilish.” The Greek text shows the words: *epigeios, psychikê,* and *daimoniôdês,* which are translated as “earthly, soulical, demoniacal” in a literal translation of the Greek text.—*Compiler*.]

water—the p risprit; ice—the body. The ice melts and for ever loses its shape, water evaporates and is dispersed in space; the vapor is liberated from its grosser particles and finally reaches that condition in which science cannot follow it. Purified from its last defilements, it is entirely absorbed into its first cause, and becomes a *cause* in its turn. With the exception of the immortal *nous*—the soul, the p risprit and the body, all having been created and having had a beginning, must all have an end.

Does that mean that the individuality is lost in that absorption? Not at all. But between the human *Ego* and the wholly divine *Ego*, there is an abyss that our critics fill in without knowing it. As to the p risprit, it is no more the soul than the delicate skin that surrounds the almond is the kernel itself or even its temporary husk. The p risprit is but the simulacrum of the man.

It follows that Theosophists understand the hypostasis, according to the old philosophers, in a very different way from the Spiritualists. For us, the Spirit is the *personal* god of each mortal, and his only divine element. The dual soul, on the contrary, is only semidivine. Being a direct emanation from the *nous*, everything it has of immortal essence, once its earthly cycle is accomplished, must necessarily return to its mother-source, and as pure as when it was detached; it is that purely spiritual essence which the primitive church, as faithful as it was rebellious to the Neo-Platonic traditions, thought it recognized in the good *daimon* and made into a guardian angel; at the same time justly blighting the “irrational” and fallible soul, the real human *Ego* (from which we get the word Egoism), she called it the angel of darkness, and afterwards made it into a personal devil. The only error was in anthropomorphizing it and in making it a monster with tail and horns. Otherwise, abstraction as it may be, this devil is truly personal because it is identical with our *Ego*. It is this, the elusive and inaccessible personality, that ascetics of every country think they chastise by mortifying the flesh. The *Ego* then, to which we concede only a conditional immortality, is the purely human individuality. Half vital

energy, half an aggregation of personal qualities and attributes, necessary to the constitution of every human being as distinct from his neighbor, the *Ego* is only the “breath of life” that Jehovah, one of the *Elohim* or creative gods, breathed into the nostrils of Adam; and, as such, and apart from its higher intelligence, it is but the element of individuality possessed by man in common with every creature, from the gnat that dances in the rays of the sun to the elephant, the king of the forest. It is only by identifying itself with that divine intelligence that the *Ego*, soiled with earthly impurities, can win its immortality.

In order to express our thought more clearly, we will proceed by a question. Though matter may be quite indestructible in its primitive atoms—indestructible, because, as we say, it is the eternal shadow of the eternal Light and co-exists with it—can this matter remain unchangeable in its temporary forms or correlations? Do we not see it, during its ceaseless modifications, destroy today what it created yesterday? Every form, whether it belongs to the objective world or to that which our intelligence alone can perceive, having

had a beginning, must have an end. There was a time when it did not exist; there will come a day when it will cease to be. Now, modern science tells us that even our thought is material. However fleeting an idea may be, its conception and its subsequent evolutions require a certain consumption of energy; let the least cerebral motion reverberate in the ether of space and it will produce a disturbance reaching to infinity. Hence, it is a material force, although invisible.

And, if that is so, who would dare to affirm that man, whose individuality is composed of thoughts, of desires and selfish passions, which are peculiar to him, and which make him an individual *sui generis*, can live in eternity with all his distinctive traits, without changing?

And if he changes during infinite cycles, what remains of him? What becomes of that separate individuality that is so much prized? It is only logical to believe that a person who already on earth, forgetting his precious *self*, was ever ready to sacrifice himself for the welfare of others;

who, in his love for humanity, has made himself useful in the present life and necessary in the future life, for the great and ceaseless work of Creation, of Preservation and of Regeneration; and who finally, aspiring to the infinite and striving to progress morally, individualizes himself with the essence of his divine intelligence, and is, thus, forced into the current of immortality—it is but logical, we say, to believe that he will live in spirit eternally. But that another person who, during his probationary exile on earth envisaged life but as a long series of selfish actions, who was as useless to himself as to others, and pernicious as an example—should be immortal like the former—is impossible for us to believe! Nothing is stationary in nature; everything must advance or fall back, and an incurable drunkard, a debauchee wholly immersed in materiality, having never made the least effort towards the good, dead or living, will never make progress! He will have to submit to his fate, even his divine soul not being able to save him. The *Ego*, or terrestrial psychê, has free will, and, moreover, the mysterious counsel of its guardian here on earth, which speaks through the voice of conscience. Being unable to follow the brutalized man in his rapid descent toward the abyss of materiality—the man who is deaf to his conscience, blind to the light, and who has lost the power of raising himself towards it—the Divine Essence, like the guardian angel of the naïve woodcuts of our childhood, spreads its white wings and, breaking the last link between them, re-ascends towards its own realms. Can the purely material individuality live in the world of spirits if abandoned to the laws of matter alone? We say no; no more than a fish can live outside its natural element. Laws are universal and immutable.*

“That which is above is like that which is below,” said the great Hermes. The newborn child cannot live if it lacks vital force, and dies without having seen the light; neither will the *ego*, entirely deprived of spiritual force, have the strength to be born or to exist in the region of spirits. If it is only weak and withered—it may survive—

* This should be meditated upon and discussed [Editor].

“as it is on earth, so it is in heaven.” But, it will be said, the evil souls do not remain unpunished. Ages, thousands of ages, perhaps, of suffering are surely a sufficient punishment. We say that such a punishment would be at the same time too much and hardly enough. It would be disproportionate even to the greatest crimes committed throughout the whole of a long human life; it would be diabolical and unjust. On the other hand, with eternity before the suffering soul, and an absolutely certain eternity, such a punishment would be merely a bad joke. What are thousands of ages in infinity! Less than the wink of the eye.

It may be that this teaching—like every other plain truth—seems repulsive to many people. As for us, we believe it. Sentimentality has no place in our ranks; he who does not feel ready to sacrifice his dearest personal hopes to the eternal truth may become a member of the Theosophical Society, but will never belong to our Esoteric Circle. Without forcing our opinions on anyone, we respect those of others without sharing them. And yet our Society reckons thousands of Europeans and Americans in its ranks.

It is said that this doctrine of conditional immortality was circulated among the masses only “to terrify low and depraved souls.” Still another error. It has never been a popular doctrine; either in India, Greece or Egypt. Its proofs were given only to the neophyte, during the great Mysteries, when a sacred beverage enabled him to leave his body and, soaring in the infinity of worlds, observe and judge for himself. To divulge what he then saw was certain death; and terrible were the oaths that were demanded of him, at the supreme *Epopteia* when the grand Hierophant offered him the *Petroma*, or stone tablets on which were engraved the secrets of initiation. Plato alone spoke of it, in veiled terms, but he did speak of it. If in one sense he said that the soul is immortal, in another he positively denied that *each* individual soul had pre-existed or that it will exist afterwards and for eternity. The same thing was taught in every sanctuary. Modern Egyptologists have all the proofs of it. Mariette-Bey translated several

passages in the *Book of the Dead* and from inscriptions in sarcophagi where conditional immortality and complete annihilation are in store for the wicked. One hymn to Osiris says of the defunct: “He sees by Thee, he lives in Thee and it is only by Thee that he can escape *annihilation*.” The Egyptians taught the masses that the animal soul, belonging to the body and independent of the immortal soul, would not rejoin it until after a certain lapse of time passed in the mummy. But to the initiate, they said that complete annihilation awaited the depraved souls which had not succeeded in becoming *Osirified* or Divine. F. Lenormant declares this, as also does Mariette-Bey. Gotama, the Hindu philosopher, says in his

Nyâya-Sûtra (Tarkalamkara): “The seat of the knowledge of the self (or individuality) is in the human soul (jîvâtman), which is dual, but the supreme soul (paramâtman) is the only one that is omniscient, infinite and eternal.”

To finish with the question, the objection is brought against us that those who *have faith* in immortality as a general law, regard our opinions as “in every respect contrary to divine justice.” We answer: “What do you know of that justice? Upon what do you base your ideas in supposing that the laws of the invisible world are any different from those of this world, entirely laying aside the well-established scientific law of the survival of the fittest, which would certainly be of no small consequence in our argument?” We ask only for valid proofs in support of the contrary. Possibly we may be told that it would perhaps, be as difficult for us to prove the truth of our doctrines as for our critics to prove theirs. Agreed! We instantly confess that, in believing them, we know only what we have been taught. But our teaching rests at least on philosophy and on experimental psychology (such as that of the system of the Hindu *Yogis*), results of long ages of research. Our Masters are Patañjali, Kapila, Kanâda, all the systems and schools of Âryâvarta (archaic India) which served as inexhaustible mines for the Greek philosophers, from Pythagoras to Proclus. It is based on the esoteric wisdom of ancient Egypt, where Moses, like Plato, went to learn from

the Hierophants and Adepts; it was therefore developed by sure methods that do not proceed by inference, but decide by strict analogy alone, are based on the immutability of universal laws, and proceed by induction. May we be allowed to ask our opponents to show us their authority? Is it modern science? But learned science laughs at you as it does at us. Is it the Mosaic Bible? We doubt it because it does not breathe a word of it, and in spite of all the tortures applied to its text during long centuries of research, and notwithstanding all its *revised* and *corrected* editions, remains mute on the subject. But in several places, touching upon the survival of the soul, it cuts the ground under our feet. In *Ecclesiastes* (iii, 19) the Bible gives man no preeminence at all over the brute; as the one perishes, so does the other, for the breath that animates them both is *the same*. As to Job, that illustrious sufferer declares to us that man, once dead “disappears like a shadow, and—*continues no more*” (*Job*, xiv, 2). Is it the New Testament? That book offers the choice between a philharmonic paradise and a hell which is far from being a real one. It gives us no irrefutable proof, it prohibits us from reasoning, and insists upon *blind faith*. Is it the phenomena of Spiritualism? Here we are! Now we are on firm ground, for the proofs are palpable, and it is “spirits” who are our teachers. Theosophists believe in the manifestations and in the “spirits” as much as the Spiritualists. But—when you have finished demonstrating to the whole world, including sceptical science, that our phenomena are produced by the souls of the departed—what will you have proved? *The survival of man* at the utmost; his immortality you will *never* prove; neither as a general law nor “as a conditional reward.” Thirty years of experience with the “spirits” have not given us an impression in favor of their veracity as a “general law”; you have nothing more, then, to

confute us than your *blind faith*, your emotions, and the instinct of a minority of humanity. Yes, a minority, for when you have set aside the 450 millions of Buddhists, who do not believe in immortality and dread as a terrible calamity even the survival of the soul; and the 200 millions of Hindus of all

sects, who believe in absorption into the primordial essence, what remains of this universal doctrine?

Our doctrine, you say, “was invented for low and vulgar souls.” We are in a position to prove to you, statistics in hand, that these “low and vulgar” souls predominate in the civilized and Christian countries where immortality is promised to everyone. We refer you to America, puritanic and pious, which promises every criminal it hangs an eternal Paradise, if he will believe; and that immediately, because, according to the Protestants, there is less than one step from the foot of the scaffold to the foot of the Eternal. Open a New York paper; you will find the first page entirely covered with news of the most atrocious, the most unheard-of crimes committed by the dozen, every day, and from one end of the year to the other. We challenge anyone to find anything like it in pagan countries, where people do not trouble themselves at all about immortality, and where they ask only to be absorbed forever. Is immortality then, as a “general law,” rather a stimulant to, than a preventive against, crime for every “low and vulgar” soul?

We close believing that we have answered all the accusations of the author of the article on “The Elementaries.”

If our teachings interest the reader we will try to be more explicit in a future number.

H.P. BLAVATSKY.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

THE INDIAN “PUBLIC” AND THEOSOPHY

[*The Indian Spectator*, Bombay, March 2, 1879]

To the Editor of *The Indian Spectator*.

Before entering upon the main question that compels me to ask you kindly to accord me space in your esteemed paper, will you inform me as to the nature of that newly-born infant prodigy which calls itself *The Bombay Review*? Is it a bigoted, sectarian organ of the Christians, or an impartial journal, fair to all, and unprejudiced as every

THE INDIAN "PUBLIC" AND THEOSOPHY

25

respectable paper styling itself “Review” *ought* to be, especially in a place like Bombay, where such a diversity of religious opinions is to be found? The two paragraphs in the number of February 22nd, which so honour the Theosophical Society by a double notice of its American members, would force me to incline towards the former opinion. Both the editorial which attacks my esteemed friend, Miss Bates, and the apocalyptic vision of the modern Ezekiel, *alias* “Anthroposophist,” who shoots his rather blunt arrows at Colonel Olcott, require an answer, if it were but to show the advisability of using sharper darts against Theosophists. Leaving the seer to his prophetic dream of languoty and coudung, I will simply review the editorial of this *Review* which tries to be at the same time satirical and severe and succeeds only in being nonsensical. Quoting from another paper a sentence relating to Miss Bates, which describes her as “*not a Christian*,” it remarks in that bitter and selfish spirit of arrogance and would-be superiority, which so characterizes Christian sectarianism: “The *public* might have been spared the sight of the italicized personal explanations.”

What “public” may I ask? The majority of the intelligent and reading public—especially of native papers—in Bombay as throughout India is, we believe, composed of non-Christians—of Pârsîs, Hindus, etc. And this public instead of resenting such “wanton aggressiveness,” as the writer pleases to call it, can but rejoice to find at least one European lady, who, at the same time that she is *not* a Christian, is quite ready, as a Theosophist, to call any respectable “heathen” her brother, and regard him with at least as much sympathy as she does a Christian. But this unfortunate thrust at Theosophy is explained by what follows:

“In the young lady’s *own interest* the insult ought not to have been flung into the teeth of the Christian public.”

Without taking into consideration the old wise axiom, that honesty is the best policy, we can only regret for our Christian opponents that they should so soon “unveil” their cunning policy. While in the eyes of every honest “heathen”

Theosophist, there can be no higher recommendation for a person than to have the reputation of being truthful even at the expense of his or her “interest,” our *Christian Review* unwittingly exposes the concealed rope of the mission machinery, by admitting that it is in the *interest* of every person here, at least—to *appear* a Christian or a possible convert, if he is not one *de facto*. We feel really very, very grateful to the *Review* for such a timely and generous confession. The writer’s defense of the “public” for which it speaks as one having authority is no less vague and unsatisfactory, as we all know that among the 240,000,000 of native population in India, Christians count but as a drop in an ocean. Or is it possible that no other public but the Christian is held worthy of the name or even of consideration? Had converted Brâhmans arrived here instead of Theosophists, and one of these announced his profession of faith by italicizing the words, *not a heathen*, we doubt whether the fear of hurting the feelings of many millions of Hindus would have ever entered the mind of our caustic paragraphist!

Nor do we find the sentence, “India owes too much to Christianity,” anything but arrogant and presumptuous talk. India owes much and everything to the British Government which protects its heathen subjects equally with those of English birth, and would no more allow the one class to insult the other than it would revive the Inquisition. India owes to Great Britain its educational system, its slow but sure progress, and its security from the aggression of other nations; to Christianity it owes nothing. And yet perhaps I am mistaken, and ought to have made one exception. India owes to Christianity its mutiny of 1857, which threw it back for a century. This we assert on the authority of general opinion and of Sir John Kaye, who declares, in his *History of the Sepoy War*,* that the mutiny resulted from the intolerance of the crusading missions and the silly talk of the *Friend of India*.

* [Vol. I, pp. 248, 472-73.]

I have done; adding but one more word of advice to the *Review*. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, when the latest international revision of the *Bible*—that infallible and revealed Word of God!—reveals 64,000 mistranslations and other mistakes, it is not the Theosophists—a large number of whose members are English patriots and men of learning—but rather the Christians who ought to beware of “wanton aggressiveness” against people of other creeds. Their boomerangs may fly back from some unexpected parabola and hit the throwers.

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Bombay, February 25th, 1879.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

THE RETORT COURTEOUS

[*The Indian Spectator*, Bombay, March 16, 1879]

There is a story current among the Yankees of a small schoolboy, who, having been thrashed by a bigger fellow and being unable to hit him back, consoled himself by making faces at his enemy's sister. Such is the position of my opponent of the world-famed *Bombay Review*. Realizing the impossibility of injuring the Theosophical Society, he "makes faces" at its Corresponding Secretary, flinging at her personal abuse.

Unfortunately for my masked enemies and fortunately for myself, I have five years' experience in fighting American newspapers, any one of which, notwithstanding the grandiloquent style of the "Anthroposophists," "B's," and "Onesimuses" is any day more than a match in humour, and especially in wit, for a swarm of such pseudonymous wasps as work on the *Review*. If I go to the trouble of noticing their last Saturday's curry of weak arguments and impertinent personalities at all, it is simply with the object of proving once more that it requires more wit than seems to be at their command to compel my silence. Abuse is no

28

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

argument; moreover, if applied indiscriminately, it may prove dangerous sometimes.

Hence, I intend noticing but one particular point. As to their conceit, it is very delightful to behold! What a benevolent tone of patronage combined with modesty is theirs! How refreshing in hot weather to hear them saying of oneself:

We have been more charitable to her than she seems subsequently to deserve [!!].

Could dictatorial magnanimity be carried further? And this dithyrambic, which forces one's recognition of the worth of the mighty ones "of broad and catholic views," who control the fates of *The Bombay Review*, and have done in various ways so much "for the races of India"! One might fancy he heard the "spirits" of Lord Mayo and Sir William Jones themselves blowing through the pipes of this earth-shaking organ.

Has it acquired its reverberant diapason from the patronage of all the native princes whose favours it so eagerly sought a while ago?

I have neither leisure nor desire to banter penny-a-line wit with such gold-medal experts, especially when I honestly write above my own signature and they hide themselves behind secure pseudonyms. Therefore, I will leave their claptrap about "weeds and Madame Sophy" to be digested by themselves and notice but the insinuation about "Russian spies." I agree with the *Review* editor when he says that it is the business of Sir Richard Temple and Sir Frank Souter to *take care* of such "spies." And I will further add that it is these two

gentlemen *alone* who have the right or the authority to *denounce* such people.

No other person, were he even the noblest of the lords instead of an *anonymous* writer, can or *will* be allowed to throw out such a malicious and mischievous hint about a woman and a citizen of the United States. He who does it risks being brought to the bar of that most just of all tribunals—a British Court. And if either of my ambuscaders wishes to test the question, pray let him put his calumny in some tangible shape. Such a vile innuendo—even when

shaped into the sham-denial of a *bazaar* rumour, becomes something more serious than whole folios of the “flap-doodle” (the stuff—as sailors say—upon which fools are fed) which the *Review’s* Christian Śâstris serve up against Theosophy and Theosophists. In the interest of that youthful and boisterous paper itself, we hope that henceforth it will get its information from a more reliable source than the Bombay market places.

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Bombay, March 14th, 1879.

[Writing about the Founders’ trip in Northern India, in April, 1879, Col. H. S. Olcott says (*Old Diary Leaves*, II, 77): “At Saharanpore the Ārya Samâjists welcomed us most cordially and brought us gifts of fruits and sweets. The only drawback to our pleasure was the presence of the Police spy and his servant, who watched our movements, intercepted our notes, read our telegrams, and made us feel as if we had stumbled within reach of the Russian Third Section by mistake.” Col. Olcott protested vigorously to the Bombay Government through the United States Consul against this spying. Eventually the Viceregal authorities put a stop to it, as related by H.P.B. herself on pp. 140-43 of the present volume.—*Compiler.*]

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

30

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

MADAME BLAVATSKY

[*The Spiritualist*, London, March 21, 1879, p. 141]

Sir,

If my memory has not altogether evaporated under the combined influences of this blazing Indian sun, and the frequent misconstructions of your correspondents, there occurred, in March, 1878, an epistolary skirmish between one who prudently conceals his face behind the two masks of “Scrutator” and “M.A. (Cantab),” and your humble servant. He again attacks me in the character of my London Nemesis. Again he lets fly a Parthian shaft from behind the fence of one of his pseudonyms. Again he has found a mare’s nest in my garden—a chronological, instead of a metaphysical, one this time. He is exercised about my age, as though the value of my statements would be in the least affected by either rejuvenating me to infancy, or aging me into a double centenarian.

He has read in the *Revue Spirite* for October last a sentence in which, discussing this very point, I say that I have not passed *thirty* years in India, and that: «*C’est justement mon âge—quoique fort respectable tel qu’il est—qui s’oppose violemment à cette chronologie, etc.*» I reproduce the sentence exactly as it appears, with the sole exception of restoring the period after “*l’Inde*” in place of the comma, which is simply a typographical mistake. The capital C which immediately follows would have conveyed to anyone except a “Scrutator” my exact meaning, viz., that my age itself, *however respectable*, is opposed to the idea that I had passed thirty years in India.

I do hope that my ever-masked assailant will devote some leisure to the study of French as well as of punctuation before he attacks again.

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Bombay, February, 1879.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

MAGIC

31

MAGIC

[*The Dekkan Star*, Poona, March 30, 1879]

In *The Indian Tribune* of March 15th appears a letter upon the relations of the Theosophical Society with the Ârya Samâj. The writer seems neither an enemy of our cause, nor hostile to the Society; therefore I will try in a gentle spirit to correct certain misapprehensions under which he labours. As he signs himself “A Member,” he must, therefore, be regarded by us as a *Brother*. And yet he seems moved by an unwarranted fear to a hasty repudiation of too close a connection between our Society and his Samâj, lest the fair name of the latter be compromised before the public by some strange notions of ours! He says:

I have been surprised to hear that the Society embraces people who believe in magic . . . Should this, however, be the belief of the Theosophical Society, I could only assure your readers that the Ârya Samâj is not in common with them in this respect. . . . Only as far as Vedic *learning* and Vedic *philosophy* is concerned, their objects may be said to be similar.

It is these very points I now mean to answer. The gist of the whole question is as to the correct definition of the word “magic,” and understanding of what Vedic “learning and philosophy” are. If by magic is meant the popular superstitious belief in sorcery, witchcraft and ghosts in general; if it involves the admission that *supernatural* feats may be performed; if it requires faith in *miracles*, that is to say, phenomena outside natural law; then, on behalf of every Theosophist, whether a sceptic yet unconverted, a believer in, and student of phenomena pure and simple, or even a modern Spiritualist so-called—*i.e.*, one who believes

32

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

mediumistic phenomena to be necessarily caused by returning human spirits—we emphatically repudiate the accusation.

We did not see *The Civil and Military Gazette*, which seems so well acquainted with our doctrines; but if it meant to accuse any Theosophists of any such belief, then like many other *Gazettes* and *Reviews* it talked of that which it knew nothing about.

Our Society believes in *no* miracle, divine, diabolical or human, nor in anything which eludes the grasp of either philosophical and logical induction, or the syllogistic method of deduction. But if the corrupted and comparatively modern term of “magic” is understood to mean the higher study and knowledge of nature and deep research into her hidden

powers—those occult and mysterious laws which constitute the ultimate essence of every element, whether with the ancients we recognize but four or five, or with the moderns over sixty; or, again, if by magic is meant that ancient study within the sanctuaries known as the “worship of the Light,” or divine and spiritual wisdom as distinct from the worship of darkness or ignorance, which led the initiated High-priests of antiquity among the Âryans, Chaldaeans, Medes and Egyptians to be called *Maha*, *Magi* or *Maginsi*, and by the Zoroastrians *Meghistom* (from the root *Meh’al*, great, learned, wise)—then, we Theosophists “plead guilty.”

We do study that “Science of Sciences,” extolled by the Eclectics and Platonists of the Alexandrian Schools, and *practised* by the theurgists and the mystics of every age. If, magic gradually fell into disrepute, it was not because of its intrinsic worthlessness, but through misconception and ignorance of its primitive meaning, and especially the cunning policy of Christian theologians, who feared lest many of the phenomena produced *by* and *through* natural (though occult) law should give the direct lie to, and thus cheapen “Divine biblical miracle,” and so forced the people to attribute every manifestation that they could not comprehend, or explain—to the direct agency of a personal devil. As well accuse the renowned *Magi* of old, of having

had no better knowledge of divine truth and the hidden powers and possibilities of physical law than their successors, the uneducated Pârsî *Mobeds*, or the Hindu Mahârâjas of that shameless sect known as the Vallabhâchâryas, both of whom yet derive their appellation from the Persian word *Mog* or *Mag*, and the Sanskrit *Mahâ*. More than one glorious truth has thus tumbled down through human ignorance from the sublime into the ridiculous. Plato, and even the sceptical Lucian, both recognized the high wisdom and profound learning of the *Magi*; and Cicero, speaking of those who inhabited Persia of his times, calls them “*sapientium et doctorum genus majorum*.” And if so, we must evidently believe that these *Magi* or “Magicians” stood somewhat higher than the modern Maskelyns and Cooks—the style of *magicians* that were not such as London sees at a shilling a seat—or yet certain fraudulent Spiritual mediums. The science of such theurgists and philosophers as Pythagoras, Plotinus, Porphyry, Proclus, Bruno, Paracelsus and a host of other great men, has now fallen into disrepute. But, had our Brother Theosophist—Thomas Alva Edison, the inventor of the telephone and the phonograph, lived in the days of Galileo, he would have surely expiated on the rack or at the stake his sin of having found the means to fix on a soft surface of metal, and preserve for long years the sounds of human voice; for his talent would have been pronounced the gift of Hell. And yet, such an abuse of brute power to suppress truth would not have changed a scientific discovery into a foolish and disreputable superstition.

But our friend “A member” consenting to descend to our level in one point at least admits himself that in “Vedic learning and philosophy” the Ârya Samâj and the Theosophical Society are upon a common ground. Then, I have something to appeal to as

an authority which will be better still than the so-much-derided Magic, theurgy and Alchemy. It is the *Vedas* themselves: for “Magic” is brought in every line of the sacred books of the *Âryans*. Magic is indispensable for the comprehension of either of the six great schools of *Âryan* philosophy. And, it is precisely to understand

them and thus enable ourselves to bring to light the hidden *summum bonum* of that mother of all Eastern philosophies known as the *Vedas*, and the later Brâhmanical literature, that we study it. Neglect this study, and we, in common with all Europe, would have to set Max Müller’s interpretations of the *Vedas* far above those of Svami Dayânanda Sarasvatî, as given in his *Veda-Bhâshya*. And we would have to let the Anglo-German Sanskritist go uncontradicted, when he says that with the exception of the *Rig*, none other of the four sacred books is deserving of the name of *Veda*, especially *Atharva Veda* which is absurd magical nonsense, composed of sacrificial formulas, charms and incantations (see his “Lecture on the Vedas”).* This is, therefore, why, disregarding every misconception, we humbly beg to be allowed to follow the analytical method of such students and practitioners of “magic” as Kapila mentioned in the *Śvetâśvatara Upanishad*† as “the Rishi nourished with knowledge by the God himself”; Patañjali, the great authority of the Yogis, Śamkarâchârya of theurgic memory, and—even Zoroaster who certainly learned his wisdom from the initiated Brâhmins of *Âryavarta*. And we do not see why, for that, we should be held up to the world’s scorn, as either superstitious fools or hallucinated enthusiasts, by our own brother of the *Ârya Samâj*. I will say more: while the latter is, perhaps, in common with other “members” of the same *Samâj*, unable and perfectly helpless to defend Svami Dayânanda against the sophistry of such partial scoffers as a certain Pandit Mahesa Chandra Nyayaratna, of Calcutta, who would have us believe the *Veda-Bhâshya* a futile attempt at interpretation, we, Theosophists, do not shrink from assuming the burden. When the Svami affirms that Agni and *Îśvara* are identical, the Calcutta Pandit calls it “stuff.” To him Agni means the coarse, visible fire, with which one melts his ghee and cooks his rice cakes. Apparently he does not know, as he might, if he had studied “magic,” that is to say, had familiarized himself with the views about the divine fire or light, “whose

* [In his *Chips from a German Workshop*, Vol. I.—*Compiler*.]

† [Chapter V, verse 2.]

external body is flame,” held by the mediaeval Rosicrucians (the fire-philosophers) and all their initiated predecessors, and successors, that the Vedic Agni is in fact *Îśvara* and nothing else. The Svami makes no mistake when he says:

For Agni is all the deities and Vishnu is all the deities. For these two (divine) bodies, Agni and Vishnu, are the two ends of the sacrifice.

At one end of the ladder which stretches from heaven to earth is Îśvara—Spirit, Supreme Being, subjective, invisible and incomprehensible; at the other his visible manifestation, “sacrificial fire.”

So well has this been comprehended by every religious philosophy of antiquity that the enlightened Pârśî worships not gross flame but the divine Spirit within, of which it is the visible type; and even in the Jewish *Bible* there is the unapproachable Jehovah and his down-rushing fire which consumes the wood upon the altar and licks up the water in the trench about it (*I Kings*, xviii, 38). There also is the visible manifestation of God in the burning bush of Moses, and the Holy Ghost in the Gospels of Christians, descending like tongues of *flame* upon the heads of the assembled disciples on the day of Pentecost. There is not an esoteric philosophy or rather theosophy, which did not apprehend this deep spiritual idea, and each and all are traceable to the Vedic sacred books. Says the author of *The Rosicrucians* in his chapter on “The Nature of Fire,” and quoting R. Fludd, the mediaeval Theosophist and Alchemist:

Wonder no longer then, if [in the religions of the Aryans, Medes and Zoroastrians], rejected so long as an idolatry, the ancient Persians and their masters the Magi—concluding that they saw “All” in this supernaturally magnificent element [fire]—fell down and worshipped it; making of it the visible representation of the very truest, but yet, in man’s speculation, and in his philosophies—nay, in his commonest reason—impossible God; God being everywhere, and in us, and, indeed, *us*, in the God-lighted man; and impossible to be contemplated or known outside—being *All!**

* [H. Jennings, *op. cit.*, chapter X, p. 81, in 5th rev. ed., 1870.]

This is the teaching of the mediaeval Fire-Philosophers known as the Brothers of the Rosie-Cross, such as Paracelsus, Khunrath, Van Helmont, and that of all the Illuminati and Alchemists who succeeded these, and who claimed to have discovered the eternal Fire, or to have “found out God in the Immortal Light”—that Light whose radiance shone through the Yogis. The same author remarks of them:

Already, in their determined climbing unto the heights of thought, had these Titans of mind achieved, past the cosmical, through the shadowy borders of Real and Unreal, into Magic. For, is Magic wholly false?

—he goes on to ask. No; certainly not, when by magic is understood the higher study of divine, and yet *not* supernatural law, though the latter be, as yet, undiscovered by exact and materialistic science.

No more are the so-called Spiritualistic phenomena which are believed in by nearly twenty millions of well-educated, often highly enlightened and learned persons in Europe

and America, but mere hallucinations of a diseased brain. They are as real, and as well authenticated by the testimony of thousands of unimpeached witnesses, and as scientifically and mathematically proved as the latest discoveries of our Brother T. A. Edison. If the term “fool” is applicable to such men of science and giants of intellect of the two hemispheres, as W. Crookes, F.R.S., and Alfred Russel Wallace, F.R.S., the greatest naturalist of Europe and a successful rival of Darwin, and as Flammarion, the French Astronomer, Member of the Academy of Sciences of France, and Professor Zöllner, the celebrated Leipzig Astronomer and Physicist, and Professor Hare, the great chemist of America and many another no less eminent scientist, unquestioned authorities *upon any other question* but the so-called spiritual phenomena, and all firm spiritualists themselves, often converted only after years of careful investigation, then, indeed, we Theosophists would not find ourselves in bad company, and would deem it an honour to

* [H. Jennings, *op. cit.*, 1870, p. 83].

be called “fools” were we even firm orthodox spiritualists ourselves—*i.e.*, believers in perambulating ghosts and materialized *bhûts*—which we are not. But we are believers in the phenomena of the Spiritualists (even if we do doubt their “spirits”), for we happen to know them to be actual facts. It is one thing to reject unproved theory and quite another to battle against well-established facts. Everyone has a right to doubt until further and stronger evidence whether these modern phenomena which are inundating the Western countries, are *all* produced by disembodied “spirits,” for it happens to be hitherto a mere speculative doctrine raised up by enthusiasts; but no one is authorized—unless he can bring to contradict the fact, something better and weightier than the mere negations of sceptics, to deny that such phenomena do occur. If we, Theosophists (and a very small minority of us), disclaim the agency of “spirits” in such manifestations, it is because we can prove in most instances to the spiritualists, that many of their phenomena whether of physical or psychological nature, can be reproduced by some of our *adepts* at will, and without any aid of “spirits” or resort to either divine or diabolical miracle, but simply by developing the occult powers of the man’s *Inner Self* and studying the mysteries of nature. That European and American sceptics should deny such interference by spirits, and, as a consequence discredit the phenomena themselves, is no cause for wonder. Scarcely liberated from the clutches of the Church, whose terrible policy, barely a century ago, was to torture and put to death, every person who either doubted biblical, “divine” miracle, or endorsed one which theology declared diabolical, it is but the natural force of reaction which makes them revel in their new-found liberty of thought and action. One who denies the Supreme and the existence of his own soul is not likely to believe in either spirits or phenomena without abundant proof. But that Eastern people, Hindus especially of any sect, should disbelieve, is indeed an anomaly, considering that they all are taught the transmigration of souls, and spiritual as well as physical evolution. The sixteenth chapter of the Mahâbhârata, Harivanśa Parva,

is full of spiritual phenomena and the raising of spirits. And if, ashamed of the now termed “superstitions” of their forefathers, young India turns, sunflower-like, but to the great Luminaries of the West, this is what one of the most renowned men of Science of England, A. R. Wallace—a Fellow of the Royal as well as a member of the Theosophical Society—says of the phenomena in his *Contributions to the Theory of Natural Selection*, and *On Miracles and Modern Spiritualism*, thus confirming the belief of old India:

Up to the time when I first became acquainted with the facts of Spiritualism, I was a confirmed philosophical sceptic . . . I was so thorough and confirmed a materialist, that I could not at that time find a place in my mind for the conception of spiritual existence, or for any other agencies in the universe than matter and force. Facts, however, are stubborn things.

Having explained how he came to become a Spiritualist, he considers the spiritual theory and shows its compatibility with natural selection. Having, he says:

. . . been led, by a strict induction from facts, to a belief—firstly, in the existence of a number of preter-human intelligences of various grades; and secondly, that some of these intelligences, although usually invisible and intangible to us, can and do act on matter, and do influence our minds—I am surely following a strictly logical and scientific course, in seeing how far this doctrine will enable us to account for some of those residual phenomena which Natural Selection alone will not explain. In the tenth chapter of my *Contributions to the Theory of Natural Selection* I have pointed out what I consider to be some of these residual phenomena; and I have suggested that they may be due to the action of *some of the various intelligences above referred to*. I maintained, and still maintain, that this view is one which is logically tenable, and is in no way inconsistent with a thorough acceptance of the grand doctrine of evolution through Natural Selection.

Would not one think he hears in the above the voices of Manu, Kapila and many other philosophers of old India, in their teachings about the creation, evolution and growth of our planet and its living world of animal as well as human species? Does the great modern scientist speak less of “spirits” and spiritual beings than Manu, the antediluvian scientist and prehistoric legislator? Let young and

sceptical India read and compare the old Âryan ideas with those of modern mystics, theosophists, spiritualists, and a few great scientists, and then laugh at the *superstitious* theories of both.

For four years we have been fighting out our great battle against tremendous odds. We have been abused and called traitors by the spiritualists, for believing in other beings in the invisible world besides their departed spirits; we were cursed and sentenced to eternal damnation, with free passports to hell, by the Christians and their clergy; ridiculed by sceptics, looked upon as audacious lunatics by society, and tabooed by the conservative Press. We thought we had drunk to the dregs the bitter cup of gall. We had hoped that at

least in India, the country *par excellence* of psychological and metaphysical science, we would find firm ground for our weary feet. But lo! here comes a brother of ours who, without even taking the trouble to ascertain whether or not the rumours about us were true, makes haste to repudiate us in case we do believe in either Magic or Spiritualism! Well. We impose ourselves upon no one. For more than four years we lived and waxed in power if not in wisdom—which latter our humble deputation of Theosophists was sent to search for here, so that we might impart “Vedic learning and philosophy” to the millions of famished souls in the West, who are familiar with phenomena, but wrongly suffer themselves to be misled through their mistaken notions about *Ghosts* and *Bhûts*. But if we are to be repulsed at the outset by any considerable party of Ârya Samâjists, who share the views of “A Member,” then will the Theosophical Society, with its 45,000 or so of Western Spiritualists, have to become again a distinct and independent body, and do as well as it can without a single “member” to enlighten it on the absurdity of Spiritualism and Magic.

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Bombay, March, 1879.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

40

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

MADAME BLAVATSKY

[*Bombay Gazette*, Bombay, May 13, 1879]

To the Editor of the *Bombay Gazette*:

Sir,

On the very day of my return from a month's travel, I am shown by the American Consul two paragraphs, *viz.*, one in your paper of the 10th inst., which mentions me as the "Russian 'Baroness'," and one in the *Times of India* of the 8th, whose author had tried hard to be witty but only succeeded in being impertinent and calumnious. In this last paragraph I am referred to as a woman who called herself a "Russian Princess."

With the original and selected matter in your contemporary you, of course, have nothing to do. If the editor can find "amusing" such slanderous tomfooleries as the extract in question from the *Colonial Gazette and Star of India*, and risk a suit for libel for circulating defamations of a respectable scientific Society, and vilifying its honoured President, by calling him a "secret detective"—an outrageous *lie*, by the way—that is not your affair. My present business is to take the *Gazette* to task for thrusting upon my unwilling republican head the Baronial coronet. Know please, once for all, that I am neither "Countess," "Princess," nor even a modest "Baroness," whatever I may have been before last July. At that time I became a plain citizen of the U.S. of America—a title I value far more than any that could be conferred on me by King or Emperor. Being this I could be nothing else, if I wished; for, as everyone knows, had I been even a princess of the royal blood before, once that my oath of allegiance was pronounced, I forfeited every claim to titles of nobility. Apart

HARICHANDRA CHINTAMON

41

from this notorious fact, my experience of things in general, and peacocks' feathers in particular, has led me to acquire a positive contempt for titles, since it appears that outside the boundaries of their own Fatherlands, Russian princes, Polish counts, Italian marquises, and German barons are far more plentiful *inside* than *outside* the police precincts. Permit me further to state—if only for the edification of the *Times of India* and a brood of snarling little papers, searching around after the garbage of journalism—that I have never styled myself aught but what I can prove myself to be—namely, an *honest* woman, now a citizen of America, my adopted country, and the only land of *true* freedom in the whole world.

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Bombay, May 12.

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**

1879

HARICHANDRA CHINTAMON

[*Native Opinion*, May 25, 1879. Copied from H. P. B.'s *Scrapbook*,
Vol. III, pp. 235-36; formerly IV, p. 101]

Sir,—In compliance with your request of April 2nd to inform you of the total amount of money sent by order of the Council, from New York, by our Society to the Ârya Samaj, I beg leave to inform you of the following:

Since August 1878 Mr. Harichandra Chintamon, then President of the Ârya Samaj of Bombay, has acknowledged the receipt of Rs. 609-3-4 in a bill and receipts which I hold at your disposal.

Moreover, as you will find in the copies (herewith enclosed) from his original accounts, when called by me to either deliver the said sum to the Samaj or return it to myself, who, as Secretary of the Theosophical Society and Treasurer, since my departure from America, of the funds of the Society, was the responsible party in all such accounts. Mr. Harichandra Chintamon deducted from the said sum

42

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

of Rs. 609-3-4, 53 rupees and 12 annas for the following expenditures to Ârya Samaj:

	Rs.	a.
Postage per letters written by him to America	15	0
Telegram to New York addressed by him to me	26	4
Hire of chairs for the meeting of the Samaj	12	8
after our arrival in Bombay		
Total	53	12

As to the list of things, that were given by the New York Theosophists to Mr. Harichandra Chintamon as President of the Samaj, they desired to join, I can only satisfy you as to those things that I handed to him personally. There were photographic portraits of fellows both of America and England who had sent their likeness to their brothers of the Ârya Samaj and had all written on the back of the cards to that effect, professing their faith and signing their names. If I mistake not, there were five or six of these, namely D. H. J. Billing, Mrs. Billing, C. C. Massey, President of the London Branch, Rev. Dr. Ayton, Palmer Thomas, W. Q. Judge and a few others which were sent from America. Also, a large gold and turquoise cover with five musical pieces, to place therein the photographic cards of all the *fellows* of the Ârya Samaj was brought by one from America and presented to Mr. Harichandra Chintamon *for the Samaj*. But, as I had the imprudence never dreaming that his name would be struck off so soon, as president and then member of our Samaj—to have engraved upon the plate of the Album not the name of the Ârya Samaj but that of its

president as follows:

“Harichandra Chintamon
from
H. P. B.”

Legally he has the right to keep it, notwithstanding that when delivering it to him on the first day of our arrival, in the presence of Colonel Olcott and others I distinctly stated that the Album was for the Samaj to place in it the likenesses of its Western Members, some of whom had already

forwarded with me their portraits and greetings to their Eastern Brothers.

I have no doubt thought, that if called upon to deliver the Album to those for whom it was originally intended, Mr. Harichandra Chintamon will give it up, unless he desires to furnish an additional proof to the world how right was the Samaj to expel him from the midst of its members. I cannot yet believe, that for the sake of getting final possession of an object hardly worth 75 dollars, anyone calling himself a gentleman would ever condescend to do such a thing *legally*. I repeat it again—he has a right to it; but, if he avails himself of this right, then it will remain with us American Theosophists to regret the more, that we should ever have placed our confidence and given our brotherly affection to one so little worthy of it.

Believe in the meanwhile,
Yours respectfully,
H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

BUDDHIST PRIESTS AND THE TITLE “REVEREND”

[*The Madras Times*, May 28, 1879. Copied from H.P.B.'s *Scrapbook*, Vol. III, pp. 234-35; formerly, Vol. IV, p. 100a.]

TO THE EDITOR,

Sir,—My writing is prompted by the legitimate curiosity of a foreigner, who is studying the value of English words and their relative meaning in more ancient languages. It was aroused in me upon reading in your influential paper of May 2nd the notice of our President Olcott's recent address in Framjee Cowasjee Hall, Bombay, upon the Theosophical Society and its *Rules*. Will you then kindly help me out of my present difficulty, and, unlike your Anglo-Indian police, which would perversely see in this great thirst for learning only a coming search after forbidden information in the interests of Russia—relieve my perplexity by explaining what follows?

44

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

The writer of the learned notice—or shall I rather say criticism?—in which his first mistake is calling Theosophy a *religion*, whereas it is but an analytical science—becomes rather facetious over the application of the title “Reverend” to the names of our two respected Sinhalese members of the general council, the Rev. H. Sumangala and the Rev. Mohottiwatte Gunananda. “They look queer,” he remarks, “to say the least, when decked in *Christian prefixes*” (the italics are mine). He wants to know what his “right reverendship,” the Bishop of Lincoln, “would say to the yellow-robed, shaven-headed, and bare-shouldered priests of Gautama Buddha being so described.”

I do sincerely hope that his “Right Reverendship,” unless he has quite forgotten his Johnson, and never consulted Webster, would have very little, if anything, to say about it. Unless the world at large, and the two great lexicographers in particular, have all this time been labouring under a delusion, the title of Reverend is derived from the Latin *reverere*, “to regard one with fear mingled with respect and affection” (Webster); or, perhaps Coleridge comes nearer to the mark in saying that “reverence” is “the synthesis of love and fear.” However this may be, I want to be informed whether this title is, in fact, purely a “Christian prefix” and why the yellow-robed, shaven-headed, and bare-shouldered priests of Lakya Muni have not as legitimate a right to it, whether in their own language or in English, as the black-robed, tonsured and surpliced “Lamas of Jehovah” (see Abbé Huc's *Travels in Thibet*)* and other *padris* of the multitudinous sects of Christendom. The Jews—to quote the immortal rejoinder of a Californian John Chinaman—“killed the *joss* of the Christians,” and yet no bigoted newspaper, clergyman or layman has ever questioned

the right of Jewish *rabbis* to the title of “Reverend.”

The etymological side of the question being thus disposed of, it then appears to me that the priest of any religion, whether Buddhist, Hindoo, Mussulman or any other,

* *Souvenirs d'un voyage dans la Tartarie, le Thibet, et la Chine pendant les années 1844, 1845, et 1846.* Paris, 1850; 2 vols.—Engl. tr by W. Hazlitt, 1851.—*Compiler.*]

may, with equal propriety be given this prefix, provided, always, he *inspires and deserves* the synthetic feeling of reverential awe and affection. *Vice versa* no cassocked or white-cravated priest or *padri* can be made “reverend” by simply affixing the title, if his secret life is one that shames morality and outrages common decency. Therefore, as we have yet to learn that our Brothers in Theosophy, Messrs. Sumangala and M. Gunananda, are less worthily styled “reverend” than the highest among the Christian clergy, we beg leave to protest against this insult. Let our critic, if he can, prove by the statistics of Ceylon, that that “spicy” isle has ever been the theatre of such disgraceful clerical crimes among the “heathen” and such shameful trials as have of late years rung throughout Christian America, not to say all Christendom. I need not go outside the law courts for statistics. Liar, embezzler, adulterer, poisoner, forger, seducer, incendiary, hypocrite—these are the “affixes” which the law has branded upon foreheads of many Christian clergymen. I have made a collection of newspaper cuttings, the last three years, and speak by the book.

I would like to know, therefore, if you will kindly ask the Bishop of Lincoln, whose feelings you seem so afraid of hurting, whether by the test of any morality whatever, New Testament included, our two Sinhalese exemplars of the noble ethics of *Ākya Muni*, are, in the opinion of his “right reverendship,” less worthy of reverence than, for instance—the American Rev. H. W. Beecher, who was proved adulterer and perjurer, and only saved from prison by a disagreement of the jury, under the pressure of the cleverest counsel in America. Or than the “right reverend” Samuel MacCroskey, Episcopal Bishop of Michigan, who last year seduced his thirteen-year old adopted daughter. Or, again, the “reverend” Mr. Hayden, who tried to conceal his crime of seduction and adultery, by cutting the throat of his paramour and disembowelling her. Or, as perhaps the noble Bishop takes exception to methodist and other nonconformist clergymen being called “reverend,” I had better submit for his decision the most recent case of the “*Very Right Reverend*” Roman Catholic Archbishop Purcell, who, in

league with his brother Edward, also a “reverend”—has just stolen six million dollars (Rs. 1,20,00,000) from the poor fund of his diocese? Last week’s mail, also, brings us word that

the “reverend” T. de Witt Talmage, of Brooklyn—long recognized by the majority of the American press as the rankest blasphemer and most catch-penny montebank that ever trod pulpit (and yet lately the honored host of the poet Martin Farquhar Tupper)—is now on trial before the Presbytery for alleged “lying, stealing, forgery, and deceiving his congregation.” But enough; the Bishop ought not to ask for more excerpts from my scrapbooks.

So, gently, if you please, our critic. Come outside your own crystal palace before throwing the hard rocks of your wit at “yellow-robed, shaven-headed, bare-shouldered ‘reverends,’ ” or even heathen Theosophists.

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Corresponding Secretary of the Theosophical Society.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

[ON THE INFALLIBILITY OF THE JEWISH SCRIPTURES]

[The second sentence in the following fragment in H.P.B.'s handwriting found in the Adyar Archives, is evidence that it belongs to the material which was eventually to become *The Secret Doctrine*. The year 1879 is mentioned somewhat later in this fragment. Although H.P.B.'s *magnum opus* did not see the light until 1888, she actually "broke ground" for it on May 23rd, 1879, as appears from Col. Olcott's *Diaries* also in the Adyar Archives. Between May 25 and June 4, 1879, some work was done on preparing a Preface to the new work which, at the time, was to be a "recasting" of *Isis Unveiled*. For these reasons, the following fragment has been placed in this particular chronological sequence.—*Compiler*.]

"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven," once said a great philosopher. If my first work *Isis* appeared "half a century too early" according to a benevolent critic, everything warrants the belief that this one will prove timely. Ours is no century of

INFALLIBILITY OF JEWISH SCRIPTURES

47

impregnable religious strongholds, of immovable idols, or of infallibility beyond appeal. Hardly born, it witnessed the downfall of that celestial slaughter house—the "Holy Inquisition," abolished in 1808, and which had terrorised Christendom for nearly seven hundred years; and now, in its 79th period, the authority of the hitherto infallible "Word of God" undermined at its very foundation, and by the hand of its own Anglican Sanhedrin, is tottering toward annihilation.* The Divine Revelation is made subservient to [MS. breaks off here].

* The public judgment cannot be blinded by any amount of sophistry like the following.

"To readers . . . who dread the consequences of the slightest relaxation of the absolute verbal infallibility of the Old Testament . . . we hope that we may without presumption address a few words to allay their alarm. Most earnestly would we urge them to remember, that the questions answered by the 'Commentary' in a sense which is obnoxious to them, lie entirely within the boundaries of the Christian faith, and touch not an article of the Creed, nor a doctrine of Christianity, nor a formulary of our Church. Decide them whichever way we will, the whole fabric of divine truth remains exactly as it was, unimpaired and complete." (*Quarterly Review*, *supra*, p. 334.)

So we are asked to believe, that after destroying the miraculous character of the Egyptian works of Moses; the *verbatim* accuracy of his pretended commands from God; the predictive significance of the utterances of the prophets as concerns the coming of Christ, all which have for centuries been paraded as the very foundations upon which Christian theology rests, still remains "unimpaired and complete." It will go hard with these apologists of a supernumerary faith to satisfy the unbiased critic that when so much hitherto declared divine revelation is tossed to the winds a shred of infallibility or divinity is left. All can see, that with them as with Hamlet "To be or not to be—that is the question." Fancy the upper portion of a house sustaining itself in

mid-air, after the lower story and foundation have been taken away!

[In H.P.B.'s *Scrapbook*, Vol. VIII, p. 278, there is pasted an "Important Notice" dated June, 1879, and signed by Swâmi Dayânanda Saraswatî. In the last portion of it he gives information concerning Harichand Chintaman (Harichandra Chintamon), who received large sums of money and disappeared. H.P.B. appended to this the following comments:]

Expelled publicly from the T.S. for embezzling Rs. 600 of the money sent by us from America and England for the Arya Samaj. Ran away to England secretly after thus carrying away Rs. 4,000 of Dya Nand Saraswati.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

THE THEOSOPHISTS AND THEIR OPPONENTS

[*The Amrita Bazaar Patrika*, Calcutta, June 13, 1879]

Sir,

I pray you to give me, in your Calcutta paper, space enough to reply to the mendacious comments of one of your religious neighbours upon the Theosophical Society. The *Indian Christian Herald*, in the number of April 4th (which unhappily has just now reached my eye), with a generosity peculiar to religious papers, filled two pages with pious abuse of our Society as a body. I gather from it, moreover, that the *Friend of India* had previously gone out of its way to vilify the Society, since the former paper observes that “the Theosophical Society has merited the epithets employed about it by the *Friend of India*.”

To my everlasting confusion be it said, that I am guilty of the crime of not only never reading, but even so much as laying my eyes upon that last named veteran organ. Nor can any of our Theosophists be charged with abusing the precious privilege of reading the missionary journals, a considerable time having elapsed since each of us was weaned, and relinquished milk and water pap. Not that we shirk the somniferous task under the spur of necessity. Were not the proof of our present writing itself sufficient, I need only cite the case of the Bombay missionary organ, the *Dnyanodaya*, which, on the 17th ultimo, infamously libelled us, and on the 25th was forced by Col. Olcott’s solicitor, Mr.

Turner, to write an ample apology in order to avoid a criminal prosecution for defamation of character. We regret now to see that while the truly good and pious writer of the *Herald* was able to rise to the level of Billingsgate, he would not (or *dared* not?) climb to the height of actionable slander. Truly prudence is a great virtue!

Confronted, as we all have so often been, with the intolerant bigotry—religious “zeal” they call it—and puerile anathemas of the clerical “followers of the meek and lowly Jesus,” no Theosophist is surprised to find the peas from the *Herald* shooter rattling against his armour. It adds to the clatter, but no one is mortally hurt. And, after all, how natural, that the poor fellows who try to administer spiritual food to the benighted heathen much after the fashion of the Strassburg goose-fatteners, who thrust balls of meal down the throats of the captive birds, unmasticated, to swell their livers, should shake at the intrusion of Europeans who are ready to analyse for the heathen these scripture-balls they are asked to grease with blind faith and swallow without chewing! People like us, who would have the effrontery to claim for the “heathen” the same right to analyse the Bible, as the Christian clergy claim to analyse and even revile the sacred scriptures of other people, must of course be put down. And the very *Christian Herald* tries his hand. “Let us,” it says “without any

bias or prejudice reflect . . . about the Theosophical Society.” To profess “such a mortal hatred[?] for Christianity and its divine Founder, bespeaks of a moral degradation . . . scarcely equalled. . . .” The Theosophists “stultify and disgrace themselves by their unnatural pretensions and blasphemous statements. . . .” No one “can undertake to describe the moral degradation of persons [the Buddhist, Âryan, Jain, Pârsî, Hebrew and Mussulman Theosophists, included?] who can see nothing good in the Bible . . . “ and who “ought to remember that the Bible is not only a blessed book, but *our* book”!!

The latter piece of presumptuous conceit cannot be allowed to pass unnoticed. Before I answer the preceding invectives I mean to demand a clear definition of this last

sentence, “our Book.” Whose Book? The *Herald’s*? “Our” must mean that; for the seven thick volumes of the *Speaker’s Commentary* on the Old Testament* show, that the possessive pronoun and the singular noun in question can no longer be used by Christians when speaking of the Bible. So numerous and glaring have been the mistakes and *mistranslations* detected by the forty divines of the Anglican Church, during their seven years’ revision of the Old Testament, that the London *Quarterly Review* (No. 294, April, 1879), the organ of the most extreme orthodoxy, is driven in despair to say: “The time has certainly passed when the *whole* Bible could be practically esteemed *a single book*, miraculously communicated in successive portions from heaven, put into writing no doubt by human hands, but at the dictation of the divine spirit.”

So we see beyond question that if it is anybody’s “Book” it must be the *Indian Christian Herald’s*; for, in fact, its editors add: “We feel it to be no more a collection of books, but *the* book.”

But here is another bitter pill for your contemporary. “The words,” it says in a pious gush, “which had come from the prophets of the despised Israel have been the life-blood of the world’s devotion”; but the inexorable *Quarterly* reviewer, after reluctantly abandoning to the analytical scalpels of Canon Cook and Bishop Harold Browne the Mosaic miracles whose supernatural character is no longer affirmed, but allowed to be “natural phenomena,” turns to the pretended Old Testament prophecies of Christ, and sadly says: “in the poetical (Psalms and Songs) and the prophetic books *especially* the number of corrections is enormous”; and shows how the commentators upon Isaiah and the other so-called prophets have reluctantly admitted that the timeworn verses which have been made to serve as predictive

* *The Bible, according to the authorized version (A.D. 1611) with an explanatory and critical commentary and a revision of the translation, by bishops and other clergy of the Anglican Church.* Edited by F. C. Cook, M.A., Canon of Exeter, Preacher at Lincoln’s Inn, Chaplain in Ordinary to the Queen. Vols. I—VI. The Old Testament. London, 1871—1876.

of Christ have in truth no such meaning! “It requires,” he says, “an effort to break the association, and to realize *how much less* they (the prophecies) *must have meant at first, to the writers themselves*. But it is just this that the critical expositor is bound to do . . . for this, some courage is required, for the result is apt to seem like a disenchantment for the worse, a descent to an inferior level, a profanation of the paradise in which ardent souls have found spiritual sustenance and delight.” (Such “souls” as the *Herald* editor’s?) What wonder, then, that the explosion of these seven theological torpedoes—as the seven volumes of the *Speaker’s Commentary* may truly be called—should force the reviewer into saying: “To us, we confess, every attempt to place the older Scriptures on the same supreme pinnacle on which the New Testament stands, leads inevitably to a disparagement of the later Revelation”?

The *Herald* is welcome to what is left of its “Book.”

How childishly absurd it was then of the *Herald* to make a whole Society the scapegoat for the sins of one individual! It is now universally known that the Society comprises fellows of many nationalities and many different religious faiths; and that its Council is made up of the representatives of these faiths. Yet the *Herald* endorses the falsehood that the Society’s principles are “a strange compound of Paganism and Atheism,” and its creed, “a creed as comprehensive as it is incomprehensible.” What other answer does this calumny require than the fact that our president has publicly declared that it had “no creed to offer for the world’s acceptance,” and that in the VIIIth Article of the Society’s *Rules*—appended to the printed Address—in an enumeration of the plans of the Society, the first paragraph says that it aims “to keep alive in man his belief that he has a soul, and the Universe a God.” If this is a “compound of Paganism and Atheism,” then let the *Herald* make the most of it.

But the Society is not the real offender; the clerical stones are thrown into *my* garden. The *Herald’s* quotation of an expression used by me in commenting upon a passage of Sir John Kaye’s *History of the Sepoy War*, making the

Friend of India and Co. primarily responsible for that bloody tragedy, shows the whole animus. It was I who said (see *Indian Spectator*, March 2nd), that “India owes everything to the British Government and not to Christianity”—*i.e.*, to missionaries. I may have lost my “senses outright,” as the *Indian Christian Herald* politely remarks, but I think I have enough left to see through the inane sophistries which they make do duty for arguments.

We have only to say to the *Herald* the following: (1) It is just because we do live in “an age of enlightenment and progress,” in which there is or should be room for every form of belief, that such Augustinian tirades as the *Herald’s* are out of place. (2) We have *not* a “mortal hatred for Christianity and its Divine Founder”;—for the tendency of the Society is to emancipate its fellows from all hatred or preference for any one exoteric form of religion, *i.e.*, with more of the human than divine element in it—over another (see rules); neither can we hate a “Founder” whom the majority of us do not believe to have ever existed. (3) To

“retain” a “reverence for the Bible” one must at some time have had it; and if our own investigations had not long since convinced us that the Bible was no more the “Word of God” than half a dozen other holy Books, the present conclusions of the Anglican divines—at least as far as the Old Testament is concerned—would have removed the last vestige of doubt upon that point. And besides sundry American clergymen and Bishops, we have among our Fellows a vicar of the Church of England, who is one of its most learned antiquarians. (4) The assertion that the “pure monotheism of the *Vedas* is a pure myth”—is a pure falsehood—besides being an insult to Max Müller and other Western Orientalists who have proved the fact, to say nothing of that great Âryan scholar, preacher and reformer, Svâmi Dyanand Sarasvati.

“Degraded humanity” that we are, there must be indeed “something radically wrong and corrupt” in our “moral nature,” for, we confess to a joy at seeing our Society constantly growing from accessions of some of the most influential laymen of different countries. And it moreover

delights us to think that when we reach the bottom of the ditch we will have as bed-fellows half the Christian clergy, if the *Speaker's Commentary* makes as sad havoc with the divinity of the New Testament as it has with that of the Old. “How” exclaims our Indian Christian Pecksniff in righteous indignation, “how they managed to sink so low in the scale of moral and spiritual being must be a sadly interesting study for metaphysicians?”

Sad indeed; but sadder still to reflect that unless the editors of the *Indian Christian Herald* are protected by post-mortem fire insurance policies, they are in danger themselves of eternal torment. . . .

“Whosoever shall say to his brother, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire,” says Lord Jesus, “the Desire of nations,” in *Matthew*, v, 22, unless—dreadful thought!—this verse should be also found a mistranslation.

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Corresponding Secretary of the Theosophical Society.

N.B.—We insert the above letter with great reluctance. The subject matter of the letter is not fit for our columns and we have no sympathy with those who attack the religious creed of other men. The matter of fact is, a Calcutta paper attacks a body of men, and the latter are thrown at a great disadvantage if they are not allowed an opportunity by another paper of replying to the attack. It is from that feeling alone that we have given place to the above letter.—Ed. *Amrita Bazaar Patrika*.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

54

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF THE *INDU PRAKASH*

[Reprinted in *The Pioneer*, Allahabad, June 28, 1879]

MADAME H. P. BLAVATSKY writes as follows to the editor of the *Indu Prakash*:

“Ever since my arrival here, in February, with an hospitality and persistence worthy of a better cause, I have been hailed by every class of society as a secret emissary of the Russian government—a ‘spy,’ to call things by their proper names. And yet, so poorly informed am I by the authorities of my native country of the ways and doings of the Russian police, that, in my ardent curiosity, I have now to apply to you for help. Will you kindly put your head together with mine to try and ‘guess’ who may possibly be a certain mysterious individual who has recently appeared in Russia? He calls himself a ‘prince of India,’ and provoking the greatest curiosity in the general public is, at the same time, received as an honoured guest by the St. Petersburg ‘court’ —though, as I am informed, *secretly*. This is what one of the numerous papers I received says of him, mentioning his arrival. I translate *verbatim*: . . . ‘A few days ago, arrived at Moscow, on his way from Petersburg to Samara, the Hindustani Prince Ramchander Balajee of Bhattor. Colonel and Aide-de-Camp on the general staff the Count N. Y. Rostovtzeff has been placed at the orders of the prince, and now forms a part of his numerous suite.’ Who is this prince? He evidently belongs to the native place, if he is not actually of kin to the famous Nana Sahib, of course. Though news for your readers, this piece of information will be stale for the omniscient police of India, who, for instance, have discovered in a twinkling of the eye that I was a dangerous Russian spy. They must certainly know all about this mirific prince. How provoking, then, that they will not tell!”

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**
1879

MADAME BLAVATSKY

55

MADAME BLAVATSKY

[*The Spiritualist*, London, July 11, 1879, p. 24]

SIR,—Be so kind as to make room in your next issue for this indignant protest of mine. Speaking of me in your leading article of May 23rd, and entitled “Theosophic Thaumaturgy,” I am mentioned as the “Countess” Blavatsky. Allow me to state, once for ever, that such is not my title, nor can I concede the right to include in the long list of vices I may be possibly endowed with that of a *parvenu*’s vanity. My family, on both sides, is quite ancient enough and noble enough to have transmitted to me too much pride to leave room for any petty feeling of vanity. I had to protest against this title while I was in America; have protested against it at another time in *La Revue Spirite* of Paris; and have just published in the *Bombay Gazette* of May 13th a third protest, stating that, for reasons sufficiently specified, and not wholly disconnected with American citizenship, my name is simply

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Bombay, June 12th.

[The expression “Countess Blavatsky” was taken from the Indian newspapers.—ED.]

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

56

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

RÉPONSE DÉFINITIVE D'UNE THÉOSOPHE À M. ROSSI DE JUSTINIANI

[*La Revue Spirite*, Paris, Septembre 1879]

L'article intitulé: «Dernières Réflexions d'un Oriental», qui m'est adressé dans le numéro de juin de *La Revue Spirite*, exige une réponse. Secrétaire correspondant de la Société Théosophique, il est de mon devoir, pour les raisons ci-dessous mentionnées, de relever le gant jeté à notre Société; surtout, lorsque l'une de nos doctrines est qualifiée «*d'erreur grave, triste et funeste dans ses conséquences*».

Notre Société s'est fait connaître d'un bout du monde à l'autre, mais ses statuts et articles de foi sont totalement inconnus au public.

J'en cite deux, que je traduis à peu près *verbatim*.

«1. Toute personne désirant de se faire accepter comme membre, doit, avant son initiation, signer un document (*a pledge of secrecy*), par lequel elle s'oblige, sur sa *parole d'honneur*, de garder le silence sur les *expériences scientifiques* de conseil, qu'elles soient du domaine physique ou psychologique, de ne les révéler à personne en dehors de la Société, à moins que la permission ne lui en soit donnée par le conseil suprême. 2. Tout membre jurera de défendre l'honneur de la Fraternité, ainsi que celui du plus pauvre et insignifiant de ses membres, aussi longtemps que ce dernier le méritera, et-cela, en cas de nécessité, au risque de la fortune et même *de la vie* du défenseur».

C'est au nom de notre Société entière que je réponds aux réflexions de M. de Justiniani, ce n'est pas à lui que nous répondons, mais bien au parti qu'il semble représenter, et qui, à en juger par les susdites «Réflexions» serait, si nous

RÉPONSE DÉFINITIVE

57

n'avions la preuve du contraire, *extrême* dans son intolérance et—qu'on nous pardonne l'expression—*fanatique* dans ses croyances. Envisageant la Société Théosophique à son point de vue, il juge notre philosophie, celle des *Védas*, par les renseignements qu'il a pu obtenir de l'occultisme traditionnel et oriental des «Mages et des Derviches» de son pays *islamisé* depuis des siècles; je ne m'étonne pas de voir M. de Justiniani traiter «Kapila, Patañjali, Kanâda, et tous les hiérophantes réunis» de l'Inde antique et moderne, avec un dédain aussi suprême. Celui qui n'a pas dans le cœur l'amour de l'humanité entière, amour qui n'a pas à considérer les différences de religions et de races, ne sympathisera jamais avec nous; s'il fait partie d'un corps social religieux, ou philosophique, et ne s'occupe que des seuls intérêts de la propagation de ses doctrines à lui; s'il les place au-dessus de toutes les

autres et cherche toujours à convertir l'univers entier à ses croyances spéciales, il ne peut rendre justice aux croyances d'autrui; tel est le Christianisme qui, se figeant dans le dogme, arrêta tout progrès scientifique pendant de longs siècles; ainsi encore, procéda l'Islamisme. Si le Spiritisme avait, parmi ses défenseurs, une majorité qui pensât comme l'auteur des «*Dernières Réflexions*»—il pourrait agir de même.

M. R. de Justiniani ne fait pas exception à cette règle, cela est évident; tout en confessant ne rien connaître «aux système de l'*Aryâvarta*», il tient néanmoins à prouver qu'ils ne valent rien. *La Science des magiciens* (?) anciens et modernes, s'éclipse devant une seule expérience spiritualiste de l'éminent M. Crookes! Sait-il seulement que cet illustre savant, tout en croyant aux phénomènes de la matérialisation, autant que les théosophes qui comptent dans leurs rangs des hommes de mérites placés plus haut dans la hiérarchie de la *Société Royale de Londres*, qui ont vu des «Katie Kings» se matérialiser par douzaines, sait-il que cette grande autorité des Spiritualistes doute que ce soient les «*Esprits*» qui président au phénomènes de la matérialisation? . . . il faut de longs siècles à une vérité démontrée pour être acceptée et devenir le patrimoine commun si elle heurte les préjugés et contredit les superstitions populaires;

par contre, tout paradoxal que soit un sophisme, il sera toujours reçu à bras ouverts, s'il flatte les idées préconçues et l'idole chérie des masses.

M. de Justiniani connaît-il seulement le *modus operandi* employé par les théosophes lorsqu'il s'agit de phénomènes et d'investigations suivies? Est-il bien renseigné sur ce que nous acceptons et sur ce que nous rejetons? Nos idées sur la valeur du témoignage collectif et corroboratif, en fait de phénomènes, lui sont-elles familières? Il nous sera bien permis d'en douter, puisqu'il cherche à impressionner le lecteur avec cette idée que les théosophes n'ont qu'une «*philosophie spéculative qui a fait son temps*», et que, ne pouvant fournir *des faits*, nous les remplaçons par *un système*; il a cette idée originale qu'on peut «croire à Dieu, aux Esprits, à la vie future, sans cesser pour cela d'être *positiviste*»(?), «qu'un *fait* quel qu'il soit doit, avant tout, être mis dans la balance de l'expérience, pesé, touché, obtenu plusieurs fois pour être admis sans conteste». — Ces réflexions nous font supposer que M. R. de Justiniani a trouvé quelque part les règlements de la Société Théosophique, puisqu'il cite deux de ses articles.

Sans contredire ces axiomes, que nous prêchons depuis quatre ans, nous ferons observer à notre contradicteur qu'il se place sur un terrain dangereux, autant pour lui-même, que pour le parti qu'il veut représenter. «*Mutato nomine, de te fabula narratur*». Les théosophes n'ont que faire de ces reproches, et certains spirites et spiritualistes crédules peuvent se les appliquer.

Commentons ses dernières réflexions: Il est un peu difficile, de concilier l'idée du «*Positivisme*» avec la croyance «*en Dieu, aux Esprits*» et «*à la vie future*». À l'exception du fameux *Catéchisme positiviste* d'Auguste Comte, nulle part nous n'avons trouvé rien d'aussi paradoxal. Un illustre savant Anglais surnomma un jour la nouvelle religion des

positivistes le «Catholicisme romain moins—le Christianisme»; et voilà, qu'on nous prêche maintenant, une vie future, que les savants pourront analyser au creuset, et un «Dieu» qu'ils dissoudraient et cristalliseraient *ad gustum*! Le Positivisme étant diamétralement l'opposé du

Spiritualisme, n'admet rien en dehors des sciences physiques et positives, il n'accepte que les faits constatés; je ne pense pas que, parmi les spirites, ceux qui ont des croyances poétiques, une doctrine abstraite et mystérieuse, consentent à dégrader leur consolante philosophie, en la plaçant au nombre des sciences physiques et positives. Toute philosophie, qu'elle s'appelle Spiritisme, Christianisme, Bouddhisme, ou Occultisme, doit nécessairement contenir des idées qui dépassent le domaine des faits *physiquement* démontrés, *théories*, qui, toutes logiques qu'elles soient, sont encore composées d'hypothèses et même de généralisations, en elles-mêmes plus que suffisantes pour les exclure à jamais du domaine des sciences positives. Notre estimable contradicteur oublie que ce sont précisément les sciences exactes, la géologie entre autres, qui ont donné le coup de grâce au Christianisme surnaturel avec tous ses miracles, et ce n'était point, je pense, pour tendre les bras grands ouverts au Spiritualisme.

Donc, théorie pour théorie, système pour système, les idées des théosophes ont autant de droit à une place au soleil que celles des spirites et des spiritualistes. La seule différence qui existe entre nous, c'est que les spirites tels que M. de Justiniani se font esclaves de dogmes et d'idées préconçues et peuvent arrêter tout progrès possible dans les sciences psychologiques.

Les théosophes qui «n'ont ni dogmes ni doctrines nouvelles à offrir» (statuts et lois de la Société) aident à ce progrès autant qu'il est en leur pouvoir, «*ce sont de simples chercheurs, des investigateurs qui acceptent toute vérité démontrée*».

Les «réflexions» de notre adversaire n'encouragent guère les théosophes, dont quelques uns ont eu l'honneur dernièrement, d'être admis par la «Société scientifique d'Études psychologiques» au nombre de ses membres honoraires—à aider leur F.E.C. dans leurs recherches. M. de Justiniani qui ne connaît pas les «sublimes conceptions de Kapila . . . et Gautama . . . philosophes indous», accuse, néanmoins, leurs descendants modernes, nos chefs indiens, «de faire fausse route en voulant imiter, en plain dix-neuvième siècle, les mystères de Cérès, d'Éleusines ou ceux de l'ancre de

Trophonius», les théosophes n'ont pas l'habitude de discuter, de nier ou de *critiquer* soit un système, un fait, ou une organisation scientifique qu'il n'ont pas étudié à fond. Ne croyant à rien *a priori*, mais en même temps admettant la *possibilité* des faits les plus merveilleux dans la nature; étudiant, cherchant, comparant tous les systèmes toutes les philosophies,

comme toutes les opinions, sans jamais en rejeter aucune avant de l'avoir parfaitement comprise et analysée, ils n'acceptent *rien* au nom de la *foi*, pas même les assertions de «l'éminent M. Crookes, de la Société Royale»; ils ne se rendent à l'évidence, que quand la science expérimentale leur a expliqué un phénomène *rationnellement*. Cependant, comme la science *positive* ne peut jamais aller au-delà de son domaine limité par nos sens physiques, elle se trouve condamnée à tourner éternellement à l'instar de l'écureuil sur sa roue, autour du fait physiquement démontré, tout en ayant réussi à prouver à l'aide de batteries électriques et autres appareils scientifiques, la réalité palpable du corps temporairement matériel de Miss Katie King. M. Crookes, malgré toute son éminence, a été, jusqu'ici, incapable de nous prouver d'une manière concluante que l'âme de cette belle fille de l'Air appartenait à la classe des Esprits des incarnés plutôt qu'à celle des sylphes sublunaires; aux «anges» des spiritualistes et non aux «diables» de M. de Mirville; la question reste «*adhuc sub judice lis est*» comme on le dit en cour.*

Nous nous proposons de prouver dans notre prochain article que les oracles sortis de «l'ancre de Trophonius» moderne sont capable parfois de rivaliser avec ceux des médiums, et même les surpasser à l'occasion. Pour le moment il est temps de clore cette épître par trop longue déjà; c'est ce que nous faisons, en ajoutant ces quelques mots. Sûrs que nous sommes de trouver la grande majorité de nos lecteurs spirites moins intolérants, et surtout moins enclins à critiquer ce dont ils ne savent pas le premier mot, nous nous empresserons de leur faire part du résultat de nos dernières études et recherches aux Indes. Les merveilles

* [Meaning: "the dispute is still with the judge; it is not yet decided." It occurs in Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 78.—*Compiler.*]

que l'on y voit, ne sont que faiblement dessinées par L.J.* dans ses expériences avec le fakir Govindasami. Quant à votre aimable correspondant de Smyrne, après avoir lu ses «Réflexions» et rêvé sur sa déclaration finale, inéquivoque et formelle, il est clair que toute polémique avec lui devenant impossible, les débats sont clos; après nous avoir invité, avec une générosité—dont nous sommes tout à fait indignes—d'ouvrir pour lui, toute grande, la porte de notre sanctuaire, et de dévoiler une à une toutes nos doctrines, il nous prévient avec franchise que toutes preuves que nous pourrions lui donner seraient inutiles. Il rejetterait «*tout ce qui n'est pas d'accord avec la raison (sa raison à lui), et répugnerait à la conscience humaine*». Les théosophes croyant à ce que la conscience de M. de Justiniani rejette, il est évident, qu'on peut leur retirer le privilège d'en avoir une.

«Si même ils [les théosophes] parviennent un jour à nous faire assister à l'annihilation du *moi* dans la nature la plus perverse, ils peuvent être sûrs que nous n'y croirons pas», ajoute notre correspondant de Smyrne qui peut se tranquilliser. Nous sommes discrets et—nous tâcherons de lui éviter la triste nécessité de nous donner le démenti.

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Bombay, 28 juin.

Nota.—*La Revue Spirite*, toujours impartiale, a inséré les articles provenant de Madame Blavatsky et ceux de M. Rossi de Justiniani. Les deux adversaires sont remplis de bonne foi, également estimable; seulement au point de vue de leurs études, ils ont des opinions différentes. À ce sujet, le mois prochain, la rédaction indiquera ce qu'elle pense et la ligne de conduite qu'elle s'est tracée.

* [Louis Jacolliot.]

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

62

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

FINAL REPLY OF A THEOSOPHIST TO MR. ROSSI DE JUSTINIANI

[*La Revue Spirite*, Paris, September, 1879]

[*Translation of the foregoing original French text*]

The article entitled: “Final Reflexions of an Oriental,” which is addressed to me in the June number of *La Revue Spirite*, demands a reply. As Corresponding Secretary of the Theosophical Society, it is my duty, for reasons mentioned below, to pick up the gauntlet thrown at our Society; above all, when one of our teachings is qualified as “*a grave error, deplorable and disastrous in its consequences.*”

Our Society is known from one end of the earth to the other, but its statutes and articles of belief are quite unknown to the public.

I will quote two of these, translated almost *verbatim*:

“(1) . Every person desiring to be accepted as a member, must before his initiation sign a document (*a pledge of secrecy*), by which he is obliged, on his *word of honor*, to preserve silence on the *scientific experiments* of the Council, whether in the physical or the psychological domain, and not to reveal them to anyone outside the Society without permission being given to him by the Supreme Council. (2) . Every member will pledge himself to defend the honor of the Brotherhood and that of the poorest and most humble of its members so long as they deserve it, and that, in case of need, at the risk of the fortune and even *of the life* of the defender.”

It is in the name of our whole Society that I reply to the reflexions of Mr. de Justiniani; we do not answer him but rather the party which he appears to represent

FINAL REPLY

63

and which, to judge by the above-mentioned “Reflexions,” would be, if we had no proof to the contrary, *extreme* in its intolerance and—if we may be pardoned the expression—*fanatical* in its beliefs. Envisaging the Theosophical Society from his point of view, he judges our philosophy, that of the *Vedas*, by the information he has been able to get of traditional and Oriental occultism from the “Magi and Dervishes” of his country which has been *Islamic* for centuries. I am not surprised to see Mr. de Justiniani treat “Kapila, Patañjali, Kanâda, and all the hierophants put together” of ancient and modern India with such supreme contempt. He who has no love in his heart for the whole of humanity, a love that pays no attention to the differences between religions and races, will never sympathize with us; if he makes a part of a social, religious or philosophic body and is interested only in the propagation of its own doctrines; if he puts them above all others, and ever seeks to

convert the whole universe to his special beliefs, he cannot do justice to the beliefs of others; such is Christianity which, fixed in dogma, arrested all scientific progress for long centuries—Islam acting the same way! If Spiritualism had among its defenders a majority which thought like the author of “Final Reflexions” it might act in a similar way also.

Mr. R. de Justiniani makes no exception to this rule, it is evident; while fully confessing that he knows nothing “of the systems of *Âryâvarta*,” he nevertheless tries to prove that they are worth nothing. *The Science of the Magicians* (?), ancient and modern, is eclipsed by a single Spiritualistic experience of the eminent Crookes! Does he even know that this illustrious scientist, believing in the phenomena of materialization as fully as the Theosophists who reckon in their ranks men of distinction standing higher in the hierarchies of the *London Royal Society*, who have seen “Katie Kings” materialize by the dozen, does he know that this great authority of the Spiritualists doubts that “*Spirits*” preside over the phenomena of materialization? . . . Long ages are needed for a demonstrated truth to be accepted and become the common patrimony, if it wounds prejudices and contradicts popular superstitions; on the contrary,

paradoxical as a sophism may be, it will always be received with open arms if it flatters the preconceived ideas and cherished idols of the masses.

Does Mr. de Justiniani know even the *modus operandi* employed by Theosophists when phenomena and their investigations are concerned? Is he well informed as to what we accept and what we reject? Are our ideas about the value of collective and corroborative evidence in the matter of phenomena familiar to him? We must really be allowed to doubt it, since he tries to impress the reader with the idea that Theosophists have only a “*speculative philosophy which has had its day*,” and that, not being able to supply *facts*, we substitute them by *a system*; he has the curious notion that one can “believe in God, in Spirits, in the future life, without ceasing for all that to be a *Positivist*”(?), “that a fact, whatever it may be, must first of all be placed in the balance of experience, weighed, calculated, touched, repeated several times, before being accepted without dispute”—these reflexions make us imagine that Mr. R. de Justiniani has discovered somewhere the *Rules* of the Theosophical Society, since he quotes two of their articles.

Without contradicting these axioms, which we have been preaching for four years, we would mention to our opponent that he is standing on dangerous ground, as much for himself as for the party he would represent. “*Mutato nomine, de te fabula narratur.*” Theosophists are not concerned with these accusations but certain credulous Spiritists and Spiritualists might well apply them to themselves.

Let us comment upon his last reflexions. It is rather difficult to harmonize the idea of “*Positivism*” with the belief “*in God, in Spirits*,” and “*in the future life.*” With the exception of the famous *Catéchisme positiviste* of Auguste Comte, nowhere have we found anything so paradoxical. An illustrious English scientist once surnamed the new religion of the Positivists “*Roman Catholicism minus—Christianity*”; and now they preach to us a future

life that the scientists can analyze in their crucibles, and a “God” that they would dissolve and crystallize *ad gustum*! Positivism being diametrically opposed to Spiritualism admits nothing

beyond the physical and positive sciences, it only accepts established facts and demonstrated laws; I do not think that, among the Spiritists, those who have poetical beliefs, and hold to an abstract and mysterious doctrine, would agree to the degradation of their consoling philosophy by letting it be placed among the physical and positive sciences. Every philosophy, be it called Spiritism, Christianity, Buddhism or Occultism, must necessarily contain ideas that extend beyond the domain of facts demonstrated *physically*; *theories*, which logical though they be, are yet composed of hypotheses, and even of generalisations, in themselves more than sufficient to exclude them for ever from the domain of the positive sciences. Our estimable contradictor forgets that it is precisely the exact sciences—geology among others—that have given the death-blow to supernatural Christianity with all its miracles, and I fancy this was not done in order to welcome Spiritualism with open arms.

Thus, theory for theory, system for system, the ideas of the Theosophists have as much right to a place in the sun as those of the Spiritists and the Spiritualists. The only difference that exists between us is that Spiritists such as Mr. de Justiniani are enslaved by dogmas and preconceived ideas and are able to arrest all possible progress in psychological sciences.

The Theosophists who “have neither dogmas nor doctrines to offer” (statutes and rules of the Society), help this progress along, as much as they are able to; “*they are merely seekers*, investigators who accept any demonstrated truth.”

The “reflexions” of our adversary hardly encourage Theosophists, of whom some have lately had the honour of being admitted by the “Scientific Society of Psychological Studies” to the number of its honorary members—to help their F.E.C. in their researches. Mr. de Justiniani, who does not know the “sublime conceptions of Kapila . . . and Gautama . . . Hindu philosophers,” nevertheless accuses their modern representatives, our Indian Chiefs, “of taking the wrong direction in wishing to imitate, in this Nineteenth Century, the mysteries of Ceres, of Eleusis, or those of the Cave of Trophonius.” Theosophists are not in the

habit of discussing, denying, or criticizing either a system, a fact, or a scientific organization that they have not studied to its foundations. Not believing anything *a priori*, but at the same time admitting the *possibility* of the most marvelous facts in nature, studying, seeking, comparing all systems, all philosophies, as well as all opinions, never rejecting one before having perfectly understood and analyzed it, they accept *nothing* in the name of *faith*, not even the statements of the eminent Mr. Crookes of the Royal Society; they do not yield to

evidence except when experimental science has explained a phenomenon *rationally* to them. However, as *positive* science can never go beyond its domain, which is limited by our physical senses, it finds itself condemned to turn for ever, like the squirrel on its wheel, around the physically demonstrated fact, although it has succeeded in proving the palpable reality of the temporarily material body of Miss Katie King by means of electric batteries and other scientific apparatus. Mr. Crookes, in spite of all his eminence, has been, so far, incapable of proving to us in a conclusive manner that the soul of that charming daughter of the Air belongs to the class of the spirits of the incarnated, rather than to that of the sublunary sylphs; to the “angels” of the Spiritualists and not to the devils of Mr. de Mirville; the question remains “*adhuc sub judice lis est*” as they say in court.*

We propose to prove in our next article that the oracles that came from the modern “Cave of Trophonius” are everywhere capable of rivalling those of the mediums, and even surpassing them on occasion. For the present it is time to close this epistle which is already too long, and we will do so by adding these few words. Certain as we are to find the great majority of our Spiritist readers less intolerant and above all less inclined to criticize that of which they do not know the first word, we will hasten to let them know the results of our latest studies and researches in India. The marvels that one can see there are but feebly delineated by Mr. L. J. [Louis Jacolliot] in his experiences with the

* [See page 60, Compiler’s footnote].

fakir Govindasami. As to your amiable correspondent from Smyrna, after having read his “Reflexions” and pondered over his final, unequivocal, and formal declaration, it is clear that all argument with him becoming impossible, the debate is closed; after having invited us with a generosity—of which we are quite unworthy—to open the gates of our sanctuary as widely as possible to him, and to unveil all our teachings by degrees, he warns us frankly that every proof we could offer him would be useless. He would reject “*everything that is not in harmony with reason (his own reason) and is contrary to human conscience.*” It is obvious that Theosophists, in believing what Mr. de Justiniani’s conscience rejects, may be denied the privilege of having one.

“If they [the Theosophists] even succeed some day in making us witness the annihilation of the *self* in the most depraved nature, they can be sure that we will not believe it,” adds our Smyrna correspondent, who may remain calm. We are discreet, and—we will try to save him from the sad necessity of giving us the lie.

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Bombay, 28th June.

NOTE.—*La Revue Spirite*, always impartial, has inserted the articles contributed by Madame Blavatsky and those of Mr. Rossi de Justiniani. The two adversaries are fraught with good faith and equally estimable; but from the point of view of their studies they are of different opinions. Next month the management will indicate its opinion on that subject and the line of conduct it will follow.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

68

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

ECHOES FROM INDIA WHAT IS HINDU SPIRITUALISM?

[*Banner of Light*, Boston, Vol. XLVI, No. 4, October 18, 1879, p. 7]

To the Editor of the *Banner of Light*.

Phenomena in India—beside the undoubted interest they offer in themselves, and apart from their great variety and in most instances utter dissimilarity from those we are accustomed to hear of in Europe and America—possess another feature which makes them worthy of the most serious attention of the investigator of psychology.

Whether Eastern phenomena are to be accounted for by the immediate and sole interference and help of the spirits of the departed, or attributed to some other and hitherto unknown cause, is a question which, for the present, we will leave aside. It can be discussed, with some degree of confidence, only after many instances have been carefully noted and submitted, in all their truthful and unexaggerated details, to an impartial and unprejudiced public. One thing I beg to reaffirm, and this is, that instead of exacting the usual “conditions” of darkness, harmonious circles, and nevertheless leaving the witnesses uncertain as to the expected results, Indian phenomena, if we except the independent apparitions of *bhûts* (ghosts of the dead), are never sporadic and spontaneous, but seem to depend entirely upon the will of the operator, whether he be a holy Hindu Yogi, a Mussulman Sâdhu, fakir, or yet a juggling Jadugar (sorcerer).

In this series of letters I mean to present numerous examples of what I here say; for, whether we read of the seemingly supernatural feats produced by the *Rishis*, the

ECHOES FROM INDIA

69

Aryan patriarchs of Archaic antiquity, or by the *Achâryas* of the Puranic days, or hear of them from popular traditions, or again see them repeated in our modern times, we always find such phenomena of the most varied character. Besides covering the whole range of those known to us through modern mediumistic agency, as well as repeating the mediaeval pranks of the nuns of Loudun and other historical *posédées* in cases of “bhût” obsession, we often recognize in them the exact counterparts—as once upon a time they must have been the *originals*—of Biblical miracles. With the exception of two—those over which the world of piety goes most in raptures while glorifying the Lord, and the world of scepticism grins most sardonically—to wit, the anti-heliocentric crime performed by Joshua, and Jonah’s unpleasant excursion into the slimy cavern of the whale’s belly—we have to record nearly everyone of the feats which are said to have so distinguished Moses and other “friends of

God,” as occasionally taking place in India.

But alas, for those venerable jugglers of Judaea! And alas for those pious souls who have hitherto exalted these alleged prophets of the forthcoming Christ to such a towering eminence! The idols have just been all but knocked off their pedestals by the parricidal hands of the forty divines of the Anglican Church, who now are known to have sorely disparaged the Jewish Scriptures. The despairing cry raised by the reviewer of the just issued Commentary on the “Holy” Bible, in the most extreme organ of orthodoxy (the *London Quarterly Review* for April, 1879), is only matched by his meek submission to the *inevitable*. The fact I am alluding to is one already known to you, for I speak of the decision and final conclusive opinions upon the worth of the Bible by the conclave of learned Bishops who have been engaged for the last dozen of years on a thorough revision of the Old Testament. The results of this labour of love may be summarized thus:

1. The shrinkage of the Mosaic and other “miracles” into mere natural phenomena. (See decisions of Canon Cook, the Queen’s Chaplain, and Bishop Harold Browne.)

2. The rejection of most of the alleged prophecies of Christ as such; the said prophecies now turning out to have related simply to contemporaneous events in the Jewish national history.

3. Resolution to place no more the Old Testament on the same eminence as the Gospels, as it would inevitably lead to the “disparagement” of the new one.

4. The sad confession that the Mosaic Books *do not contain one word about a future life*, and the just complaint that: “Moses under divine direction [?] should have abstained from any recognition of man’s destiny beyond the grave, while the belief was prominent in all the religions around Israel,” . . . is “*confessed to be one of those enigmas which are the trial of our faith.*”

And it is the “trial” of our American missionaries here also. Educated natives all read the English papers and magazines, and it now becomes harder than ever to convince these “heathen” matriculates of the “sublime truths” of Christianity. But this by the way of a small parenthesis; for I mention these newly evolved facts only as having an important bearing upon Spiritualism in general, and its phenomena especially. Spiritualists have always taken such pains to identify their manifestations with the Bible miracles, that such a decision, coming from witnesses certainly more prejudiced in favour of, than opposed to, “miracles” and *divine* supernal phenomena, is rather a new and unexpected difficulty in our way. Let us hope that in view of these new religious developments, our esteemed friend, Dr. Peebles, before committing himself too far to the establishment of “independent Christian churches,” will wait for further ecclesiastical verdicts, and see how the iconoclastic English divines will overhaul the phenomena of the New Testament. Maybe, if their consistency does not evaporate, they will have to attribute all the miracles worked by Jesus also to “natural phenomena”! Very happily for Spiritualists, and for Theosophists likewise, the phenomena of the nineteenth century cannot be as easily disposed of as those of the Bible. We have had

to take the latter for nearly two thousand

years on mere blind faith, though but too often they transcended every possible law of nature, while quite the reverse is our case, and we can offer *facts*.

But to return. If manifestations of occult nature of the most various character may be said to abound in India, on the other hand, the frequent statements of Dr. Peebles to the effect that this country is full of native Spiritualists, are —how shall I say it?—a little too hasty, and exaggerated. Disputing this point in the London *Spiritualist* of January 18th, 1878, with a Madras gentleman, now residing in New York, he maintained his position in the following words: “I have met not only Sinhalese and Chinese Spiritualists, but hundreds of Hindu Spiritualists, gifted with the powers of conscious mediumship. And yet Mr. W. L. D. O’Grady, of New York, informs the readers of *The Spiritualist* (see issue November 23rd) that there are no Hindu Spiritualists. These are his words—‘No Hindu is a Spiritualist’.” And, as an offset to this assertion, Dr. Peebles quotes from the letter of an esteemed Hindu gentleman, Mr. Peary Chand Mitra, of Calcutta, a few words to the effect that he blesses God that his “inner vision is being more and more developed,” and he talks “with spirits.” We all know that Mr. Mitra is a Spiritualist, but what does it prove? Would Dr. Peebles be justified in stating that because H. P. Blavatsky and half a dozen of other Russians have become Buddhists and Vedantists, Russia is full of Buddhists and Vedantists? There may be, in India, a few Spiritualists among the educated reading classes, scattered far and wide over the country, but I seriously doubt whether our esteemed opponent could easily find a dozen of such among this population numbering 240,000,000. There are solitary exceptions, but exceptions only go to strengthen a rule, as everyone knows.

Owing to the rapid spread of Spiritualistic doctrines the world over, and to my having left India several years before, at the time I was in America I abstained from contradicting in print the great Spiritualistic “pilgrim” and philosopher, surprising as such statements seemed to me, who thought myself pretty well acquainted with this country.

India, unprogressive as it is, I thought might have changed, and I was not sure of my facts. But now that I have returned for the fourth time to this country, and have had over five months’ residence in it, a careful investigation into the phenomena, and especially into the opinions held by the people on this subject, and seven weeks of travelling all over the country, mainly for the purpose of seeing and investigating every kind of manifestations, I must be allowed to know what I am talking about, as I speak by the book. Mr. O’Grady was right: “No Hindu is a Spiritualist” in the sense in which we all understand the term. And I am now ready to prove, if need be, by *dozens* of letters from the most trustworthy natives, who are educated by Brahmans, and know the religious and superstitious views of their

countrymen better than any one of us, that whatever else Hindus may be termed, it is not *Spiritualists*. “What constitutes a Spiritualist?” very pertinently inquires, in a London Spiritual organ, a correspondent with “a passion for definition” (see *Spiritualist*, June 13th, 1879), and then, after asking, “Is Mr. Crookes a Spiritualist, who, like my humble self, does not believe in spirits of the dead as agents in the phenomena?” he brings forward several definitions, “from the most latitudinarian to the most restricted definitions,” as he expresses it.

Let us see to which of these “definitions” the “Spiritualism” of the Hindus—I will not say of the mass, but even of a majority—would answer. Since Dr. Peebles, during his two short visits to India, and while on his way from Madras, crossing it in its diameter from Calcutta to Bombay, could meet “hundreds of Spiritualists,” then these must indeed form, if not the majority, at least a considerable percentage of the 240,000,000, of India. I will now quote the definitions from the letter of the inquirer, who signs himself “A Spiritualist” (?), and [add] my own remarks thereupon:

A. “Every one is a Spiritualist who believes in the immortality of the soul.” I guess not; otherwise the whole of Christian Europe and America would be Spiritualists; nor does this definition, A, answer to the religious views of the Hindus of any sect, for, while the ignorant masses believe

[in] and aspire to Moksha, *i.e.*, literal absorption of the spirit of man in that of Brahma, or *loss of individual immortality*, as means of avoiding the punishment and horrors of transmigration, the philosophers, adepts, and learned Yogis, such as our venerated master, Swami Dayanand Saraswati, the great Hindu reformer, Sanskrit scholar, and Supreme Chief of the Vedic Section of the Eastern Division of the Theosophical Society, explain the future state of man’s spirit, its progress and evolution, in terms diametrically opposite to the views of the Spiritualists. These views, if agreeable, I will give in some future letter.

B. “Any one who believes that the continued conscious existence of deceased persons has been demonstrated by communication is a Spiritualist.” A Hindu, whether an erudite scholar and philosopher or an ignorant idolater, does not believe in “continued *conscious* existence,” though the former assigns for the holy, sinless soul, which has reached Svarga (heaven) and Moksha, a period of many millions and quadrillions of years, extending from one *Pralaya** to the next. The Hindu believes in *cyclic* transmigrations of the soul, during which there must be periods when the soul loses its recollections as well as the consciousness of its individuality, since, if it were otherwise, every person would distinctly remember all his previous existences, which is not the case. Hindu philosophies are likewise consistent with logic. They at least will not allow an endless eternity of either reward or punishment for a few dozens of years of earthly life, be this life wholly blameless or yet wholly sinful.

* For the meaning of the word *Pralaya* see Vol. II, p. 424, of *Isis Unveiled*. I am happy to say, that

notwithstanding the satirical criticisms upon its Vedic and Buddhistic portions by some American “would-be” Orientalists, Swami Dayânand and the Rev. Sumangala of Ceylon, respectively the representatives of Vedic and Buddhistic scholarship and literature in India—the first, the best Sanskrit, and the other, the most eminent Pâli scholar, both expressed their entire satisfaction with the correctness of my esoteric explanations of their respective religions. *Isis Unveiled* is now being translated into Marâthî and Hindi in India, and into Pâli in Ceylon.

C. “Anyone is a Spiritualist who believes in any of the alleged objective phenomena, whatever theory he may favour about them, or even if he have none at all.” This definition is a totally wrong one. Such persons are “Phenomenalists,” not Spiritualists, and in this sense it answers to Hindu beliefs. All of them, even those who, aping the modern school of Atheism, declare themselves materialists, are yet phenomenalists in their hearts, if one only sounds them.

(D.) E. “Does not allow of Spiritualism without spirits, but the spirits need not be human.” At this rate Theosophists and Occultists generally may also be called Spiritualists, though the latter regard them as enemies; and in this sense only *all* Hindus are Spiritualists, though their ideas about human spirits are diametrically opposed to those of the Spiritualists. They regard “bhûts”—which are the spirits of those who died with unsatisfied desires, and who, on account of their sins and earthly attractions, are *earth-bound* and kept back from Svarga (the “Elementaries” of the Theosophists)—as having become wicked devils, liable to be *annihilated* any day under the potent curses of the Brahman exorciser. The “spiritual control” so much sought for and appreciated in mediums, the Hindu regards as the greatest curse a person can be afflicted with—possession and obsession by a *bhût*, and the most loving couples often part if the wife is attacked by the *bhût* of a relative, who, it seems, seldom or never attacks any but women.

(F.) G. “Consider that no one has a right to call himself a Spiritualist who has any new-fangled notions about ‘elementaries,’ ‘spirit of the medium,’ and so forth; or does not believe that departed human spirits, high and low, account for all the phenomena of every description.” This one is the most proper and correct of all the above given “definitions,” from the standpoint of orthodox Spiritualism, and settles our dispute with Dr. Peebles. No Hindu, were it even possible to bring him to regard *bhûts* as low, suffering spirits on their way to progress and final pardon(?), could, even if he would, account for *all* the phenomena on this true Spiritualistic theory. His religious and

philosophical traditions are all opposed to such a limited idea. A Hindu is, first of all, a born metaphysician and logician. If he believes at all, and in whatever he believes, he will admit of no special laws called into existence for men of this planet alone, but will apply these

laws throughout the universe; for he is a Pantheist before being anything else, and notwithstanding his possible adherence to some special sect. Thus Dr. Peebles has well defined the situation himself, in the following happy paradox, in his *Spiritualist* letter above quoted, and in which he says: “Some of the best mediums that it has been my good fortune to know, I met in Ceylon and India. And these were *not* mediums; for, indeed, they held converse with the ‘Pays and Piśachas, having their habitations in the air, the water, the fire, in rocks and trees, in the clouds, the rain, the dew, in mines and caverns’.”

Thus these “mediums” who *were not mediums*, were no more Spiritualists than they were mediums, and—the house (Dr. Peebles’ house) is divided against itself and—must fall. So far we agree, and I will now proceed further on with my proofs.

As I mentioned before, Colonel Olcott and myself, accompanied by a Hindu gentleman, Mr. Mulji Thackersing, a member of our Council, started on our seven weeks’ journey early in April. Our object was two-fold: (1) To pay a visit to and remain for some time with our ally and teacher, Swami Dayanand, with whom we had corresponded so long from America, and thus consolidate the alliance of our Society with the Ârya Samâjjes of India (of which there are now over fifty); and (2) see as much of the phenomena as we possibly could; and, through the help of our Swami—a Yogi himself and an Initiate into the mysteries of the *Vidya* (or secret sciences)—settle certain vexed questions as to the agencies and powers at work, at first hand. Certainly no one could find a better opportunity to do so than we had. There we were, on friendly relations of master and pupils with Pandit Dayanand, the most learned man in India, a Brahman of high caste, and one who had for seven long years undergone the usual and

dreary probations of Yogism in a mountainous and wild region, in solitude, in a state of complete nudity, and constant battle with elements and wild beasts—the battle of divine human Spirit and imperial WILL of man against gross and blind matter in the shape of tigers, leopards, rhinoceroses and bears, without mentioning venomous snakes and scorpions. The inhabitants of the village nearest to that mountain are there to certify that sometimes for weeks no one would venture to take a little food—a handful of rice—to our Swami; and yet, whenever they came, they always found him in the same posture and on the same spot—an open, sandy hillock, surrounded by thick jungle full of beasts of prey—and apparently as well without food and water for whole weeks, as if he were made of stone instead of human flesh and bones.*

He has explained to us this mysterious secret which enables man to suffer and conquer at last the most cruel privations; which permits him to go without food or drink for days and weeks; to become utterly insensible to the extremes of either heat or cold, and, finally, to live for days *outside* instead of *within* his body . . .

During this voyage we visited the very cradle of Indian mysticism, the hot-bed of ascetics, where the remembrance of the wondrous phenomena performed by the Rishis of old is now as fresh as it ever was during those days when the School of Patañjali—the reputed founder of Yogism—was filled, and where his *Yog-Sânkhya* is still studied with as

much fervour, if not with the same powers of comprehension. To Upper India and the North-Western Provinces we went; to Allahabad and Cawnpore, with the shores of their sacred “Gangâ” (Ganges) all studded with devotees; whither the latter, when disgusted with life, proceed to pass the remainder of their days in meditation and

* Yogis and ascetics are not the only examples of such protracted fastings; for if these can be doubted and sometimes utterly rejected by sceptical science as void of any conclusive proof—for the phenomenon takes place in remote and inaccessible places—we have many of the *Jainas*, inhabitants of populated towns, to bring forward as exemplars of the same. Many of them fast, abstaining even from one drop of water for *forty days* at a time—and survive always.

seclusion, and become Sannyâsis, Gosains, Sâdhus. Thence to Agra, with its Taj Mahal, “the poem in marble,” as Bishop Heber happily called it; and the tomb of its founder, the great Emperor-Adept, Akbar, at Sikandra; to Agra, with its temples crowded with Shakti-worshippers, and to that spot, famous in the history of Indian occultism, where the Jumna mixes its blue waters with the patriarchal Ganges, and which is chosen by the Shaktas (worshippers of the female power) for the performance of their *pujas*; during which ceremonies the famous black crystals or mirrors mentioned by P. B. Randolph, are fabricated by the hands of young virgins. From there, again, to Saharanpore and Meerut, the birthplace of the mutiny of 1857. During our sojourn at the former town, it happened to be the central railway point to which, on their return from the Hardwar pilgrimage, flocked nearly twenty-five thousand Sannyâsis and Gosains, to numbers of whom Colonel Olcott put close interrogatories, and with whom he conversed for hours. Then to Rajputana, the land inhabited by the bravest of all races in India, as well as the most mystically inclined—the Solar Race, whose Râjas trace their descent from the sun itself. We penetrated as far as Jeypore, the Paris, and at the same time the Rome of the Rajput land. We searched through plains and mountains, and all along the sacred groves covered with pagodas and devotees, among whom we found some very holy men, endowed with genuine wondrous powers, but the majority unmitigated frauds. And we got into the favour of more than one Brahman, guardian and keeper of his god’s secrets and the mysteries of his temple; but got no more evidence out of these hereditary dead beats,” as Colonel Olcott graphically dubbed them, than out of the Sannyâsis and exorcisers of evil spirits, as to the similarity of their views with those of the Spiritualists. Neither have we ever failed, whenever coming across any educated Hindu, to pump him as to the ideas and views of his countrymen about phenomena in general, and Spiritualism especially. And to all our questions, *who* it was in the case of holy Yogis, endowed “with miraculous powers,” that produced the manifestations, the astonished answer was invariably the

same: “He (the Yogi) himself having become *one with Brahm*, produces them”; and more than once our interlocutors got thoroughly disgusted and extremely offended at Colonel Olcott’s irreverent question, whether the “bhûts” might not have been at work helping the thaumaturgist. For nearly two months uninterruptedly our premises at Bombay—garden, verandahs and halls—were crammed from early morning till late at night with native visitors of the most various sects, races and religious opinions; averaging from twenty to a hundred and more a day, coming to see us with the object of exchanging views upon metaphysical questions, and to discuss upon the relative worth of Eastern and Western philosophies—occult sciences and mysticism included. During our journey we had to receive our brothers of the Arya Samajes, which sent their deputations wherever we went to welcome us, and wherever there was a Samaj established. Thus we became intimate with the previous views of hundreds and thousands of the followers of Swami Dayanand, every one of whom had been converted by him from one idolatrous sect or another. Many of these were educated men, and as thoroughly versed in Vedic philosophy as in the tenets of the sect from which they had separated. Our chances, then, of getting acquainted with Hindu views, philosophies and traditions, were greater than those of any previous European traveller; nay, greater even than those of any officials who had resided for years in India; but who, neither belonging to the Hindu faith, nor on such friendly terms with them as ourselves, were neither trusted by the natives, nor regarded as and called by them “brothers,” as we are.

It is, then, after constant researches and cross-questioning, extending over a period of several months, that we have come to the following conclusions, which are those of Mr. O’Grady: *No Hindu is a Spiritualist*, and, with the exception of extremely rare instances, none of them has ever heard of Spiritualism or its movements in Europe, least of all in America, with which country many of them are as little acquainted as with the North Pole. It is but now, when Swami Dayanand, in his learned researches, has found

out that America must have been known to the early Aryans—as Arjuna, one of the five *Pandavas*, the friend and disciple of Krishna, is shown in Puranic history to have gone to Patal(a) in search of a wife, and married in that country Ulûpî, the widow-daughter of NÂGA, the king of Patal(a), an antipodal country answering perfectly in its description to America, and unknown in those early days to any but the Aryans—that an interest for this country is being felt among the members of the Samajes. But, as we explained the origin, development and doctrines of the spiritual philosophy to our friends, and especially the *modus operandi* of the medium, *i.e.*, the communion of the Spirits of the departed with living men and women, whose organisms the former use as modes of communication, the horror of our listeners was unequalled and undisguised in each case. “*Communion with bhûts!*” they exclaimed. “Communion with souls that have become wicked demons, to whom we are ready to offer sacrifices in food and drink to pacify them and make them leave us quiet, but who never come but to disturb the peace of families; whose presence is a pollution! What pleasure or comfort can the *bellati* (white foreigners) find in communicating

with them?” Thus I repeat most emphatically that not only are there, so to say, no Spiritualists in India, as we understand the term, but affirm and declare that the very suggestion of our so-called “spirit intercourse” is obnoxious to most of them—that is to say, to the oldest people in the world, people who have known all about the phenomena thousands upon thousands of years. Is this fact nothing to us, who have just begun to see the wonders of mediumship? Ought we to estimate our cleverness at so high a figure as to make us refuse to take instruction from these Orientals, who have seen their holy men—nay, even their gods and demons and the spirits of the elements — performing “miracles” since the remotest antiquity? Have we so perfected a philosophy of our own that we can compare it with that of India, which explains every mystery and triumphantly demonstrates the nature of every phenomenon? It would be worth our while—believe me—to ask Hindu help, if it

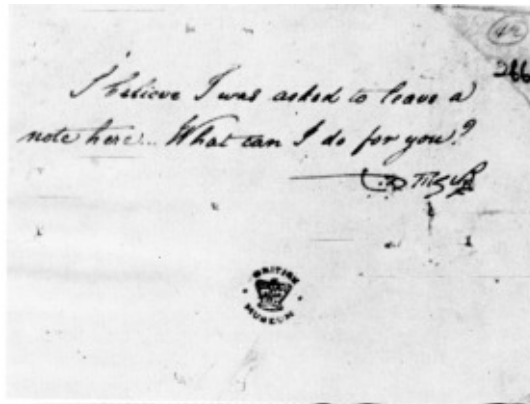
were but to prove, better than we can now, to the materialist and sceptical science, that, whatever may be the true theory as to the agencies, the phenomena, whether Biblical or Vedic, Christian or heathen, are in the natural order of this world, and have a first claim to scientific investigation. Let us first prove the existence of the sphinx to the profane, and afterwards we may try to unriddle its mysteries. Spiritualists will always have time enough to refute “antiquated” notions by the logic of their new theories, and spirits to measure their strength with the mystical “elementals” of old. Truth is eternal, and however long trampled down will always come out the brighter in the expiring twilight of superstition. But in one sense we are perfectly warranted to apply the name of Spiritualists to the Hindus. Opposed as they are to *physical* phenomena as produced by the *bhûts*, or unsatisfied souls of the departed, and to the possession by them of mediumistic persons, they still accept with joy those consoling evidences of the continued interest in themselves of a departed father or mother. In the subjective phenomena of dreams, in visions of clairvoyance or trance, brought on by the powers of holy men, they welcome the spirits of their beloved ones, and often receive from them important directions and advice. . . .

If agreeable to your readers, I will devote a series of letters to the phenomena taking place in India, explaining them as I proceed.* I sincerely hope that the old experience of American Spiritualists, massing in threatening force against iconoclastic Theosophists and their “superannuated” ideas, will not be repeated; for my offer is perfectly impartial and friendly. It is with no desire to either teach new doctrines or carry on an unwelcome Hindu propaganda that I make it; but simply to supply material for comparison and study to the Spiritualists who think.

H.P. BLAVATSKY.

Bombay, July, 1879.

* [As far as could be ascertained, such letters were never written by H.P.B., and nothing similar to them has ever been found.—*Comp.*]

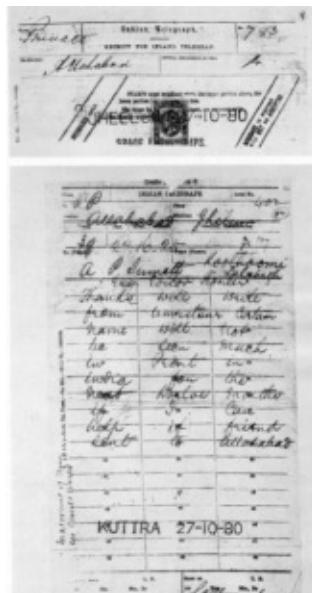


FACSIMILE OF THE FAMOUS "PINK SLIP"

Note written by one of the Teachers on pink paper and left in a tree on Prospect Hill, Simla, India, for the benefit of Mrs. Patience Sinnett.

Original is in the British Museum.

Consult for an account of this phenomenon, Col. H. S. Olcott's *Old Diary Leaves*, II, 231-32; and A. P. Sinnett's *The Occult World*, American edition, New York, 1885, pp. 61-63.



FACSIMILE OF THE JHELUM TELEGRAM

Telegram sent by Koothoomi Lalsingh from Jhelum To A. P. Sinnett at Allâhâbâd. Original in the British Museum

Consult for details and references p. xxxiv of the Chronological Survey in the present Volume.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

H. P. B. ON THE MONSOON

81

[H. P. B. ON THE MONSOON]

[The following is reprinted *verbatim et literatim* from a clipping in one of General Abner Doubleday's scrapbooks in the archives of the former Point Loma Theosophical Society. It is clear from the heading 'Banner Correspondence' that it was originally published in *The Banner of Light*. No date is attached to the clipping, but from other clippings pasted in the same scrapbook the date is undoubtedly 1879.]

Banner Correspondence India

BOMBAY.—[From a private letter forwarded us by Mad. Helen P. Blavatsky we take the liberty of extracting the following graphic description of matters climatic in this land of the sun—prefacing our action with the announcement that we have on file a lengthy letter from this talented lady, which we propose to publish at our earliest opportunity:] “Do you know what *the monsoon* is? And if aware of its nature, are you prepared to say that you are as well acquainted with all its peculiarities, progress, development and results upon humanity in general, and lymphatic, slow-blooded folks in particular? My private and archaeological opinion is that it is one of such monsoons that Father Noah—whom I suspect of having been a low-caste Hindu—mistook, in some fit of intoxication, for the universal deluge, and thus was allowed to impose upon credulous Christo-Judaic humanity, and perplex geology for many ages. Well, the monsoon begins about the 15th of June, and ends about the 15th of October. In the previous long interval of eight months not a drop of rain ever falls on the blistered noses of the sweating millions of ‘mild’ Hindus, to solace their parched souls. But as, in their character of ‘benighted heathen,’ they have to prepare for Christian hell anyhow, it does not much matter. But when it does come it is a caution, I tell you! It can

82

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

no more be called a rain than the Niagara Falls a shower. The streets and yards and gardens and compounds and even the rooms in the houses are flooded. Bombay is changed for days, sometimes weeks, into a semblance of Venice *la Bella*. Hindus do not care; for, naked to the waist, they promenade about in the dry season, and, naked to a completer degree, they paddle about in water during the monsoon. It's all one for them. But for unfortunate visitors from other and drier spheres, like our ‘Theosophical mission,’ as we are called here, it is a matter of more than a serious consideration. Everything from roof to floor in the houses; from furniture to wearing apparel; hats, boots, brushes, etc., etc., becomes damp as a soaked rag, moulds and finally rots away, if neglected. I have to dry every one of my several

hundred books over a brazier every second or third day; and our party, I was going to say, has almost to sit under an umbrella half the time in our drawing-room! But this is not all. The fields, jungles, and the crevices in the rocks being overflowed, the cobra-capellas, scorpions, centipedes, lizards, and in some places tigers, begin running a race for salvation, and take refuge in the houses, most of which, like our own bungalow, have no sashes to the windows, but simply a few wooden bars. It is the real Darwinian season, in which the law of the 'survival of the fittest' is most apparent. Every night I have to make the round in my solitary bungalow, which is nestled under a canopy of coconut trees, and surrounded by bananas and large shrubs, and I feel particularly happy whenever I have succeeded in committing any amount of cruel murders. I become a bloodthirsty Nimrod, and kill cockroaches as big as small mice, spiders which could be mistaken for moderate-sized crabs, and crush to death about a thousand or so of various smaller insects nightly. Alas! I can never hope for a snug place in the calendar of either Jain or Buddhist saints. But, as I said to you, it is the survival of the fittest; and if we would survive we have to give fits to our *brothers* of the animal kingdom. We all have our share in this world of sorrow."

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

THE FOUNDING OF THE THEOSOPHIST

83

[THE FOUNDING OF THE THEOSOPHIST]

[According to Col. H. S. Olcott's *Diaries*, now in the Adyar Archives, the Prospectus for the first Theosophical magazine, *The Theosophist*, was written on July 6, 1879. On July 15, Master M. visited the Founders in his physical body, and "a most important private interview" took place, possibly on the question of the forthcoming magazine. On July 31, E. Wimbridge designed the cover for *The Theosophist*, and, on September 2nd began engraving it. On Sept. 11th workmen began to prepare an Editorial Office for the magazine. On Sept. 20th, the first form (eight pages) of *The Theosophist* was printed, and on the 27th the last form was struck off. On Sept. 28th, Col. Olcott arose and went to see the printer at 5:30 A.M., to make some changes ordered by the "revered Old Gentleman" the night before. This title was applied to Master Narayan. On Sept. 30th, the first four hundred copies of the magazine were received, and on October 1st the initial issue of *The Theosophist* was out, "all hands busy pasting and directing wrappers," to quote from Col. Olcott's *Diaries*.

On October 3rd, a letter was received by the Colonel from Master Serapis, which apparently was the "first word from him in some time," as Col. Olcott says. That letter instructs the Colonel on certain points in connection with *The Theosophist*. It says, among other things:

"Assert your rights to the paper—it was established for you, none but you two have a right over it as directed by—*

. . . Whenever convenient explain that the paper is neither your nor H.P.B.'s but belongs to and is under the control of certain persons no one knows anything about except your two selves. . . "†

By the end of October, there were 381 registered subscribers to the magazine, and it was decided to print 750 copies for the second issue.

It is interesting to note that it was during this period, namely on August 2nd, 1879, that Dâmodar was admitted to membership by the Founders.]

* [Here appears a symbol often used by Master Serapis.]

† [*Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom*, Second Series, Letter No. 29.]

84

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

[In her *Scrapbook*, Vol. X, p. 9, H. P. B. pasted a proof of the cover for the forthcoming *Theosophists*, and wrote under it as follows:]

First proof of the cover—printed in relief because we could find in India neither a woodblock to cut it on, nor an engraver to cut it properly nor a lithographer to print it in colours from the stone. Wimbridge had to invent a new process to etch it on the zinc.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

NAMASTAE!

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 1, October, 1879, pp. 1-2]

The foundation of this journal is due to causes which, having been enumerated in the Prospectus, need only be glanced at in this connection. They are—the rapid expansion of the Theosophical Society from America to various European and Asiatic countries; the increasing difficulty and expense in maintaining correspondence by letter with members so widely scattered; the necessity for an organ through which the native scholars of the East could communicate their learning to the Western world, and, especially, through which the sublimity of the Aryan, Buddhistic, Parsi, and other religions might be expounded by their own priest or pandits, the only competent interpreters; and finally, to the need of a repository for the facts—especially such as relate to Occultism—gathered by the Society's Fellows among different nations. Elsewhere we have clearly explained the nature of Theosophy, and the platform of the Society; it remains for us to say a few words as to the policy of our paper.

It has been shown that the individual members of our Society have their own private opinions upon all matters of a religious, as of every other, nature. They are protected in the enjoyment and expression of the same; and, as individuals, have an equal right to state them in *The*

NAMASTAE!

85

Theosophist, over their own signatures. Some of us prefer to be known as Arya Samajists, some as Buddhists, some as idolaters, some as something else. What each is, will appear from his or her signed communications. But neither Aryan, Buddhist, nor any other representative of a particular religion, whether an editor or a contributor, can, under the Society's rules, be allowed to use these editorial columns exclusively in the interest of the same, or unreservedly commit the paper to its propaganda. It is designed that a strict impartiality shall be observed in the editorial utterances; the paper representing the whole Theosophical Society, or Universal Brotherhood, and not any single section. The Society being neither a church nor a sect in any sense, we mean to give the same cordial welcome to communications from one class of religionists as to those from another; insisting only, that courtesy of language shall be used towards opponents. And the policy of the Society is also a full pledge and guarantee that *there will be no suppression of fact nor tampering with writings, to serve the ends of any established or dissenting church of any country.*

Articles and correspondence upon either of the topics included in the plan of *The Theosophist* are invited; and while, of course, we prefer them to be in the English language, yet if sent in Hindi, Marathi, Bengali, or Gujarati, or in French, Italian, Spanish or Russian, they will be carefully translated and edited for publication. Where it is necessary to print

names and words in Hebrew, Greek, and other characters (except Sanskrit and the Indian vernaculars) unlike the Roman, authors will kindly write also their phonetic equivalents in English, as the resources of our printer's office do not appear great in this direction. Manuscripts must be written legibly, upon one side of the sheet only, and authors should always keep copies at home as we will not be responsible for their loss, nor can we obligate ourselves to return rejected articles. Statements of fact will not be accepted from unknown parties without due authentication.

It is designed that our journal shall be read with as much interest by those who are not deep philosophers as by

those who are. Some will delight to follow the pandits through the mazes of metaphysical subtleties and the translations of ancient manuscripts, others to be instructed through the medium of legends and tales of mystical import. Our pages will be like the many viands at a feast, where each appetite may be satisfied and none are sent away hungry. The practical wants of life are to many readers more urgent than the spiritual, and that it is not our purpose to neglect them our pages will amply show.

One more word at the threshold before we bid our guests to enter. The first number of *The Theosophist* has been brought out under mechanical difficulties which would not have been encountered either at New York or London, and which we hope to escape in future issues. For instance: We first tried to have Mr. Edward Wimbridge's excellent design for the cover engraved on wood, but there was no wood to be had of the right sizes to compose the block, nor any clamps to fasten them together; nor was there an engraver competent to do justice to the subject. In lithography we fared no better; there was not a pressman who could be trusted to print artistic work in colours, and the proprietor of one of the best job offices in India advised us to send the order to London. As a last resort we determined to print the design in relief, and then scoured the metal markets of Bombay and Calcutta for rolled metal plate. Having finally secured an old piece, the artist was forced to invent an entirely novel process to etch on it, and to execute the work himself. We mention these facts in the hope that our unemployed young Indian brothers may recall the old adage, "where there is a will, there is a way" and apply the lesson to their own case. And now, friends and enemies, all—*Namastae!*

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

WHAT IS THEOSOPHY?

87

WHAT IS THEOSOPHY?

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 1, October, 1879, pp. 2-5]

This question has been so often asked, and misconception so widely prevails, that the editors of a journal devoted to an exposition of the world's Theosophy would be remiss were its first number issued without coming to a full understanding with their readers. But our heading involves two further queries: What is the Theosophical Society; and what are the Theosophists? To each an answer will be given.

According to lexicographers, the term *theosophia* is composed of two Greek words—*theos*, “god,” and *sophos*, “wise.” So far, correct. But the explanations that follow are far from giving a clear idea of Theosophy. Webster defines it most originally as “a supposed intercourse with God and superior spirits, and consequent attainment of superhuman knowledge, by *physical processes*, as by the theurgic operations of some ancient Platonists, or by the *chemical processes* of the German fire-philosophers.”

This, to say the least, is a poor and flippant explanation. To attribute such ideas to men like Ammonius Saccas, Plotinus, Iamblichus, Porphyry, Proclus—shows either intentional misrepresentation, or Mr. Webster's ignorance of the philosophy and motives of the greatest geniuses of the later Alexandrian School. To impute to those whom their contemporaries as well as posterity styled “*theodidaktoi*,” god-taught—a purpose to develop their psychological, spiritual perceptions by “*physical processes*,” is to describe them

88

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

as materialists. As to the concluding fling at the fire-philosophers, it rebounds from them to fall home among our most eminent modern men of science; those, in whose mouths the Rev. James Martineau places the following boast: “matter is all we want; give us atoms alone, and we will explain the universe.”

Vaughan offers a far better, more philosophical definition. “A Theosophist,” he says—“is one who gives you a theory of God or the works of God, which has not revelation, but an inspiration of his own for its basis.” In this view every great thinker and philosopher, especially every founder of a new religion, school of philosophy, or sect, is necessarily a Theosophist. Hence, Theosophy and Theosophists have existed ever since the first glimmering of nascent thought made man seek instinctively for the means of expressing his own independent opinions.

There were Theosophists before the Christian era, notwithstanding that the Christian

writers ascribe the development of the Eclectic theosophical system, to the early part of the third century of their Era. Diogenes Laërtius traces Theosophy to an epoch antedating the dynasty of the Ptolemies; and names as its founder an Egyptian Hierophant called Pot-Amun, the name being Coptic and signifying a priest consecrated to Amun, the god of Wisdom. But history shows it revived by Ammonius Saccas, the founder of the Neo-Platonic School. He and his disciples called themselves “Philaletheians”—lovers of the truth; while others termed them the “Analogists,” on account of their method of interpreting all sacred legends, symbolical myths and mysteries, by a rule of analogy or correspondence, so that events which had occurred in the external world were regarded as expressing operations and experiences of the human soul. It was the aim and purpose of Ammonius to reconcile all sects, peoples and nations under one common faith—a belief in one Supreme, Eternal, Unknown, and Unnamed Power, governing the Universe by immutable and eternal laws. His object was to prove a primitive system of Theosophy, which at the beginning was essentially alike in all countries; to induce all

men to lay aside their strifes and quarrels, and unite in purpose and thought as the children of one common mother; to purify the ancient religions, by degrees corrupted and obscured, from all dross of human element, by uniting and expounding them upon pure philosophical principles. Hence, the Buddhistic, Vedantic and Magian, or Zoroastrian, systems were taught in the Eclectic Theosophical School along with all the philosophies of Greece. Hence also, that pre-eminently Buddhistic and Indian feature among the ancient Theosophists of Alexandria, of due reverence for parents and aged persons; a fraternal affection for the whole human race; and a compassionate feeling for even the dumb animals. While seeking to establish a system of moral discipline which enforced upon people the duty to live according to the laws of their respective countries; to exalt their minds by the research and contemplation of the one Absolute Truth; his chief object in order, as he believed, to achieve all others, was to extract from the various religious teachings, as from a many-chorded instrument, one full and harmonious melody, which would find response in every truth-loving heart.

Theosophy is, then, the archaic *Wisdom-Religion*, the esoteric doctrine once known in every ancient country having claims to civilization. This “Wisdom” all the old writings show us as an emanation of the divine Principle; and the clear comprehension of it is typified in such names as the Indian Budha, the Babylonian Nebo, the Thoth of Memphis, the Hermes of Greece; in the appellations, also, of some goddesses—Metis, Neitha, Athena, the Gnostic *Sophia*, and finally—the *Vedas*, from the word “to know.” Under this designation, all the ancient philosophers of the East and West, the Hierophants of old Egypt, the Rishis of Aryavarta, the Theodidaktoi of Greece, included all knowledge of things occult and essentially divine. The *Mercavah* of the Hebrew Rabbis, the secular and popular series, were thus designated as only the vehicle, the outward shell which contained the higher esoteric knowledge. The Magi of Zoroaster received instruction and were initiated in the

caves and secret lodges of Bactria; the Egyptian and Grecian

hierophants had their *aporrhêta*, or secret discourses, during which the *Mystês* became an *Epoptês*—a Seer.

The central idea of the Eclectic Theosophy was that of a single Supreme Essence, Unknown and *Unknowable*—for—“How could one know the knower?” as enquires *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*. Their system was characterized by three distinct features: the theory of the above-named Essence; the doctrine of the human soul—an emanation from the latter, hence of the same nature; and its theurgy. It is this last science which has led the Neo-Platonists to be so misrepresented in our era of materialistic science. Theurgy being essentially the art of applying the divine powers of man to the subordination of the blind forces of nature, its votaries were first termed magicians—a corruption of the word “Magh,” signifying a wise, or learned man, and—derided. Skeptics of a century ago would have been as wide of the mark if they had laughed at the idea of a phonograph or a telegraph. The ridiculed and the “infidels” of one generation generally become the wise men and saints of the next.

As regards the Divine Essence and the nature of the soul and spirit, modern Theosophy believes now as ancient Theosophy did. The popular *Diu* of the Aryan nations was identical with the *Iao* of the Chaldeans, and even with the Jupiter of the less learned and philosophical among the Romans; and it was just as identical with the *Jahve* of the Samaritans, the *Tiu* or “Tuisto” of the Northmen, the *Duw* of the Britons, and the Zeus of the Thracians. As to the Absolute Essence, the One and All—whether we accept the Greek Pythagorean, the Chaldean Kabalistic, or the Aryan philosophy in regard to it, it will all lead to one and the same result. The Primeval Monad of the Pythagorean system, which retires into darkness and is itself Darkness (for human intellect) was made the basis of all things; and we can find the idea in all its integrity in the philosophical systems of Leibnitz and Spinoza. Therefore, whether a Theosophist agrees with the Kabala which, speaking of En-Soph, propounds the query: “Who, then, can comprehend It, since It is formless, and Non-Existent?”—or,

WHAT IS THEOSOPHY?

remembering that magnificent hymn from the *Rig-Veda* (Hymn 129th, Book 10th)—enquires:

“Who knows from whence this great creation sprang?
Whether his will created or was mute.
He knows it—or perchance *even He knows not.*”

Or, again, accepts the Vedantic conception of Brahma, who in the *Upanishads* is represented as “without life, without mind, pure,” *unconscious*, for—Brahma is “Absolute Consciousness.” Or, even finally, siding with the Svâbhâvikas of Nepal, maintains that nothing exists but “Svabhavat” (substance or nature) which exists by *itself* without any creator—any one of the above conceptions can lead but to pure and absolute Theosophy. That Theosophy which prompted such men as Hegel, Fichte and Spinoza to take up the labours of the old Grecian philosophers and speculate upon the One Substance—the Deity, the *Divine All* proceeding from the Divine Wisdom—incomprehensible, unknown, and *unnamed*—by any ancient or modern religious philosophy, with the exception of Christianity and Mohammedanism. Every Theosophist, then, holding to a theory of the Deity “which has not revelation, but an inspiration of his own for its basis,” may accept any of the above definitions or belong to any of these religions, and yet remain strictly within the boundaries of Theosophy. For the latter is belief in the Deity as the ALL, the source of all existence, the infinite that cannot be either comprehended or known, the universe alone revealing *It*, or, as some prefer it, *Him*, thus giving a sex to that, to anthropomorphize which is *blasphemy*. True, Theosophy shrinks from brutal materialization; it prefers believing that, from eternity retired within itself, the Spirit of the Deity neither wills nor creates; but that, from the infinite effulgency everywhere going forth from the Great Centre, that which produces all visible and invisible things is but a Ray containing in itself the generative and conceptive power, which, in its turn produces that which the Greeks called *Macrocosm*, the Kabalists *Tikkun* or Adam Kadmon—the archetypal man, and the Aryans *Purusha*, the manifested Brahm, or the Divine Male. Theosophy believes also in the *Anastasis*

or continued existence, and in transmigration (evolution) or a series of changes in the soul* which can be defended and explained on strict philosophical principles; and only by making a distinction between *Paramâtma* (transcendental, supreme soul) and *Jivâtma* (animal, or conscious soul) of the Vedantins.

To fully define Theosophy, we must consider it under all its aspects. The interior world has not been hidden from all by impenetrable darkness. By that higher intuition acquired by *Theosophia*—or God-knowledge, which carries the mind from the world of form into that of formless spirit, man has been sometimes enabled in every age and every country to perceive things in the interior or invisible world. Hence, the “Samadhi,” or *Dyan Yog Samadhi*, of the Hindu ascetics; the “Daïmonion-photi,” or spiritual illumination, of the Neo-Platonists; the “Sidereal confabulation of souls,” of the Rosicrucians or Fire-philosophers; and, even the ecstatic trance of mystics and of the modern mesmerists and spiritualists, are identical in nature, though various as to manifestation. The search after man’s diviner “self,” so often and so erroneously interpreted as individual communion with a personal God, was the object of every mystic, and belief in its possibility seems to have been coëval with the genesis of humanity—each people giving it another name. Thus Plato and Plotinus call “Noëtic work” that which the Yogis and the Srotriya term *Vidya*. “By reflection, self-knowledge and intellectual discipline, the soul can be raised to the vision of eternal truth, goodness, and

beauty—that is, to the *Vision of God*—this is the *epopteia*,” said

*In a series of articles entitled “The World’s Great Theosophists,” we intend showing that from Pythagoras, who got his wisdom in India, down to our best known modern philosophers, and theosophists—David Hume, and Shelley, the English poet the Spiritists of France included—many believed and yet believe in metempsychosis or reincarnation of the soul; however unelaborated the system of the Spiritists may fairly be regarded.

[Such a series of articles was never written by H.P.B., although some of the material in *The Theosophical Glossary*, published posthumously in 1892, has similarity to the general aim H.P.B. may have had in view.—*Compiler.*]

the Greeks. “To unite one’s soul to the Universal Soul,” says Porphyry, “requires but a perfectly pure mind. Through self-contemplation, perfect chastity, and purity of body, we may approach nearer to It, and receive, in that state, true knowledge and wonderful insight.” And Swami Dayânund Saraswati, who has read neither Porphyry nor other Greek authors, but who is a thorough Vedic scholar, says in his *Veda-Bhâshya* (upâsanâ prakara ank. 9)—“To obtain *Diksha* (highest initiations) and *Yog*, one has to practice according to the rules . . . The soul in human body can perform the greatest wonders by knowing the Universal Spirit (or God) and acquainting itself with the properties and qualities (occult) of all the things in the universe. A human being (a *Dikshita* or initiate) can thus *acquire a power of seeing and hearing at great distances.*” Finally, Alfred R. Wallace, F.R.S., a spiritualist and yet a confessedly great naturalist, says, with brave candour: “It is ‘spirit’ that alone feels, and perceives, and thinks—that acquires knowledge, and reasons and aspires . . . there not unfrequently occur individuals so constituted that the spirit can perceive independently of the corporeal organs of sense, or can, perhaps, wholly or partially, quit the body for a time and return to it again . . . the spirit . . . communicates with spirit easier than with matter.” We can now see how, after thousands of years have intervened between the age of the Gymnosophists* and our own highly civilized era, notwithstanding, or, perhaps, just because of, such an enlightenment which pours its radiant light upon the psychological as well as upon the physical realms of nature, over twenty millions of people today believe, under a different form, in those same spiritual powers that were believed in by the Yogins and the Pythagoreans, nearly 3,000 years ago. Thus, while the Aryan mystic claimed for himself the power of solving all the problems of life and death, when

*The reality of Yoga-powers was affirmed by many Greek and Roman writers, who call the Yogins Indian Gymnosophists; by Strabo, Lucan, Plutarch, Cicero (*Tuscul. Disp.*), Pliny (*Nat. Hist.*, VII, ii, 22), etc.

he had once obtained the power of acting independently of his body, through the *Atman*—“self,” or “soul”; and the old Greeks went in search of *Atmu*—the Hidden one, or the God-Soul of man, with the symbolical mirror of the Thesmophorian mysteries;—so the spiritualists of today believe in the faculty of the spirits, or the souls of the disembodied persons, to communicate visibly and tangibly with those they loved on earth. And all these, Aryan Yogis, Greek philosophers, and modern spiritualists, affirm that possibility on the ground that the embodied soul and its never embodied spirit—the real *self*—are not separated from either the Universal Soul or other spirits by space, but merely by the differentiation of their qualities; as in the boundless expanse of the universe there can be no limitation. And that when this difference is once removed—according to the Greeks and Aryans by abstract contemplation, producing the temporary liberation of the imprisoned Soul; and according to Spiritualists, through mediumship— such an union between embodied and disembodied spirits becomes possible. Thus was it that Patañjali’s Yogis and, following in their steps, Plotinus, Porphyry, and other Neo-Platonists, maintained that in their hours of ecstasy, they had been united to, or rather become as one with, God, several times during the course of their lives. This idea, erroneous as it may seem in its application to the Universal Spirit, was, and is, claimed by too many great philosophers to be put aside as entirely chimerical. In the case of the Theodidaktoi, the only controvertible point, the dark spot on this philosophy of extreme mysticism, was its claim to include that which is simply ecstatic illumination, under the head of sensuous perception. In the case of the Yogins, who maintained their ability to see *Iwara* “face to face,” this claim was successfully overthrown by the stern logic of Kapila. As to the similar assumption made for their Greek followers, for a long array of Christian ecstasies, and, finally, for the last two claimants to “God-seeing” within these last hundred years—Jacob Böhme and Swedenborg—this pretension would and *should* have been philosophically and logically questioned, if a few of our great men of science

who are Spiritualists had had more interest in the philosophy than in the mere phenomenalism of Spiritualism.

The Alexandrian Theosophists were divided into neophytes, initiates, and masters, or hierophants; and their rules were copied from the ancient Mysteries of Orpheus, who, according to Herodotus, brought them from India. Ammonius obligated his disciples by oath not to divulge his *higher* doctrines, except to those who were proved thoroughly worthy and initiated, and who had learned to regard the gods, the angels, and the demons of other peoples, according to the esoteric *hyponoia*, or under-meaning. “The gods exist, but they are not what the *hoi polloi*, the uneducated multitude, suppose them to be,” says Epicurus. “He is not an atheist who denies the existence of the gods whom the multitude worship, but he is such who fastens on these gods the opinions of the multitude.” In his turn, Aristotle declares that of the “Divine Essence pervading the whole world of nature, what are styled the *gods* are simply the first principles.”*

Plotinus, the pupil of the “God-taught” Ammonius, tells us, that the secret *gnosis* or the

knowledge of Theosophy, has three degrees—opinion, science, and *illumination*. “The means or instrument of the first is sense, or perception; of the second, dialectics; of the third, intuition. To the last, reason is subordinate; it is *absolute knowledge*, founded on the identification of the mind with the object known.” Theosophy is the exact science of psychology, so to say; it stands in relation to natural, uncultivated mediumship, as the knowledge of a Tyndall stands to that of a school-boy in physics. It develops in man a direct beholding; that which Schelling denominates “a realization of the identity of subject and object in the individual”; so that under the influence and knowledge of *hyponoia* man thinks divine thoughts, views all things as they really are, and, finally, “becomes recipient of the Soul of the World,” to use one of the finest expressions of Emerson. “I, the imperfect,

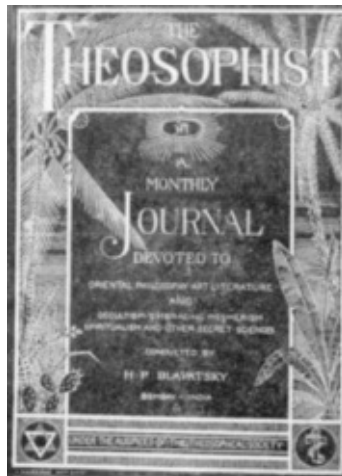
* [*Vide* Diogenes Laertius, *Lives*, X, 123, where the Greek word *acebês* means impious, irreverent, ungodly, rather than “atheist”; and Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Bk. XII, viii, p. 1074b.—*Compiler*.]

adore my own Perfect”—he says in his superb Essay on *The Over-Soul*. Besides this psychological, or soul-state, Theosophy cultivated every branch of sciences and arts. It was thoroughly familiar with what is now commonly known as mesmerism. Practical theurgy or “ceremonial magic,” so often resorted to in their exorcisms by the Roman Catholic clergy—was discarded by the Theosophists. It is but Iamblichus alone who, transcending the other Eclectics, added to Theosophy the doctrine of Theurgy. When ignorant of the true meaning of the esoteric divine symbols of nature, man is apt to miscalculate the powers of his soul, and, instead of communing spiritually and mentally with the higher, celestial beings, the good spirits (the gods of the theurgists of the Platonic school), he will unconsciously call forth the evil, dark powers which lurk around humanity—the undying, grim creations of human crimes and vices—and thus fall from *theurgia* (white magic) into *goëtia* (or black magic, sorcery). Yet, neither white, nor black magic are what popular superstition understands by the terms. The possibility of “raising spirits” according to the key of Solomon, is the height of superstition and ignorance. Purity of deed and thought can alone raise us to an intercourse “with the gods” and attain for us the goal we desire. Alchemy, believed by so many to have been a spiritual philosophy as well as a physical science, belonged to the teachings of the theosophical school.

It is a noticeable fact that neither Zoroaster, Buddha, Orpheus, Pythagoras, Confucius, Socrates, nor Ammonius Saccas, committed anything to writing. The reason for it is obvious. Theosophy is a double-edged weapon and unfit for the ignorant or the selfish. Like every ancient philosophy it has its votaries among the moderns; but, until late in our own days, its disciples were few in numbers, and of the most various sects and opinions. “Entirely speculative, and founding no schools, they have still exercised a silent influence upon philosophy; and, no doubt, when the time arrives, many ideas thus silently propounded may yet give new directions to human thought”—remarks Mr. Kenneth R. H. MacKenzie IX°. . . himself a mystic and a

Theosophist, in his large and valuable work, *The Royal Masonic Cyclopaedia* (articles “Theosophical Society of New York” and “Theosophy,” p. 731).* Since the days of the fire-philosophers, they had never formed themselves into societies, for, tracked like wild beasts by the Christian clergy, to be known as a Theosophist often amounted, hardly a century ago, to a death warrant. The statistics show that, during a period of 150 years, no less than 90,000 men and women were burned in Europe for alleged witchcraft. In Great Britain only, from A.D. 1640 to 1660, but twenty years, 3,000 persons were put to death for compact with the “Devil.” It was but late in the present century—in 1875—that some progressed mystics and spiritualists, unsatisfied with the theories and explanations of Spiritualism, started by its votaries, and finding that they were far from covering the whole ground of the wide range of phenomena, formed at New York, America, an association which is now widely known as the Theosophical Society. And now, having explained what is Theosophy, we will, in a separate article, explain what is the nature of our society, which is also called the “Universal Brotherhood of Humanity.”

* *The Royal Masonic Cyclopaedia of History, Rites, Symbolism and Biography*. Edited by Kenneth R. H. MacKenzie IX° (Cryptonymus), Hon. Member of the Canongate Kilwinning Lodge, No. 2, Scotland. New York, J. W. Bouton, 706 Broadway, 1877.



ORIGINAL COVER OF *THE THEOSOPHIST*



ENTRANCE TO CROW'S NEST, BREACH CANDY, BOMBAY
The Founders moved into this residence at the end of 1880.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

98

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

WHAT ARE THE THEOSOPHISTS?

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 1, October, 1879, pp. 5-7]

Are they what they claim to be—students of natural law, of ancient and modern philosophy, and even of exact science? Are they Deists, Atheists, Socialists, Materialists, or Idealists; or are they but a schism of modern Spiritualism—mere visionaries? Are they entitled to any consideration, as capable of discussing philosophy and promoting real science; or should they be treated with the compassionate toleration which one gives to “harmless enthusiasts”? The Theosophical Society has been variously charged with a belief in “miracles,” and “miracle-working”; with a secret political object—like the Carbonari; with being spies of an autocratic Czar; with preaching socialistic and nihilistic doctrines; and, *mirabile dictu*, with having a covert understanding with the French Jesuits, to disrupt modern Spiritualism for a pecuniary consideration! With equal violence they have been denounced as dreamers, by the American Positivists; as fetish-worshippers, by some of the New York press; as revivalists of “mouldy superstitions,” by the Spiritualists; as infidel emissaries of Satan, by the Christian Church; as the very types of “*gobe-mouche*,” by Professor W. B. Carpenter, F.R.S.; and finally, and most absurdly, some Hindu opponents, with a view to lessening their influence, have flatly charged them with the employment of *demons* to perform certain phenomena. Out of all this potter of opinions, one fact stands conspicuous—the Society, its members, and their views, are deemed of enough importance to be discussed and denounced: *Men slander only those whom they hate—or fear.*

WHAT ARE THE THEOSOPHISTS?

99

But, if the Society has had its enemies and traducers, it has also had its friends and advocates. For every word of censure, there has been a word of praise. Beginning with a party of about a dozen earnest men and women, a month later its numbers had so increased as to necessitate the hiring of a public hall for its meetings; within two years, it had working branches in European countries. Still later, it found itself in alliance with the Indian Arya Samaj, headed by the learned Pandit Dayânund Saraswati Swâmi, and the Ceylonese Buddhists, under the erudite H. Sumangala, High Priest of Adam’s Peak and President of the Widyodaya College, Colombo.

He who would seriously attempt to fathom the psychological sciences, must come

to the sacred land of ancient Âryâvarta. None is older than she in esoteric wisdom and civilization, however fallen may be her poor shadow—modern India. Holding this country, as we do, for the fruitful hot-bed whence proceeded all subsequent philosophical systems, to this source of all psychology and philosophy a portion of our Society has come to learn its ancient wisdom and ask for the impartation of its weird secrets. Philology has made too much progress to require at this late day a demonstration of this fact of the primogenitive nationality of Âryâvarta. The unproved and prejudiced hypothesis of modern Chronology is not worthy of a moment's thought, and it will vanish in time like so many other unproved hypotheses. The line of philosophical heredity, from Kapila through Epicurus to James Mill; from Patañjali through Plotinus to Jacob Böhme, can be traced like the course of a river through a landscape. One of the objects of the Society's organization was to examine the too transcendent views of the Spiritualists in regard to the powers of disembodied spirits; and, having told them what, in our opinion at least, a portion of their phenomena are *not*, it will become incumbent upon us now to show what they are. So apparent is it that it is in the East, and especially in India, that the key to the alleged "supernatural" phenomena of the Spiritualists must be sought, that it has recently been conceded in the Allahabad *Pioneer* (August

11th, 1879), an Anglo-Indian daily journal which has not the reputation of saying what it does not mean. Blaming the men of science who "intent upon physical discovery, for some generations have been too prone to neglect super-physical investigation," it mentions "the new wave of doubt" (Spiritualism) which has "latterly disturbed this conviction." To a large number of persons, including many of high culture and intelligence, it adds, "the supernatural has again asserted itself as a fit subject of inquiry and research. And there are plausible hypotheses in favour of the idea that among the 'sages' of the East . . . there may be found in a higher degree than among the more modernized inhabitants of the West traces of those personal peculiarities, whatever they may be, which are required as a condition precedent to the occurrence of supernatural phenomena." And then, unaware that the cause he pleads is one of the chief aims and objects of our Society, the editorial writer remarks that it is "the only direction in which, it seems to us, the efforts of the Theosophists in India might possibly be useful. The leading members of the Theosophical Society in India are known to be very advanced students of occult phenomena, already, and we cannot but hope that their professions of interest in Oriental philosophy . . . may cover a reserved intention of carrying out explorations of the kind we indicate."

While, as observed, one of our objects, it yet is but one of many; the most important of which is to revive the work of Ammonius Saccas, and make various nations remember that they are the children "of one mother." As to the transcendental side of the ancient Theosophy, it is also high time that the Theosophical Society should

explain. With how much, then, of this nature-searching, God-seeking science of the ancient Aryan and Greek mystics, and of the powers of modern spiritual mediumship, does the Society agree? Our answer is:—with it all. But if asked what it believes in, the reply will be:—“*as a body*—Nothing.” The Society, as a body, has no creed, as creeds are but the shells around spiritual knowledge; and Theosophy in its fruition is spiritual knowledge itself—the very essence of

philosophical and theistic enquiry. Visible representative of Universal Theosophy, it can be no more sectarian than a Geographical Society, which represents universal geographical exploration without caring whether the explorers be of one creed or another. The religion of the Society is an algebraical equation, in which so long as the sign = of equality is not omitted, each member is allowed to substitute quantities of his own, which better accord with climatic and other exigencies of his native land, with the idiosyncrasies of his people, or even with his own. Having no accepted creed, our Society is very ready to give and take, to learn and teach, by practical experimentation, as opposed to mere passive and credulous acceptance of enforced dogma. It is willing to accept every result claimed by any of the foregoing schools or systems, that can be logically and experimentally demonstrated. Conversely, it can take nothing on mere faith, no matter by whom the demand may be made.

But, when we come to consider ourselves individually, it is quite another thing. The Society's members represent the most varied nationalities and races, and were born and educated in the most dissimilar creeds and social conditions. Some of them believe in one thing, others in another. Some incline toward the ancient *magic*, or secret wisdom that was taught in the sanctuaries, which was the very opposite of supernaturalism or diabolism; others in modern spiritualism, or intercourse with the spirits of the dead; still others in mesmerism or animal magnetism, or only an occult dynamic force in nature. A certain number have scarcely yet acquired any definite belief, but are in a state of attentive expectancy; and there are even those who call themselves materialists, in a certain sense. Of atheists and bigoted sectarians of any religion, there are none in the Society; for the very fact of a man's joining it proves that he is in search of the final truth as to the ultimate essence of things. If there be such a thing as a speculative atheist, which philosophers may deny, he would have to reject both cause and effect, whether in this world of matter, or in that of spirit. There may be members who, like the poet Shelley, have let their imagination soar from cause to prior cause *ad*

infinitum, as each in its turn became logically transformed into a result necessitating a prior cause, until they have thinned the Eternal into a mere mist. But even they are not atheists in the speculative sense, whether they identify the material forces of the universe with the functions with which the theists endow their God, or otherwise; for once that they cannot free themselves from the conception of the abstract ideal of power, cause, necessity, and effect, they can be considered as atheists only in respect to a personal God, and not to the Universal Soul of the Pantheist. On the other hand, the bigoted sectarian, fenced in, as he is, with a creed upon every paling of which is written the warning “No Thoroughfare,” can neither come out of his enclosure to join the Theosophical Society, nor, if he could, has it room for one whose very religion forbids examination. The very root idea of the Society is free and fearless investigation.

As a body, the Theosophical Society holds that all original thinkers and investigators of the hidden side of nature whether materialists those who find matter “the promise and potency of all terrestrial life,” or spiritualists—that is, those who discover in spirit the source of all energy and of matter as well, were and are, properly, Theosophists. For to be one, one need not necessarily recognize the existence of any special God or a deity. One need but worship the spirit of living nature, and try to identify oneself with it. To revere that *Presence*, the invisible Cause, which is yet ever manifesting itself in its incessant results; the intangible, omnipotent, and omnipresent Proteus: indivisible in its Essence, and eluding form, yet appearing under all and every form; who is here and there, and everywhere and nowhere; is ALL, and NOTHING; ubiquitous yet one; the Essence filling, binding, bounding, containing everything; contained in all. It will, we think, be seen now, that whether classed as Theists, Pantheists or Atheists, such men are near kinsmen to the rest. Be what he may, once that a student abandons the old and trodden highway of routine, and enters upon the solitary path of independent thought—Godward—he is a Theosophist; an original thinker, a seeker after

the eternal truth with “an inspiration of his own” to solve the universal problems.

With every man that is earnestly searching in his own way after a knowledge of the Divine Principle, of man’s relations to it, and nature’s manifestations of it, Theosophy is allied. It is likewise the ally of honest science, as distinguished from much that passes for *exact*, physical science, so long as the latter does not poach on the domains of psychology and metaphysics.

And it is also the ally of every honest religion—to wit: a religion willing to be judged by the same tests as it applies to the others. Those books, which contain the most self-evident truth, are to it inspired (not revealed). But all books it regards, on account of the human element contained in them, as inferior to the Book of Nature; to read which and comprehend it correctly, the innate powers of the soul must be highly

developed. Ideal laws can be perceived by the intuitive faculty alone; they are beyond the domain of argument and dialectics, and no one can understand or rightly appreciate them through the explanations of another mind, though even this mind be claiming a direct revelation. And, as this Society which allows the widest sweep in the realms of the pure ideal, is no less firm in the sphere of facts, its deference to modern science and its just representatives is sincere. Despite all their lack of a higher spiritual intuition, the world's debt to the representatives of modern physical science is immense; hence, the Society endorses heartily the noble and indignant protest of that gifted and eloquent preacher, the Rev. O. B. Frothingham, against those who try to undervalue the services of our great naturalists. "Talk of Science as being irreligious, atheistic," he exclaimed in a recent lecture, delivered at New York, "Science is creating a new idea of God. It is due to Science that we have any conception at all of a *living* God. If we do not become atheists one of these days under the maddening effect of Protestantism, it will be due to Science, because it is disabusing us of hideous illusions that tease and embarrass us, and putting us in the way of knowing how to reason about the things we see . . ."

And it is also due to the unremitting labours of such Orientalists as Sir W. Jones, Max Müller, Burnouf, Colebrooke, Haug, de Saint-Hilaire, and so many others, that the Society, as a body, feels equal respect and veneration for Vedic, Buddhist, Zoroastrian, and other old religions of the world; and, a like brotherly feeling towards its Hindu, Sinhalese, Parsi, Jain, Hebrew, and Christian members as individual students of "self," of nature, and of the divine in nature.

Born in the United States of America, the Society was constituted on the model of its Motherland. The latter omitting the name of God from its Constitution lest it should afford a pretext one day to make a state religion, gives absolute equality to all religions in its laws. All support and each is in turn protected by the State. The Society, modelled upon this Constitution, may fairly be termed a "Republic of Conscience.

We have now, we think, made clear why our members, as individuals, are free to stay outside or inside any creed they please, provided they do not pretend that none but themselves shall enjoy the privilege of conscience, and try to force their opinions upon the others. In this respect the Rules of the Society are very strict. It tries to act upon the wisdom of the old Buddhistic axiom, "Honour thine own faith, and do not slander that of others"; echoed back in our present century, in the "Declaration of Principles" of the Brahmo Samaj, which so nobly states that: "no sect shall be vilified, ridiculed, or hated." In Section VI of the Revised Rules of the Theosophical Society, recently adopted in General Council, at Bombay, is this mandate: "It is not lawful for any officer of the Parent Society to express, by word or act, any hostility to, or preference for, any one section (sectarian division, or group within the Society) more than

another. All must be regarded and treated as equally the objects of the Society's solicitude and exertions. All have an equal right to have the essential features of their religious belief laid before the tribunal of an impartial world." In their individual capacity, members may, when attacked, occasionally break this Rule, but, nevertheless, as

officers they are restrained, and the Rule is strictly enforced during the meetings. For, above all human sects stands Theosophy in its abstract sense; Theosophy which is too wide for any of them to contain but which easily contains them.

In conclusion, we may state that, broader and far more universal in its views than any existing mere scientific Society, it has *plus* science its belief in every possibility, and determined will to penetrate into those unknown spiritual regions which exact science pretends that its votaries have no business to explore. And, it has one quality more than any religion in that it makes no difference between Gentile, Jew, or Christian. It is in this spirit that the Society has been established upon the footing of a Universal Brotherhood.

Unconcerned about politics; hostile to the insane dreams of Socialism and of Communism, which it abhors—as both are but disguised conspiracies of brutal force and sluggishness against honest labour; the Society cares but little about the outward human management of the material world. The whole of its aspirations are directed toward the occult truths of the visible and invisible worlds. Whether the physical man be under the rule of an empire or a republic, concerns only the man of matter. His body may be enslaved; as to his Soul, he has the right to give to his rulers the proud answer of Socrates to his Judges. They have no sway over the *inner* man.

Such is, then, the Theosophical Society, and such its principles, its multifarious aims, and its objects. Need we wonder at the past misconceptions of the general public, and the easy hold the enemy has been able to find to lower it in the public estimation? The true student has ever been a recluse, a man of silence and meditation. With the busy world his habits and tastes are so little in common that, while he is studying, his enemies and slanderers have undisturbed opportunities. But time cures all and lies are but ephemera. Truth alone is eternal.

About a few of the Fellows of the Society who have made great scientific discoveries, and some others to whom the psychologist and the biologist are indebted for the new light

thrown upon the darker problems of the inner man, we will speak later on. Our object now was but to prove to the reader that Theosophy is neither "a newfangled doctrine,"

a political cabal, nor one of those societies of enthusiasts which are born today but to die tomorrow. That not all of its members can think alike, is proved by the Society having organized into two great Divisions—the Eastern and the Western—and the latter being divided into numerous sections, according to races and religious views. One man's thought, infinitely various as are its manifestations, is not all-embracing. Denied ubiquity, it must necessarily speculate but in one direction; and once transcending the boundaries of exact human knowledge, it has to err and wander, for the ramifications of the one Central and Absolute Truth are infinite. Hence, we occasionally find even the greater philosophers losing themselves in the labyrinths of speculations, thereby provoking the criticism of posterity. But as all work for one and the same object, namely, the disenthralment of human thought, the elimination of superstitions, and the discovery of truth, all are equally welcome. The attainment of these objects, all agree, can best be secured by convincing the reason and warming the enthusiasm of the generation of fresh young minds, that are just ripening into maturity, and making ready to take the place of their prejudiced and conservative fathers. And, as each—the great ones as well as small—have trodden the royal road to knowledge, we listen to all, and take both small and great into our fellowship. For no honest searcher comes back empty-handed, and even he who has enjoyed the least share of popular favour can lay at least his mite upon the one altar of Truth.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

THE DRIFT OF WESTERN SPIRITUALISM

107

THE DRIFT OF WESTERN SPIRITUALISM

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 1, October, 1879, pp. 7-8]

Late advices from various parts of the world seem to indicate that, while there is an increasing interest in the phenomena of Spiritualism, especially among eminent men of science, there is also a growing desire to learn the views of the Theosophists. The first impulse of hostility has nearly spent itself, and the moment approaches when a patient hearing will be given to our arguments. This was foreseen by us from the beginning. The founders of our Society were mainly veteran Spiritualists, who had outgrown their first amazement at the strange phenomena, and felt the necessity to investigate the laws of mediumship to the very bottom. Their reading of mediaeval and ancient works upon the occult sciences had shown them that our modern phenomena were but repetitions of what had been seen, studied, and comprehended in former epochs. In the biographies of ascetics, mystics, theurgists, prophets, ecstasies; of astrologers, “diviners,” “magicians,” “sorcerers,” and other students, subjects, or practitioners of the Occult Power in its many branches, they found ample evidence that Western Spiritualism could only be comprehended by the creation of a science of Comparative Psychology. By a like synthetic method the philologists, under the lead of Eugène Burnouf, had unlocked the secrets of religious and philological heredity, and exploded Western theological theories and dogmas until then deemed impregnable.

Proceeding in this spirit, the Theosophists thought they discovered some reasons to doubt the correctness of the spiritualistic theory that all the phenomena of the circles must

108

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

of necessity be attributed *solely* to the action of spirits of our deceased friends. The ancients knew and classified other supercorporeal entities that are capable of moving objects, floating the bodies of mediums through the air, giving apparent tests of the identity of dead persons, and controlling sensitives to write and speak strange languages, paint pictures, and play upon unfamiliar musical instruments. And not only knew them, but showed how these invisible powers might be controlled by man, and made to work these wonders at his bidding. They found, moreover, that there were two sides of Occultism—a good and an evil side; and that it was a dangerous and fearful thing for the inexperienced to meddle with the latter—dangerous to our moral as to our physical nature. The conviction forced itself upon their minds, then, that while the

weird wonders of Spiritualism were among the most important of all that could be studied, mediumship, without the most careful attention to every condition, was fraught with peril.

Thus thinking, and impressed with the great importance of a thorough knowledge of mesmerism and all other branches of Occultism, these founders established the Theosophical Society, to read, enquire, compare, study, experiment and expound, the mysteries of Psychology. This range of enquiry, of course, included an investigation of Vedic, Brahmanical and other ancient Oriental literature; for in that—especially the former, the grandest repository of wisdom ever accessible to humanity—lay the entire mystery of nature and of man. To comprehend modern mediumship it is, in short, indispensable to familiarize oneself with the Yoga Philosophy; and the aphorisms of Patañjali are even more essential than the “Divine Revelations” of Andrew Jackson Davis. We can never know how much of the mediumistic phenomena we *must* attribute to the disembodied until it is settled how much *can* be done by the embodied, human soul, and the blind but active powers at work within those regions which are yet unexplored by science. Not even proof of an existence beyond the grave, if it must come to us in a phenomenal shape. This will be conceded without qualification, we think, provided that the records

of history be admitted as corroborating the statements we have made.

The reader will observe that the primary issue between the theosophical and spiritualistic theories of mediumistic phenomena is that the Theosophists say the phenomena may be produced by more agencies than one, and the latter that but one agency can be conceded, namely—the disembodied souls. There are other differences—as, for instance, that there *can* be such a thing as the obliteration of the human individuality as the result of very evil environment; that good spirits seldom, if ever, cause physical “manifestations,” etc. But the first point to settle is the one here first stated; and we have shown how and in what directions the Theosophists maintain that the investigations should be pushed.

Our East Indian readers, unlike those of Western countries who may see these lines, do not know how warmly and stoutly these issues have been debated, these past three or four years. Suffice it to say that, a point having been reached where argument seemed no longer profitable, the controversy ceased; and that the present visit of the New York Theosophists, and their establishment of the Bombay Headquarters, with the library, lectures, and this journal, are its tangible results. That this step must have a very great influence upon Western psychological science is apparent. Whether our Committee are themselves fully competent to observe and properly expound Eastern Psychology or not, no one will deny that Western Science must inevitably be enriched by the contributions of the Indian, Sinhalese, and other mystics who will now find in *The Theosophist* a channel by which to reach European and American students of

Occultism, such as was never imagined, not to say seen, before. It is our earnest hope and belief that after the broad principles of our Society, its earnestness, and exceptional facilities for gathering Oriental wisdom, are well understood, it will be better thought of than now by Spiritualists, and attract into its fellowship many more of their brightest and best intellects.

Theosophy can be styled the enemy of Spiritualism with

no more propriety than of Mesmerism, or any other branch of Psychology. In this wondrous outburst of phenomena that the Western world has been seeing since 1848, is presented such an opportunity to investigate the hidden mysteries of being as the world has scarcely known before. Theosophists only urge that these phenomena shall be studied so thoroughly that our epoch shall not pass away with the mighty problem unsolved. Whatever obstructs this—whether the narrowness of sciolism, the dogmatism of theology, or the prejudice of any other class, should be swept aside as something hostile to the public interest. Theosophy, with its design to search back into historic records for proof, may be regarded as the natural outcome of phenomenalistic Spiritualism, or as a touchstone to show the value of its pure gold. One must know both to comprehend what is Man.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

ANTIQUITY OF THE VEDAS

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 1, October, 1879, pp. 8-9]

A Journal interested like *The Theosophist* in the explorations of archaeology and archaic religions, as well as the study of the occult in nature, has to be doubly prudent and discreet. To bring the two conflicting elements—exact science and metaphysics—into direct contact, might create as great a disturbance as to throw a piece of potassium into a basin of water. The very fact that we are predestined and pledged to prove that some of the wisest of Western scholars have been misled by the dead letter of appearances and that they are unable to discover the hidden spirit in the relics of old, places us under the ban from the start. With those sciolists who are neither broad enough, nor sufficiently modest to allow their decisions to be reviewed, we are necessarily in antagonism. Therefore, it is essential that our position in relation to certain scientific hypotheses,

ANTIQUITY OF THE VEDAS

111

perhaps tentative and only sanctioned for want of better ones—should be clearly defined at the outset.

An infinitude of study has been bestowed by the archaeologists and the Orientalists upon the question of chronology—especially in regard to Comparative Theology. So far, their affirmations as to the relative antiquity of the great religions of the pre-Christian era are little more than plausible hypotheses. How far back the national and religious Vedic period, so-called, extends—“it is impossible to tell,” confesses Professor Max Müller; nevertheless, he traces it “to a period anterior to 1000 B.C.,” and brings us “to 1100 or 1200 B.C., as the earliest time when we may suppose the collection of the Vedic hymns to have been finished.” Nor do any other of our leading scholars claim to have finally settled the vexed question, especially delicate as it is in its bearing upon the chronology of the book of *Genesis*. Christianity, the direct outflow of Judaism and in most cases the State religion of their respective countries, has unfortunately stood in their way. Hence, scarcely two scholars agree; and each assigns a different date to the *Vedas* and the Mosaic books, taking care in every case to give the latter the benefit of the doubt. Even that leader of the leaders in philological and chronological questions—Professor Müller, hardly twenty years ago, allowed himself a prudent margin by stating that it will be difficult to settle “whether the *Veda* is ‘the oldest of the books,’ and whether some of the portions of the Old Testament may not be traced back to the same or even an earlier date than the oldest hymns of the *Vedas*.” *The Theosophist* is, therefore, quite warranted in either adopting or rejecting as it

pleases the so-called authoritative chronology of science. Do we err then, in confessing that we rather incline to accept the chronology of that renowned Vedic scholar, Swami Dayânanda Saraswati, who unquestionably knows what he is talking about, has the four *Vedas* by heart, is perfectly familiar with all Sanskrit literature, has no such scruples as the Western Orientalists in regard to public feelings, nor desire to humour the superstitious notions of the majority, nor has any object to gain in suppressing

facts? We are only too conscious of the risk in withholding our adulation from scientific authorities. Yet, with the common temerity of the heterodox we must take our course, even though, like the Tarpeia of old, we be smothered under a heap of shields—a shower of learned quotations from these “authorities.”

We are far from feeling ready to adopt the absurd chronology of a Berosus or even Syncellus—though in truth they appear “absurd” only in the light of our preconceptions. But, between the extreme claims of the Brahmins and the ridiculously short periods conceded by our Orientalists for the development and full growth of that gigantic literature of the ante-Mahâbhâratan period, there ought to be a just mean. While Swami Dayânanda Saraswati asserts that “The *Vedas* have now ceased to be objects of study for nearly 5,000 years,” and places the first appearance of the four *Vedas* at an immense antiquity, Professor Müller, assigning for the composition of even the earliest among the *Brâhmanas*, the years from about 1000 to 800 B.C., hardly dares, as we have seen, to place the collection and the original composition of the Sanhitâ, of Rig-Vedic hymns, earlier than 1200 to 1500 before our era!* Whom ought we to believe; and which of the two is the better informed? Cannot this gap of several thousand years be closed, or would it be equally difficult for either of the two cited authorities to give data which would be regarded by science as thoroughly convincing? It is as easy to reach a false conclusion by the modern inductive method as to assume false premises from which to make deductions. Doubtless Professor Max Müller has good reasons for arriving at his chronological conclusions. But so has Dayânanda Saraswati Pandit. The gradual modifications, development and growth of the Sanskrit language are sure guides enough for an expert philologist. But, that there is a possibility of his having been led into error would seem to suggest itself upon considering a certain argument brought forward by Swami Dayânanda. Our respected friend and teacher maintains

* *Lecture on the Vedas*. [in *Chips, etc.*, Vol. I.]

that both Professor Müller and Dr. Wilson have been solely guided in their researches and conclusion by the inaccurate and untrustworthy commentaries of Sayana, Mahîdhara, and Uvata; commentaries which differ diametrically from those of a far earlier period as used by himself in connection with his great work, the *Veda-Bhâshya*. A cry was raised at the outset of this publication that Swami's commentary is calculated to refute Sayana and the English interpreters. "For this," very justly remarks Pandit Dayânanda, "I cannot be blamed; if Sayana has erred, and English interpreters have chosen to take him for their guide, the delusion cannot be long maintained. Truth alone can stand, and Falsehood before growing civilization must fall."* And if, as he claims, his *Veda-Bhâshya* is entirely founded on the old commentaries of the ante-Mahâbhâratan period to which the Western scholars have had no access, then, since his were the surest guides of the two classes, we cannot hesitate to follow him, rather than the best of our European Orientalists.

But, apart from such *prima facie* evidence, we would respectfully request Professor Max Müller to solve us a riddle. Propounded by himself, it has puzzled us for over twenty years, and pertains as much to simple logic as to the chronology in question. Clear and undeviating, like the Rhone through the Geneva lake, the idea runs through the course of his lectures, from the first volume of *Chips* down to his last discourse. We will try to explain.

All who have followed his lectures as attentively as ourselves will remember that Professor Max Müller attributes the wealth of myths, symbols and religious allegories in the Vedic hymns, as in Grecian mythology, to the early worship of nature by man. "In the hymns of the Vedas" to quote his words, "we see man left to himself to solve the riddle of this world . . . He is awakened from darkness and slumber by the light of the sun" . . . and he calls it—"his life, his breath, his brilliant Lord and Protector. He gives names to all the powers of nature, and after he has called the fire 'Agni,' the sunlight 'Indra,' the storms

* Answer to the Objections to the *Veda-Bhâshya*.

'Maruts,' and the dawn 'Usha,' they all seem to grow naturally into beings like himself, nay, greater than himself."* This definition of the mental state of *primitive* man, in the days of the very infancy of humanity, and when hardly out of its cradle—is perfect. The period to which he attributes these effusions of an infantile mind, is the Vedic period, and the time which separates us from it is, as claimed above, 3,000 years. So much impressed seems the great philologist with this idea of the mental feebleness of mankind at the time when these hymns were composed by the four venerable Rishis, that in his *Introduction to the Science of Religion* (p. 278) we find the Professor saying: "Do you still wonder at polytheism or at mythology? Why, they are inevitable. They are, if you like, a *parler enfantin* of religion. But the world has its childhood, and when it was a child it spoke as a child [*nota bene*, 3,000 years ago], it

understood as a child, it thought as a child . . . The fault rests with us, if we insist on *taking the language of children for the language of men* . . . The language of antiquity is the language of childhood . . . The *parler enfantin* in religion is not extinct . . . as, for instance, the religion of India . . .”

Having read thus far, we pause and think. At the very close of this able explanation, we meet with a tremendous difficulty, the idea of which must have never occurred to the able advocate of the ancient faiths. To one familiar with the writings and ideas of this Oriental scholar, it would seem the height of absurdity to suspect him of accepting the Biblical chronology of 6,000 years since the appearance of the first man upon earth as the basis of his calculations. And yet the recognition of such chronology is inevitable if we have to accept Professor Müller’s reasons at all; for here we run against a purely arithmetical and mathematical obstacle, a gigantic miscalculation of proportion . . .

No one can deny that the growth and development of mankind—mental as well as physical—must be analogically measured by the growth and development of man. An

* *Chips from a German Workshop*, Vol. I, p. 68.

anthropologist, if he cares to go beyond the simple consideration of the relations of man to other members of the animal kingdom, has to be in a certain way a physiologist as well as an anatomist; for, as much as ethnology, it is a progressive science which can be well treated but by those who are able to follow up retrospectively the regular unfolding of human faculties and powers, assigning to each a certain period of life. Thus, no one would regard a skull in which the wisdom tooth, so-called, would be apparent, the skull of an infant. Now, according to geology, recent researches “give good reasons to believe that under low and base grades the existence of man can be traced back into the tertiary times.” In the old glacial drift of Scotland—says Professor W. Draper—“the relics of man are found along with those of the fossil elephant”; and the best calculations so far assign a period of two hundred and forty thousand years since the beginning of the last glacial period. Making a proportion between 240,000 years—the least age we can accord to the human race—and twenty-four years of a man’s life, we find that three thousand years ago, or the period of the composition of Vedic hymns, mankind would be just twenty-one—the legal age of majority, and certainly a period at which man ceases using, if he ever will, the *parler enfantin* or childish lisping. But, according to the views of the Lecturer, it follows that man was, three thousand years ago, at twenty-one, a foolish and undeveloped—though a very promising—infant, and at twenty-four, has become the brilliant, acute, learned, highly analytical and philosophical man of the nineteenth century. Or, still keeping our equation in view, in other words, the Professor might as well say, that an individual who was a nursing baby at 12 noon on a certain day, would at 12:20 p.m., on the same day, have become an adult speaking high wisdom instead of his *parler enfantin*!

It really seems the duty of the eminent Sanskritist and Lecturer on Comparative Theology to get out of this dilemma. Either the *Rig-Veda* hymns were composed but 3,000 years ago, and, therefore, cannot be expressed in the “language of childhood”—man having lived in the glacial period

—but the generation which composed them must have been composed of adults, presumably as philosophical and scientific in the knowledge of their day, as we are in our own; or, we have to ascribe to them an immense antiquity in order to carry them back to the days of human mental infancy. And, in this latter case, Professor Max Müller will have to withdraw a previous remark, expressing the doubt “whether some of the portions of the Old Testament may not be traced back to the same or even an earlier date than the oldest hymns of the *Vedas*.”

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**
1879

FOOTNOTES TO DAYANANDA'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY

117

**FOOTNOTES TO "THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF
DAYANANDA SARASWATI SWAMI"**

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, Nos. 1, 3, October and December, 1879,
pp. 9-13, 66-68, respectively.]

No Swami or Sannyâsi can touch money, or personally transact any monetary business.

Rudrâdhyâya is a chapter about Rudra (a name of Śiva).

The office of "Jamâdâr" answers to that of a town Revenue Collector, combining that of a Magistrate, at the same time.

Parthiwa Puja is the ceremony connected with the worship of a lingam of clay—the emblem of Śiva.

[" . . . the great day of gloom and fasting—called Śivarâtri . . ."]. The Vishnavites, or worshippers of Vishnu—the greatest enemies of the Śivaïtes or worshippers of Śiva—hold on this day a festival, in derision of their religious opponents.

[" . . . this day following on the 13th of Vadya of Mâgh . . ."]. The eleventh month of the Hindu year.

[Kailâsa]. A mountain peak of the Himâlayas where Śiva's heaven is believed to be situated.

[*Nighanta*]. A medical work. There is a treatise entitled *Nighanta* in the *Vedas*.

[*Nirukta*]. Another Vedic treatise.

[*Purvamimânsa*]. *First* mimânsa.

118

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

[*nautch*]. Singing and dancing by professional women.

[four *ghatkas*]. About half-an-hour.

[*Mukti*]. The final bliss of a liberated soul; absorption into Brahma.

Astronomy includes Astrology in India, and it is in Benares that the subtlest of metaphysics and so-called occult sciences are taught.

Mella is a religious gathering, numbering at times hundreds of thousands of pilgrims.

[*tumbâ*]. A vessel to hold water, made of a dried gourd.

[*Sannyâsis*]. *Sannyâs*. There are different conditions and orders prescribed in the Shâstras. (1) *Brahmachâri*—one who leads simply a life of celibacy, maintaining himself by begging while prosecuting his studies; (2) *Grihasthâsrama*—one who leads a married but a holy life; (3) *Vânaprastha*—who lives the life of a hermit; (4) *Sannyâs* or *Chaturthâsrama*. This is the highest of the four; in which the members of either of the other three may enter, the necessary conditions for it being the renunciation of *all* worldly considerations. Following are the four different successive stages of this life: (a) *Kutichaka*—living in a hut, or in a desolate place and wearing a red-ochre coloured garment, carrying a three-knotted bamboo rod, and wearing the hair in the centre of the crown of the head, having the sacred thread, and devoting oneself to the contemplation of *Parabrahma*; (b) *Bahudaka*—one who lives quite apart from his family and the world, maintains himself on alms collected at *seven* houses, and wears the same kind of reddish garment; (c) *Hansa*—the same as in the preceding case, except the carrying of only a one-knotted bamboo; (d) *Paramahansa*—the same as the others; but the ascetic wears the sacred thread, and his hair and beard are quite long. This is the highest of all these orders. A *Paramahansa* who shows himself worthy is on the very threshold of becoming a *Dikshita*.

[*Dand*]. The three and seven-knotted bamboo of *Sannyâsis* given to them as a sign of power, after their initiation.

[“. . . a man thoroughly versed in Yog . . .”]. A religious “magician,” practically. One who can embrace the past and the future in one *present*; a man who has reached the most perfect state of clairvoyance, and has a thorough knowledge of what is now known as mesmerism, and the occult properties of nature, which sciences help the student to perform the greatest phenomena; such phenomena must not be confounded with *miracles*, which are an absurdity.

One may be a *Yogi*, and yet not a *Dikshita*, *i.e.*, not have received his final initiation into the mysteries of *Yoga Vidya*.

[“Spirituous liquors, fish, and all kind of animal food, and *Mudra* (exhibition of indecent images) . . . were allowed . . .”]. The word *Mudra* has been variously understood and interpreted. It means the signet of a royal as well as of a religious

personage; a ring seal with initials engraved upon it. But it is also understood in another sense—the pristine and esoteric.

Bhûcharî, Chachurî, Khecharî, Charâcharî, and Agocharî — these five were the Mudras practiced by the Aryas to qualify themselves for Yoga. They are the initiative stages to the difficult system of RÂJA-YOGA, and the preliminaries of *Dhotipoti*, the early discipline of HATHA-YOGA. The *Mudra* is a quite distinct and independent course of Yoga training, the completion of which helps the candidate to attain *Anima, Laghima* and *Garima*. (For the meaning of these *Siddhis*, see article on *Yog-Vidya* in the November number of *The Theosophist*.) The sense of this holy word once perverted, the ignorant Brahmins debased it to imply the pictorial representation of the emblems of their deities, and to signify the marks of those sexual emblems daubed upon their bodies with *Gopichand* made of the whitish clay of rivers held sacred. The Vaishnavas debase the mark and the word less than the *Shaivas*; but the *Shaktas* by applying it to the obscene gestures and

the indecent exposures of their filthy Ritual, have entirely degraded its Aryan meaning. The following are the five nasals in Sanskrit;

(1) ङ् ङ; (2) ञ् ञ; (3) ण् ण; (4) न् न; (5) म् म

[“I . . . reached Gupta Kâśî (the *secret* Benares) . . .”]. Gupta Kâśî —*Gupta*, secret, hidden; Kâśî, the ancient name of Benares—is a holy place enshrouded in mystery. It is about fifty miles from Badrinâth. Outwardly there is seen only a temple with columns; but a firm belief prevails among pilgrims to the effect that this shrine only serves as a landmark to indicate the locality of the sacred hidden Benares—a whole city, in fact, underground. This holy place, they believe, will be revealed at the proper time, to the world. The *Mahâtmas* alone can now reach it, and some inhabit it. A learned Swâmi friend, and a native of Badrinâth, highly respected at Bombay, has just told us that there is a prophecy that in twenty-five years from this time Benares will begin to decline in every respect as it has long done in holiness, and, owing to the wickedness of men, will finally fall. Then, the mystery of Gupta Kâśî will be disclosed and the truth begin to dawn upon men. Swâmi P—— solemnly avers that, having often visited this very shrine, he has several times observed, with his own eyes, as it were, shadowy forms disappearing at the entrance—as though half visible men, or the wraiths of men were entering.

[*Triyugee*]. Three Yugas, or the three Epochs.

[“ . . . those true ascetics I have heard of but as yet had never met—the *Mahâtmas* . . .”].

The *Mahâtmas*, or literally great souls, from the words—*Mahâ*, great, and *âtma*, soul—are those mysterious adepts whom the popular fancy views as “magicians,” and of whom every child knows in India, but who are met with so rarely, especially in this age of degeneration. With the

exception of some Swâmis and ascetics of a perfectly holy life, there are few who know positively that they *do* exist, and are no myths created by superstitious fancy. It will be given, perhaps, to Swâmi Dayânanda, the great and holy man, to disabuse the skeptical minds of his degenerating countrymen; especially of this young decorated generation, the *Jeunesse Dorée* of India, the LL.B., and M.A. aristocracy—who, fed upon Western materialism, and inspired by the cold negation of the age, despise the traditions, as well as the religion of their forefathers, calling all that was held sacred by the latter, a “rotten superstition.” Alas! they hardly remark themselves that from idolatry they have fallen into *fetishism*. They have but changed their idols for poorer ones, and remain the same.

[“. . . I then ascended the Tunganâth Peak”].

At Badrinâth (Northern India), on the right bank of the Bishangangâ, where the celebrated temple of Vishnu, with hot mineral springs in it, annually attracts numerous pilgrims, there is a strange tradition among the inhabitants. They believe that holy Mahâtmas (anchorites) have lived [on] the inaccessible mountain peaks, in caves of the greatest beauty for several thousand years. Their residence is approachable only through a cavern perpetually choked with snow, which forbids the approach of the curious and the skeptical. The Badrinâth peaks in this neighbourhood are above 22,000 feet high.

Since the above was written one of our most respected and learned Fellows has informed us that his *Guru* (Preceptor) told him that while stopping at the temple of Nârâyan, on the Himâlayas, where he had passed some months, he saw therein a copper plate bearing date, with an inscription, said to have been made by Śankarâchârya, that that temple was the extreme limit where one should go in ascending the Himâlayas. The *Guru* also said that farther up the heights, and beyond apparently insurmountable walls of snow and ice, he several times saw men of a most venerable appearance, such as the Aryan Rishis are represented, wearing hair so long as to hang below their

waist. There is reason to know that he saw correctly, and that the current belief is not without foundation that the place is inhabited by adepts and *no one* who is *not* an adept *will ever* succeed in getting an entrance.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

PERSIAN ZOROASTRIANISM AND RUSSIAN VANDALISM

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 1, October, 1879, pp. 19-21]

Few persons are capable of appreciating the truly beautiful and esthetic; fewer still of revering those monumental relics of bygone ages, which prove that even in the remotest epochs mankind worshipped a Supreme Power, and people were moved to express their abstract conceptions in works which should defy the ravages of Time. The Vandals—whether Slavic Wends, or some barbarous nation of Germanic race—came at all events from the North. A recent occurrence is calculated to make us regret that Justinian did not destroy them all; for it appears that there are still in the North worthy scions left of those terrible destroyers of monuments of arts and sciences, in the persons of certain Russian merchants who have just perpetrated an act of inexcusable vandalism. According to the late Russian papers, the Moscow archmillionaire, Kokoreff, with his Tiflis partner the Armenian Croesus, Mirzoeff, is desecrating and apparently about to totally destroy perhaps the oldest relic in the world of Zoroastrianism—the “Attesh-Gag” of Baku.*

Few foreigners, and perhaps as few Russians, know anything of this venerable sanctuary of the Fire-worshippers around the Caspian Sea. About twenty versts from the small town of Baku in the valley of Absharon in Russian Georgia, and among the barren, desolated steppes of the shores of the Caspian, there stands—alas! rather stood, but a few months ago—a strange structure, something between a mediaeval Cathedral and a fortified castle. It was built in unknown

* Attesh-Kudda also.

ages, and by builders as unknown. Over an area of somewhat more than a square mile, a tract known as the “Fiery Field,” upon which the structure stands, if one but digs from two to three inches into the sandy earth, and applies a lighted match, a jet of fire will stream up, as if from a spout.* The “Gheber Temple,” as the building is sometimes termed, is carved out of one solid rock. It comprises an enormous square enclosed by crenelated walls, and at the centre of the square, a high tower also rectangular resting upon four gigantic pillars. The latter were pierced vertically down to the bed-rock and the cavities were continued up to the battlements where they opened out into the atmosphere; thus forming continuous tubes through which the inflammable gas stored up in the heart of the mother-rock was conducted to the top of the tower. This tower has been for centuries a shrine of the fire-worshippers and bears the symbolical representation of the trident—called *teersoot*. All around the interior face of the external wall, are excavated the cells, about twenty in number, which served as habitations for past generations of Zoroastrian recluses. Under the supervision of a High

Mobed, here, in the silence of their isolated cloisters, they studied the *Avesta*, the *Vendidad*, the *Yasna*—especially the latter, it seems, as the rocky walls of the cells are inscribed with a greater number of quotations from the sacred songs. Under the tower-altar, three huge bells were hung. A legend says that they were miraculously produced by a holy traveller, in the tenth century during the Mussulman persecution, to warn the faithful of the approach of the enemy. But a few weeks ago, the tall tower-altar was yet ablaze with the same flame that local tradition affirms had been kindled thirty centuries ago. At the horizontal orifices in the four hollow pillars burned four perpetual fires, fed uninterruptedly from the inexhaustible subterranean reservoir. From every merlon on the walls, as well as from every embrasure flashed forth

* A bluish flame is seen to arise there, but “this fire does not consume; and if a person finds himself in the middle of it, no warmth is felt.” See Kinneir, *A Geographical Memoir of the Persian Empire*, p. 360.

a radiant light, like so many tongues of fire; and even the large porch overhanging the main entrance was encircled by a garland of fiery stars, the lambent lights shooting forth from smaller and narrower orifices. It was amid these impressive surroundings, that the Gheber recluses used to send up their daily prayers, meeting under the open tower-altar; every face reverentially turned toward the setting sun, as they united their voices in a parting evening hymn. And as the luminary—the “Eye of Ahura-Mazda”—sank lower and lower down the horizon, their voices grew lower and softer, until the chant sounded like a plaintive and subdued murmur . . . A last flash—and the sun is gone; and, as darkness follows daylight almost suddenly in these regions, the departure of the Deity’s symbol was the signal for a general illumination, unrivalled even by the greatest fireworks at regal festivals. The whole field seemed nightly like one blazing prairie . . .

Till about 1840, “Attesh-Gag” was the chief rendezvous for all the Fire-worshippers of Persia. Thousands of pilgrims came and went; for no true Gheber could die happy unless he had performed the sacred pilgrimage at least once during his life-time. A traveller—Koch—who visited the cloister about that time, found in it but five Zoroastrians, with their pupils. In 1878, about fourteen months ago, a lady of Tiflis, who visited the Attesh-Gag, mentioned in a private letter that she found there but one solitary hermit, who emerges from his cell but to meet the rising and salute the departing sun. And now, hardly a year later, we find in the papers that Messrs. Kokoreff and Co., are busy erecting on the Fiery Field enormous buildings for the refining of petroleum! All the cells but the one occupied by the poor old hermit, half-ruined and dirty beyond all expression, are inhabited by the firm’s workmen; the altar over which blazed the sacred flame, is now piled high with rubbish, mortar and mud, and the flame itself turned off in another direction. The bells are now, during the periodical visits of a Russian priest, taken down and suspended in the porch of the superintendent’s house; heathen relics being as usual used—though abused—by the religion which supplants the

previous worship. And, all looks like the abomination of desolation . . . “It is a matter of surprise to me,” writes a Baku correspondent in the *St. Petersburg Vedomosti*, who was the first to send the unwelcome news, “that the trident, the sacred *teersoot* itself, has not as yet been put to some appropriate use in the new firm’s kitchen . . . ! Is it then so absolutely necessary that the millionaire Kokoreff should desecrate the Zoroastrian cloister, which occupies such a trifling compound in comparison to the space allotted to his manufactories and stores? And shall such a remarkable relic of antiquity be sacrificed to commercial greediness which can after all neither lose nor gain one single rouble by destroying it?”

It must apparently, since Messrs. Kokoreff and Co. have leased the whole field from the Government, and the latter seems to feel quite indifferent over this idiotic and useless Vandalism. It is now more than twenty years since the writer visited for the last time Attesh-Gag. In those days besides a small group of recluses it had the visits of many pilgrims. And since it is more than likely that ten years hence, people will hear no more of it, I may just as well give a few more details of its history. Our Parsee friends will, I am sure, feel an interest in a few legends gathered by me on the spot.

There seems to be indeed a veil drawn over the origin of Attesh-Gag. Historical data are scarce and contradictory. With the exception of some old Armenian Chronicles which mention it incidentally as having existed before Christianity was brought into the country by Saint Nina during the third century,* there is no other mention of it anywhere else so far as I know.

* Though Saint Nina appeared in Georgia in the third, it is not before the fifth century that the idolatrous *Grouzines* [Georgians] were converted to Christianity by the thirteen Syrian Fathers. They came under the leadership of both St. Anthony and St. John of Zedadzene—so called, because he is alleged to have travelled to the Caucasian regions on purpose to fight and conquer the chief idol *Zeda*! And thus, while—as incontrovertible proof of the existence of both—the opulent tresses of the black hair of St. Nina are being preserved to this day as relics, in Zion Cathedral at Tiflis—the thaumaturgic John has immortalized

Tradition informs us—how far correctly is not for me to decide—that long before Zarathushtra, the people, who now are called in contempt, by the Mussulmans and Christians,

his name still more. *Zeda*, who was the Baal of the Trans-Caucasus, had children sacrificed to him, as the legend tells us, on the top of the Zedadzene mount, about 18 versts from Tiflis. It is there that the Saint defied the idol, or rather Satan under the guise of a stone statue—to single combat, and *miraculously* conquered him; *i.e.*, threw down, and trampled upon the idol. But he did not stop there in the exhibition of his powers. The mountain peak is of an immense height, and being only a barren rock at its top, spring water is nowhere to be found on its summit. But in commemoration of his triumph, the Saint had a spring appear at the very bottom of the deep, and—as people assert—a fathomless well, dug down into the very bowels of the mountain, and the gaping mouth of which was situated near the altar of the god *Zeda*, just in the centre of his temple. It was into this opening that the limbs of the murdered infants were cast down after the sacrifice. The miraculous spring,

however, was soon dried up, and for many centuries there appeared no water. But, when Christianity was firmly established, the water began re-appearing on the 7th day of every May, and continues to do so till the present time. Strange to say, this fact does not pertain to the domain of legend, but is one that has provoked an intense curiosity even among men of science, such as the eminent geologist, Dr. Otto W. von Abich, who resided for years at Tiflis. Thousands upon thousands proceed yearly upon pilgrimage to Zedadzene on the seventh of May; and all witness the “miracle.” From early morning, water is heard bubbling down at the rocky bottom of the well; and, as noon approaches, the parched-up walls of the mouth become moist, and clear cold sparkling water seems to come out from every porosity of the rock; it rises higher and higher, bubbles, increases, until at last having reached to the very brim, it suddenly stops, and a prolonged shout of triumphant joy bursts from the fanatical crowd. This cry seems to shake like a sudden discharge of artillery the very depths of the mountain and awaken the echo for miles around. Everyone hurries to fill a vessel with the miraculous water. There are necks wrung and heads broken on that day at Zedadzene, but everyone who survives carries home a provision of the crystal fluid. Toward evening the water begins decreasing as mysteriously as it had appeared, and at midnight the well is again perfectly dry. Not a drop of water, nor a trace of any spring, could be found by the engineers and geologists bent upon discovering the “trick.” For a whole year, the sanctuary remains deserted, and there is not even a janitor to watch the poor shrine. The geologists have declared that the soil of the mountain precludes the possibility of having springs concealed in it. Who will explain the puzzle?

“Ghebers,” and who term themselves “Behedin” (followers of the true faith), recognized Mithra, the Mediator, as their sole and highest God—who included within himself all the good as well as the bad gods. Mithra, representing the two natures of Ormazd and Ahriman combined, the people *feared* him, whereas, they would have had no need of fearing, but only of loving and reverencing him as Ahura-Mazda, were Mithra without the Ahriman element in him.

One day as the god, disguised as a shepherd, was wandering about the earth, he came to Baku, then a dreary, deserted seashore, and found an old devotee of his quarrelling with his wife. Upon this barren spot wood was scarce, and she would not give up a certain portion of her stock of cooking fuel to be burned upon the altar. So the Ahriman element was aroused in the god and, striking the stingy old woman, he changed her into a gigantic rock. Then, the Ahura-Mazda element prevailing, he, to console the bereaved widower, promised that neither he, nor his descendants, should ever need fuel any more, for he would provide such a supply as should last till the end of time. So he struck the rock again and then struck the ground for miles around, and the earth and the calcareous soil of the Caspian shores were filled up to the brim with naphtha. To commemorate the happy event, the old devotee assembled all the youths of the neighbourhood and set himself to excavating the rock—which was all that remained of his ex-wife. He cut the battlemented walls, and fashioned the altar and the four pillars, hollowing them all to allow the gases to rise up and escape through the top of the merlons. The god Mithra upon seeing the work ended, sent a lightning flash, which set ablaze the fire upon the altar, and lit up every merlon upon the walls. Then, in order that it should burn the brighter, he called forth the four winds and ordered them to blow the flame in every direction. To this day, Baku is known under its primitive name of “Badlube,” which means literally the gathering of winds.*

The other legend, which is but a continuation of the

above, runs thus: For countless ages, the devotees of Mithra worshipped at his shrines, until Zarathushtra, descending from heaven in the shape of a “Golden Star,” transformed himself into a man, and began teaching a new doctrine. He sang the praises of the One but Triple god—the supreme Eternal, the incomprehensible essence “Zervana-Akerene,” which emanating from itself “Primeval Light,” the latter in its turn produced Ahura-Mazda. But this process required that the “Primeval One” should previously absorb in itself all the light from the fiery Mithra, and thus left the poor god despoiled of all his brightness. Losing his right of undivided supremacy, Mithra, in despair, and instigated by his Ahrimanic nature, annihilated himself for the time being, leaving Ahriman alone, to fight out his quarrel with Ormazd, the best way he could. Hence, the prevailing Duality in nature since that time until Mithra returns; for he promised to his faithful devotees to come back some day. Only since then, a series of calamities fell upon the Fire-worshippers. The last of these was the invasion of their country by the Moslems in the 7th century, when these fanatics commenced most cruel persecutions against the Behedin. Driven away from every quarter, the Ghebers found refuge but in the province of Kerman, and in the city of Yezd. Then followed heresies. Many of the Zoroastrians abandoning the faith of their forefathers, became Moslems; others, in their unquenchable hatred for the new rulers, joined the ferocious Koords and became devil, as well as fire-worshippers. These are the Yezidis. The whole religion of these strange sectarians—with the exception of a few who have more weird rites, which are a secret to all but to themselves—consists in the following. As soon as the morning sun appears, they place their two thumbs crosswise one upon the other, kiss the symbol, and touch with them their brow in reverential silence. Then they salute the sun and turn back into their tents. They believe in the power of the Devil, dread it, and propitiate the “fallen angel” by every means; getting very angry whenever they hear him spoken of disrespectfully by either a Mussulman or a Christian. Murders have been committed

by them on account of such irreverent talk, but people have become more prudent of late.

With the exception of the Bombay community of Parsees, Fire-worshippers are, then, to be found but in the two places before mentioned, and scattered around Baku. In Persia some years ago, according to statistics they numbered about 100,000 men;* I doubt, though, whether their religion has been preserved as pure as even that of the Gujerati Parsees, adulterated as is the latter by the errors and carelessness of generations of uneducated Mobeds. And yet, as is the case of their Bombay brethren, who are considered by all the travellers as well as Anglo-Indians, as the most intelligent, industrious and well-behaved community of the native races, the fire-worshippers of Kerman and Yezd bear a very high character among the Persians, as well as among the Russians of Baku. Uncouth and crafty some of them have become, owing to long centuries of persecution and spoliation; but the unanimous testimony is in

their favour and they are spoken of as a virtuous, highly moral, and industrious population. “As good as the word of a Gheber” is a common saying among the Kurds, who repeat it without being in the least conscious of the self-condemnation contained in it.

I cannot close without expressing my astonishment at the utter ignorance as to their religions, which seems to prevail in Russia even among the journalists. One of them speaks of the Ghebers in the article of the *St. Petersburg Vedomosti*, above referred to, as a sect of Hindu idolaters, in whose prayers the name of Brahma is constantly invoked. To add to the importance of this historical item Alexandre Dumas (senior) is quoted, as mentioning in his work *Travels*

* Mr. Grattan Geary in his recent highly valuable and interesting work *Through Asiatic Turkey* (London, Sampson Low and Co.) remarks of the Ghebers of Yezd—“it is said that there are only 5,000 of them all told.” But as his information was gleaned while travelling rapidly through the country, he was apparently misinformed in this instance. Perhaps it was meant to convey the idea to him that there were but 5,000 in and about Yezd at the time of his visit. It is the habit of this people to scatter themselves all over the country in the commencement of the summer season in search of work.

in the Caucasus that during his visit to Attesh-Gag, he found in one of the cells of the Zoroastrian cloister “two Hindu idols”!! Without forgetting the charitable dictum: *De mortuis nil nisi bonum*, we cannot refrain from reminding the correspondent of our esteemed contemporary of a fact which no reader of the novels of the brilliant French writer ought to be ignorant of; namely, that for the variety and inexhaustible stock of *historical facts*, evolved out of the abysmal depths of his own consciousness, even the immortal Baron Munchausen was hardly his equal. The sensational narrative of his tiger-hunting in Mingrelia, where, since the days of Noah, there never was a tiger, is yet fresh in the memory of his readers.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

“THE LIGHT OF ASIA”*

AS TOLD IN VERSE BY AN INDIAN BUDDHIST.

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 1, October, 1879, pp. 20-25]

A timely work in poetical form, and one whose subject—perfect though the outward clothing be—is sure to provoke discussion and bitter criticisms, has just made its appearance. It is inscribed to “The Sovereign, Grand Master and Companions of the Most Exalted Order of the Star of India,” and the author, Mr. Edwin Arnold, C.S.I., late

* *The Light of Asia*: or the Great Renunciation (Mahâbhinishkramana). Being the Life and Teachings of Gautamas Prince of India and Founder of Buddhism. As told in verse by an Indian Buddhist. By Edwin Arnold, M.A., K.C.I.E., C.S.I. Formerly Principal of the Deccan College, Poona, and Fellow of the University of Bombay. London: Trübner & Co., 1879.

[A small portion of the Manuscript of this article in the Adyar Archives is signed by H.P.B.’s initials, thus identifying her as its author.—*Compiler*.]

THE LIGHT OF ASIA

131

Principal of the Deccan College at Poona, having passed some years in India, has evidently studied his theme *con amore*. In his Preface he expresses the hope that the present work and his “*Indian Song of Songs* will preserve the memory of one who loved India and the Indian peoples.” The hope is well grounded, for if any Western poet has earned the right to grateful remembrance by Asiatic nations and is destined to live in their memory, it is the author of the *Light of Asia*.

The novelty, and, from a Christian standpoint, the distastefulness of the mode of treatment of the subject seems to have already taken one reviewer’s breath away. Describing the volume as “gorgeous in yellow and gold” he thinks the book “chiefly valuable as . . . coming from one who during a long residence in India imbued his mind with Buddhistic philosophy.” This, he adds, “is no criticism of a religion supposed to be false, but the sympathetic presentment of a religion so much of which is true *as from the mouth of a votary* [*sic*].” By many, Mr. Arnold’s “imaginary Buddhist votary” of the Preface, is identified with the author himself; who now—to quote again his critic—“comes out in his true colours.” We are glad of it; it is a rare compliment to pay to any writer of this generation, whose peremptory instincts lead but too many to sail under any colours but their own. For our part, we regard the poem as a really remarkable specimen of literary talent, replete with philosophical thought and religious feeling—just the book, in short, we needed in our period of *Science of Religion*—and the general toppling of ancient gods.

The Miltonic verse of the poem is rich, simple, yet powerful, without any of those

metaphysical innuendoes at the expense of clear meaning which the subject might seem to beg, and which is so much favored by some of our modern English poets. There is a singular beauty and a force in the whole narrative, that hardly characterizes other recent poems—Mr. Browning’s idyl, the *Pheidippides*, for one, which in its uncouth hero—the Arcadian goat-god, offers

such a sad contrast to the gentle Hindu Saviour. Jar as it may on Christian ears, the theme chosen by Mr. Arnold is one of the grandest possible. It is as worthy of his pen, as the poet has showed himself worthy of the subject. There is a unity of Oriental colouring in the descriptive portion of the work, a truthfulness of motive evinced in the masterly handling of Buddha’s character, which are as precious as unique; inasmuch as they present this character for the first time in the history of Western literature, in the totality of its unadulterated beauty. The moral grandeur of the hero, that Prince of royal blood, who might have been the “Lord of Lords,” yet

“ let the rich world slip
Out if his grasp, to hold a beggar’s bowl,”

and the development of his philosophy, the fruit of years of solitary meditation and struggle with the mortal “Self,” are exquisitely portrayed. Toward the end the poem culminates in a triumphant cry of all nature; a universal hymn at the sight of the World-liberating soul

“The Scripture of the Saviour of the World,
Lord Buddha—Prince Siddhârtha styled on earth—
In Earth and Heavens and Hells Incomparable,
All-honoured, Wisest, Best, most Pitiful;
The Teacher of Nirvana and the Law.”*

Whatever the subsequent fate of all the world’s religions and their founders, the name of Gautama Buddha, or Śâkyâ Muni, † can never be forgotten; it must always live in the

* [This, however, is the opening of Book the First in the poem.—*Compiler*.]

† He belonged to the family of the Śâkyas, who were descendants of Ikshvâku and formed one of the numerous branches of the Solar dynasty; the race which entered India about 2,300 years B.C. “according to the epic poems of India. *Muni* means a saint or ascetic, hence—Śâkyamuni.”

hearts of millions of votaries. His touching history—that of a daily and hourly self-abnegation during a period of nearly *eighty* years, has found favor with everyone who has studied his history. When one searches the world’s records for the purest, the highest ideal of a religious reformer, he seeks no further after reading this Buddha’s life. In wisdom,

zeal, humility, purity of life and thought; in ardor for the good of mankind; in provocation to good deeds, to toleration, charity and gentleness, Buddha excels other men as the Himâlayas excel other peaks in height. Alone among the founders of religions, he had no word of malediction nor even reproach for those who differed with his views. His doctrines are the embodiment of universal love. Not only our philologists—cold anatomists of time-honoured creeds who scientifically dissect the victims of their critical analysis—but even those who are prepossessed against his faith, have ever found but words of praise for Gautama. Nothing can be higher or purer than his social and moral code. “That moral code,” says Max Müller, “taken by itself is one of the most perfect which the world has ever known.”* In his work *Le Bouddha et sa religion* (p. 5) Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire reaches the climax of reverential praise. He does not “hesitate to say” that “among the founders of religions there is no figure more pure or more touching than that of Buddha. *His life has not a stain upon it.* His constant heroism equals his convictions . . . He is the perfect model of all the virtues he preaches; his abnegation and charity, his inalterable gentleness, never forsake him for an instant . . .” And, when his end approaches, it is in the arms of his disciples that he dies, “with the serenity of a sage who practiced good during his whole life, and who is sure to have found—the truth.” So true is it, that even the early Roman Catholic saint-makers, with a flippant unconcern for detection by posterity characteristic of the early periods of Christianity, claimed him as one of their converts, and, under the

* “Buddhism,” in *Chips from a German Workshop*, Vol. I, p. 217.

pseudonym of St. Josaphat, registered him in their *Golden Legend* and *Martyrology* as an orthodox, beatified Catholic saint. At this very day, there stands at Palermo, a church dedicated to Buddha under the name of Divo Josaphat.* It is to the discovery of the Buddhist canon, and the *Sacred Historical Books of Ceylon*—partially translated from the ancient Pâli by the Hon. J. Turnour; and especially to the able translation of *Lalitavistara* by the learned Babu Râjendrâlala Mitra—that we owe nearly all we know of the true life of this wonderful being, so aptly named by our present author, “The Light of Asia.” And now, poetry wreathes his grave with asphodels.

Mr. Arnold, as he tells us himself in the *Preface*, has taken his citations from Spence Hardy’s work, and has also modified more than one passage in the received narrative. He has sought, he says, “to depict the life and character and indicate the philosophy of that noble hero and reformer, Prince Gautama of India,” and reminds his readers that a generation ago “little or nothing was known in Europe of this great faith of Asia, which had nevertheless existed during twenty-four centuries, and at this day surpasses, in the number of its followers and the area of its prevalence, any other form of creed. Four hundred and seventy millions of our race live and die in the tenets of Gautama . . .” whose “sublime teaching is stamped ineffaceably upon modern Brahmanism . . . More than a third of mankind, therefore, owe their moral and religious ideas to this illustrious prince; whose personality . . . cannot but appear the highest, gentlest, holiest, and most beneficent . . . in the history of Thought . . . no single act or word . . . mars

* See *Speculum historiale*, by Vincent de Beauvais, XIIIth century. Max Müller affirms the story of this transformation of the great founder of Buddhism into one of the numberless Popish Saints. (See *Contemporary Review*, July, 1870, p. 588.) Colonel Yule tells us (*Book of Ser Marco Polo*, 1875, Vol. II, p. 308) that this story of Barlaam and Josaphat is recognized by Baronius and is to be found at p. 348 of "*The Roman Martyrology* set forth by command of Pope Gregory XIII, and revised by the authority of Pope Urban VIII, translated out of Latin into English by G.K. of the Society of Jesus . . ."

THE MAGNETIC CHAIN

135

the perfect purity and tenderness of this Indian teacher . . ." We will now explain some of the sacred legends as we proceed to quote them.

[Here follows a lengthy summary of the poem interspersed with quoted passages.]

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

THE MAGNETIC CHAIN

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 1, October, 1879, pp. 29-30]

We have read with great interest the first number of a new French journal devoted to the science of Mesmerism, or, as it is called, Animal Magnetism, which has been kindly sent us by that venerable and most illustrious practitioner of that science, the Baron Du Potet, of Paris. Its title is *La Chaine Magnétique* (The Magnetic Chain). After long years of comparative indifference, caused by the encroachments of sceptical science, this fascinating subject is again absorbing a large share of the attention of Western students of Psychology. Mesmerism is the very key to the mystery of man's interior nature; and enables one familiar with its laws to understand not only the phenomena of Western Spiritualism, but also that vast subject—so vast as to embrace every branch of Occultism within itself—of Eastern Magic. The whole object of the Hindu *Yoga* is to bring into activity his interior power, to make himself ruler over physical self and over everything else besides. That the developed *Yogi* can influence, sometimes control, the operations of vegetable and animal life, proves that the soul within his body has an intimate relationship with the soul of all other things. Mesmerism goes far toward teaching us how to read this occult secret, and Baron Reichenbach's great discovery of *Odyle* or *Od* force, together with Professor Buchanan's *Psychometry*, and the recent advances in electrical and magnetic science complete the demonstration. *The Theosophist* will give great attention to all these—Mesmerism, the laws of *Od*, *Psychometry*, etc. In this connection we give translated extracts from *La Chaine Magnétique* that will repay perusal. There is a great truth in what Baron Du Potet says about the Mesmeric fluid:

136

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

It is no utopian theory, but a universal Force, ever the same; which we will irrefutably prove. . . . A law of nature as positive as electricity, yet different from it; as real as night and day. A law of which physicians, notwithstanding all their learning and science, have hitherto been ignorant. Only with a knowledge of magnetism does it become possible to prolong life and heal the sick. Physicians must study it some day or—cease to be regarded as physicians.

Though now almost a nonogenarian, the Baron's intellect is as clear and his courageous devotion to his favourite Science, as ardent as when, in the year 1826, he appeared before the French Academy of Medicine and experimentally demonstrated the reality of animal magnetism. France, the mother of so many great men of science, has produced few greater than Du Potet.

A disciple of the Baron's—a Mr. Saladin of Tarasconsur-Rhône—reporting to him the results of recent magnetic experiments for the cure of disease, says:

Once, while magnetizing my wife, I made a powerful effort of my will to project the magnetic fluid, when I felt streaming from each of my finger-tips as it were little threads of cool breeze, such as might come from the mouth of an opened air-bag. My wife distinctly felt this singular breeze, and, what is still more strange, the servant girl, when told to interpose her hand between my own hand and my wife's body, and asked what she felt, replied that "it seemed as though something were blowing from the tips of my fingers."

The peculiar phenomenon here indicated has often been noticed in therapeutic magnetization; it is the vital force, intensely concentrated by the magnetizer's will, pouring out of his system into the patient's. The blowing of a cool breeze over the hands and faces of persons present, is also frequently observed at spiritualistic "circles."

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**
1879

SPIRITUALISM AT SIMLA

137

SPIRITUALISM AT SIMLA

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 1, October, 1879, p. 31]

[Under the above title, introducing three short narratives of occult experiences based on actual facts, H.P.B. made the following remarks.]

An esteemed young English lady of Simla, interested in Occultism, sends us some interesting narratives of psychological experiences which may safely be copied by our Western contemporaries. Our correspondent is perfectly trustworthy and has a place in the highest social circle. We hope to give from time to time many examples of similar mystical adventure by Europeans in Eastern countries.

Among other papers promised for *The Theosophist* is one by a British officer, upon a curious phase of bhûta worship among a very primitive Indian tribe; and another upon the same custom, in another locality, by a well-known native scholar. The value of such articles as these latter is that they afford to the psychologist material for comparison with the current Western mediumistic phenomena. Heretofore, there have been, we may say, very few observations upon East Indian spiritualism, of any scientific value. The observers have mainly been incompetent by either bigotry, moral cowardice, or skeptical bias. The exceptions have but proved the rule. Few, indeed, are they who, seeing psychical phenomena, have the moral courage to tell the whole truth about them.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

138

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

BUDDHISTIC EXEGESIS

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 2, November, 1879, p. 34]

We feel honored in being able to lay before Western thinkers, preliminary contributions from two of the most eminent priests of the religion of Buddha, now living. They are H. Sumangala, High Priest of Adam's Peak, Ceylon, the most venerated of Buddhistic monasteries; and Mohottiwatte Gunananda, superior of the Vihâra Dipadattama, at Colombo, Ceylon. The former is recognized by European philologists as the most learned of all the representatives of his faith; in fact, Dr. Muir of Edinburgh recently called him a polyglot, so extensive and accurate is his knowledge of languages and philosophies. His eminence as an instructor is also shown in his occupancy of the position of President of the Elu, Pali, and Sanskrit, College Vidyodaya. As a preacher and expositor of doctrine he is no less distinguished, while his personal character is so pure and winsome that even the bigoted enemies of his religion vie with each other in praising him. In the year 1867 a synod of the Buddhist clergy, called to fix the text of the *Sûtras* and *Pitakas*, was presided over by him. When it was decided to reorganize the Theosophical Society upon the basis of a Universal Brotherhood of humanity, uniting men of all creeds in an effort to spread throughout the world the basic principles of a true religion, he cheerfully gave his adhesion to the movement, and accepted a place in the General Council; thus dignifying the Society and securing it the good-will of Buddhists, the world over. Far from asking that it should be given a sectarian character and made a propaganda of Buddhism, he sent his "respectful and fraternal salutation to our brethren in Bombay" in his letter

BUDDHISTIC EXEGESIS

139

of acceptance, and has shown from first to last the disposition to assist unreservedly and cordially our labours.

Who our other contributor is, the Christian world, or at any rate that portion of it with which the Missionaries in Ceylon have relations, very well knows. For years he has been the bravest, subtlest, wisest, and most renowned champion of Buddha's Doctrine, in Ceylon. Six or more times he has met the chosen debaters of the Missionaries before vast assemblages of natives, to discuss the respective merits of the two religions, and was never yet worsted. In fact, it is only too evident in the admissions of Christian papers that he silenced his adversaries by his searching analysis of Bible history and doctrines, and his exposition of the Law of Buddha. A pamphlet edition of the report of one of these great debates was published

at London and Boston, two years ago, under the title *Buddhism and Christianity Face to Face*, which should be read by all for whom the subject has an interest. We are promised a translation of another similar debate from the careful report made at the time in the Sinhalese language. In all, Priest Mohottiwatte—or, as he is popularly termed in Ceylon, *Megittuwatte*—has preached over 5,000 discourses upon the Buddhistic religion, and devoted the whole strength of his noble heart to his sacred mission. His interest in our Society is as sincere as Sumangala's, and his ardor in promoting its influence characteristic of all he does. He has no reluctance whatever to co-operate with our Aryan, Brahmanic, Parsi, Jain, and Hebrew members in carrying on our work. "We feel happier than can be described," he writes, "to learn about the cordial receptions given you by the brothers in London and by the natives of India. I am sorry that, without putting my congregation and myself to great inconvenience, I cannot be present in person at the meeting with Swami Dayânanda. But I enclose a letter signed by the Rev. Sumangala, the High Priest, and myself, recording our unqualified approbation of your kind suggestion to place us as representatives of our faith in your Oriental Council." In another letter to Colonel Olcott, he says, "We are rejoiced to know that such a learned, good and influential gentleman as

Dayânanda Saraswati Swami, is every way favourably disposed towards you." Such men as these two worthily exemplify the divine doctrines of Śâkyâ Muni.

In the whole experience of the officers of the Theosophical Society, no incident has been more cheering and delightful, than the friendliness with which their advances have been met by the Buddhists. If we had been brothers long separated, our greeting could not have been warmer. Says the venerable Chief Priest, Sumana Tissa, of the Paramananda Vihâra, near Point de Galle—now in his sixty-sixth year—"To use an Oriental simile, I and my many disciples anxiously wait your arrival, as a swarm of peacocks joyously long for the downpour of a shower." We trust that our duties will permit us before long to meet all our Sinhalese brothers in person, and exchange congratulations over the encouraging prospects of our peaceful humanitarian mission.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

A THUNDER CLOUD WITH SILVER LINING

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 2, November, 1879, pp. 34-35]

“All comes in good time to him who knows to wait,” says the proverb. The small party of New York Theosophists, who arrived at Bombay eight months ago, had scarcely enjoyed the friendly greeting of the natives when they received the most unmerited and bitter insult of an accusation of political intrigue, followed by a shower of abuse and slander! We had come with the best and purest of intentions—however utopian, exaggerated, and even ill-timed, they may have seemed to the indifferent. But lo! who hath “believed our report”? Like Israel, the allegorical man of sorrow of Isaiah, we saw ourselves for no fault of ours “numbered with the transgressors,” and “bruised for the iniquities” of one for whose race we had come to offer our mite of work, and were ready to devote our time and our very lives. This one, whose name must never pollute the columns

A THUNDER CLOUD WITH SILVER LINING

141

of this journal, showed us *his* gratitude by warning the police that we were come with some dark political purpose, and accusing us of being *spies*—that is to say, the vile of the vile—the *mangs** of the social system. But now, as the last thunder-clap of the monsoon is dying away, our horizon too is cleared of its dark clouds. Thanks to the noble and unselfish exertions of an English friend at Simla, the matter has been brought before His Excellency, the Viceroy. The sequel is told in the Allahabad *Pioneer*, of October 11th, as follows:

. . . It will be remembered that in the beginning of this year, their feelings were deeply hurt on the occasion of a trip they made up-country by an insulting espionage set on foot against them by the police. It appears that some groundless calumny had preceded them to this country, and that the police put a very clumsy construction upon certain orders they received from Government respecting the new arrivals. However, since then the subject has been brought especially to the Viceroy’s notice, and, satisfied that the Theosophists were *misrepresented in the first instance*, he has given formal orders, through the Political Department, to the effect that they are not to be any longer subject to interference.

From the bottom of our hearts we thank his Lordship for having with one single word rubbed the vile stain off our reputations. We thank Lord Lytton rather than the Viceroy, the *gentleman*, who hastened to redress a wrong that the Viceroy might have overlooked. The high official has but done an act of justice, and would not have been wholly blameable if, under the temporary pressure of political work of the highest importance, he had put it off to the Greek kalends. We love to feel that we owe this debt of gratitude to the son of one whose memory will ever be dear and sacred to the heart of every true Theosophist; to the son of the author of *Zanoni*, *A Strange Story*, *The Coming Race*, and *The House and the Brain*; one who ranked higher than any other in the small number of

* [*Mâng*—Skt. *Mâtaüga*—a very low aboriginal tribe in India. They make ropes, mats; baskets, and muzzles for bullocks, and, when settled in the outskirts of villages, they act as village watchmen, guides, scavengers, and as executioners.—*Compiler.*]

genuine mystical writers, for he knew what he was talking about, which is more than can be said of other writers in this department of literature.* Once more we thank Lord Lytton for having prompted the Viceroy.

And now, for the last time in these columns, as we hope, we will say a few words more in reference to this sad page in the history of our Society. We first wish to thank those many outside friends, as well as Fellows of the Theosophical Society, who, regardless of the danger of associating with strangers so much ostracized, kept true to us throughout the long trial, scorning to abandon us even at the risk of loss of employment, or of personal disgrace. Honour to them; most gladly would we, were it permitted, write their names for the information of our Western Fellows. But we can never forget, on the other hand, the two or three instances of shameful, cowardly desertion, that have occurred. They were among those who had talked the most, who had most loudly protested their changeless and eternal devotion to us; who called us “brothers” near and dear to their hearts; had offered us their houses, their carriages, and the contents of their purses—if we would only accept them—which we did not. At the first apprehension that idle rumour might become a reality, these were the swiftest to desert us. One, especially, whose name we will refrain from mentioning, though we would have a perfect right to do so, acted towards us in the most disgraceful way. At the first hint from an official superior, cowering like a whipped hound before a danger more imaginary than real, he hastened to repudiate not only his “brothers,” but even to pointedly disclaim the remotest connection with the Theosophical Society, and conspicuously published this repudiation in an Anglo-Vernacular paper!

To him, we have no word to say, but as a lesson for such others as in the future may feel like imitating him,

* [Edward George Earle Lytton, Bulwer-Lytton, 1st Baron Lytton (1803-73), the famous English novelist, was the father of Edward Robert Bulwer-Lytton, 1st Earl of Lytton (1831-91), who became Viceroy of India in 1875.—*Compiler.*]

we will quote these words of an English gentleman (not the lowest among Government officials) who has since joined our Society, who writes us in reference to this personage:

. . . If I were you, I would bless my stars that such a sneak left our Society of his own accord before he put us to the trouble of expelling him. *Falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus*. A Fellow who, after pledging his *word of honour** to protect the interest of his Society, “also the honour of a Brother Fellow,” even “at the peril of his life” (*Rules*, Art. II), breaks it and turns traitor without any other cause than his own shameful cowardice, offers but a poor guarantee for his loyalty even to the Government that he has sworn allegiance to. . . .

In all their search after strong words to fling at it, our enemies never once thought of charging the Theosophical Society with harboring and honoring poltroons.

*The Theosophical Society requires no oaths, as it deems no pledge more binding than the word of honour.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

CROSS AND FIRE

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 2, November, 1879, pp. 35-36]

Perhaps the most widespread and universal among the symbols in the old astronomical systems, which have passed down the stream of time to our century, and have left traces everywhere in the Christian religion as elsewhere—are the Cross and the Fire—the latter, the emblem of the Sun. The ancient Aryans had them both as the symbols of Agni. Whenever the ancient Hindu devotee desired to worship Agni—says É. Burnouf†—he arranged two pieces of wood in the form of a cross, and, by a peculiar whirling and friction obtained fire for his sacrifice. As a symbol, it is called *Svastika*, and, as an instrument manufactured out of a sacred tree and in possession of every Brahmin, it is known as *Arani*.

† *La Science des Religions*, chap. XIII, pp. 187-88.

The Scandinavians had the same sign and called it Thor's Hammer, as bearing a mysterious magneto-electric relation to Thor, the god of thunder, who, like Jupiter armed with his thunderbolts, holds likewise in his hand this ensign of power, over not only mortals but also the mischievous spirits of the elements, over which he presides. In Masonry it appears in the form of the Grand Master's mallet; at Allahabad it may be seen on the Fort as the Jaina Cross, or the Talisman of the Jaina Kings; and the gavel of the modern judge is no more than this *crux dissimulata*—as de Rossi, the archaeologist calls it; for the gavel is the sign of power and strength, as the hammer represented the might of Thor, who, in the Norse legends splits a rock with it, and kills the Midgard snake. Schliemann found it in *terra cotta* disks, on the site, as he believes, of ancient Troy, in the lowest stratum of his excavations; which indicated, according to Dr. Lundy, “an Aryan civilization long anterior to the Greek—say from two to three thousand years B.C.” Burnouf calls it the oldest form of the cross known, and affirms that it is found personified in the ancient religion of the Greeks under the figure of Prometheus “the fire-bearer,” crucified on Mount Caucasus, while the celestial bird—the *Śyena* of the Vedic hymns—daily devours his entrails. Boldetti* gives a copy from the painting in the cemetery of St. Sebastian, representing a Christian convert and grave-digger, named Diogenes, who wears on both his legs and right arm the signs of the *Svastika*.† The Mexicans and the Peruvians had it, and it is found as the sacred Tau in the oldest tombs of Egypt.

It is, to say the least, a strange coincidence, remarked even by some Christian clergymen, that *Agnus Dei*, the Lamb of God, should have the symbols, identical with the Hindu God Agni. While *Agnus Dei* expiates and takes away the sins of the world, in one religion, the God *Agni*, in the other, likewise expiates sins against the gods, man, the

* M. A. Boldetti, *Osservazioni sopra i cimiterj de 'santi martiri, ed antichi cristiani di Roma, etc.*, Rome, 1720, Part. I, 15, p. 60.

† [See J. P. Lundy, *Monumental Christianity*, p. 17.—*Compiler.*]

manes, the soul, and repeated sins; as shown in the six prayers accompanied by six oblations.*

If, then, we find these two—the Cross and the Fire—so closely associated in the esoteric symbolism of nearly every nation, it is because on the combined powers of the two rests the whole plan of the universal laws. In astronomy physics, chemistry, in the whole range of natural philosophy, in short, they always come out as the invisible cause and the visible result; and only metaphysics and alchemy—or shall we say *Metachemistry*, since we prefer coining a new word to shocking sceptical ears?—can fully and conclusively solve the mysterious meaning. An instance or two will suffice for those who are willing to think over hints.

The Central Point, or the great central sun of the Kosmos, as the Kabalists call it, is the Deity. It is the point of intersection between the two great conflicting powers—the centripetal and centrifugal forces, which drive the planets into their elliptical orbits, that make them trace a cross in their paths through the Zodiac. These two terrible, though as yet hypothetical and imaginary powers, preserve harmony and keep the Universe in steady, unceasing motion; and the four bent points of the Svastika typify the revolution of the Earth upon its axis. Plato calls the Universe a “blessed god” *which was made in a circle and decussated in the form of the letter X.*† So much for astronomy. In Masonry the Royal Arch degree retains the cross as the triple Egyptian Tau. It is the mundane circle with the astronomical cross upon it rapidly revolving; the perfect square of the Pythagorean mathematics in the scale of numbers, as its occult meaning is interpreted by Cornelius Agrippa. Fire is heat—the central point; the perpendicular ray represents the male element or spirit; and the horizontal one the female element—or matter. Spirit vivifies and fructifies the matter, and everything proceeds from the central Point, the focus of Life, and

* H. T. Colebrooke, *Essays on the Religion and Philosophy of the Hindus*, London, 1837, Vol. I, p. 190.

[In the one-volume ed. of 1858, this occurs on p. 119. It is an essay originally published in the *Asiatic Researches*, Calcutta, 1801, Vol. VII, pp. 232-85.—*Compiler.*]

† [Cf. Thomas Taylor, *The Works of Plato*, Vol. II, pp. 483, 487.]

Light, and Heat, represented by the terrestrial fire. So much, again, for physics and chemistry, for the field of analogies is boundless, and Universal Laws are immutable and identical in their outward and inward applications. Without intending to be disrespectful to anyone, or to wander far away from truth, we think we may say that there are strong reasons

to believe that in their original sense the Christian Cross, as the cause, and Eternal torment by Hell Fire—as the direct effect of negation of the former—have more to do with these two ancient symbols than our Western theologians are prepared to admit. If Fire is the Deity with some heathens, so in the Bible, God is likewise the Life and the Light of the World; if the Holy Ghost and Fire cleanse and purify the Christian, on the other hand Lucifer is also Light, and called the “Son of the morning star.”*

Turn wherever we will, we are sure to find these conjoint relics of ancient worship with almost every nation and people. From the Aryans, the Chaldaeans, the Zoroastrians, Peruvians, Mexicans, Scandinavians, Celts, and ancient Greeks and Latins, it has descended in its completeness to the modern Parsi. The Phoenician Cabiri and the Greek Dioscuri are partially revived in every temple, cathedral, and village church; while, as will now be shown, the Christian Bulgarians have even preserved the sun worship in full.

It is more than a thousand years since this people, who, emerging from obscurity, suddenly became famous through the late Russo-Turkish war, were converted to Christianity. And yet they appear none the less pagans than they were before, for this is how they meet Christmas and the New Year’s day. To this time they call this festival *Survaki*, as it falls in with the festival in honour of the ancient Slavonian god *Surva*. In the Slavonian mythology this deity—*Surva* evidently identical with the Aryan *Surya*, the sun, is the god of heat, fertility, and abundance. The

* [Most likely a misprint for either “son of the morning,” or “morning star.” Cf. *Revelation*, xxii, 16.—*Compiler*.]

celebration of this festival is of an immense antiquity, as, far before the days of Christianity, the Bulgarians worshipped *Surva*, and consecrated New Year’s day to this god, praying him to bless their fields with fertility, and send them happiness and prosperity. This custom has remained among them in all its primitive heathenism, and though it varies according to localities, yet the rites and ceremonies are essentially the same.

On the eve of New Year’s day the Bulgarians do no work, and are obliged to fast. Young betrothed maidens are busy preparing a large *platiy* (cake) in which they place roots and young shoots of various forms, to each of which a name is given according to the shape of the root. Thus, one means the “house,” and another represents the “garden”; others again, the mill, the vineyard, the horse, a cat, a hen, and so on, according to the landed property and worldly possessions of the family. Even articles of value such as jewelry and bags of money are represented in this emblem of the horn of abundance. Besides all these, a large and ancient silver coin is placed inside the cake; it is called *babka* and is tied two ways with a red thread, which forms a cross. This coin is regarded as the symbol of fortune.

After sunset, and other ceremonies, including prayers addressed in the direction of the departing luminary, the whole family assemble about a large round table called *paralya*, on which are placed the above-mentioned cake, dry vegetables, corn, wax taper, and, finally, a large censer containing incense of the best quality to perfume the god. The head of the

household, usually the oldest in the family either the grandfather, or the father himself—taking up the censer with the greatest veneration, in one hand, and the wax taper in the other, begins walking about the premises, incensing the four corners, beginning and ending with the East, and reads various invocations, which close with the Christian “Our Father who art in Heaven,” addressed to Surva. The taper is then laid away to be preserved throughout the whole year, till the next festival. It is thought to have acquired marvelous healing properties, and is lighted

only upon occasions of family sickness, in which case it is expected to cure the patient.

After this ceremony, the old man takes his knife and cuts the cake into as many slices as there are members of the household present. Each person, upon receiving his or her share, makes haste to open and search the piece. The happiest of the lot, for the ensuing year, is he or she who gets the part containing the old coin crossed with the scarlet thread; he is considered the elect of Surva, and every one envies the fortunate possessor. Then in order of importance come the emblems of the house, the vineyard, and so on; and according to his findings, the finder reads his horoscope for the coming year. Most unlucky he who gets the cat; he turns pale and trembles. Woe to him and misery, for he is surrounded by enemies, and has to prepare for great trials.

At the same time, a large log which represents a flaming altar, is set up in the chimney place, and fire is applied to it. This log burns in honour of Surva, and is intended as an oracle for the whole house. If it burns the whole night through till morning without the flame dying out, it is a good sign; otherwise, the family prepares to see death that year, and deep lamentations end the festival.

Neither the *momche* (young bachelor), nor the *moma* (the maiden), sleep that night. At midnight begins a series of soothsaying, magic, and various rites, in which the burning logs play the part of the oracle. A young bud thrown into the fire and bursting with a loud snap, is a sign of happy and speedy marriage, and *vice versa*. Long after midnight, the young couples leave their respective homes, and begin visiting their acquaintances, from house to house, offering and receiving congratulations, and rendering thanks to the deity. These deputy couples are called the *Survakari*, and each male carries a large branch ornamented with red ribbons, old coins, and the image of *Surva*, and as they wend along sing in chorus. Their chant is as original as it is peculiar and merits translation, though, of course, it must

lose in being rendered into a foreign language. The following stanzas are addressed by them to those they visit:

Surva, Surva, Lord of the Season,

Happy New Year mayest thou send;
Health and fortune on this household,
Success and blessings till next year.

With good crops and full ears,
With gold and silk, and grapes and fruits;
With barrels full of wine, and stomachs full,
You and your house be blessed by the God . . .
His blessing on you all.—Amen! Amen! Amen!

The singing *Survakari*, recompensed for their good wishes with a present at every house, go home at early dawn . . . And this is how the symbolical exoteric Cross and Fire worship of old Aryavarta go hand in hand in Christian Bulgaria . . .

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

WAR IN OLYMPUS

BY H. P. BLAVATSKY.

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 2, November, 1879, pp. 40-42]

Dark clouds are gathering over the hitherto cold and serene horizon of exact science, which forebode a squall. Already two camps are forming among the votaries of scientific research. One wages war on the other, and hard words are occasionally exchanged. The apple of discord in this case is—Spiritualism. Fresh and illustrious victims are yearly decoyed away from the impregnable strongholds of materialistic negation, and ensnared into examining and testing the alleged spiritual phenomena. And we all know that when a true scientist examines them without prejudice . . . well, he generally ends like professor Hare, Mr.

150

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

William Crookes, F.R.S., the great Alfred Russel Wallace, another F.R.S., and so many other eminent men of science—he passes over to the enemy . . .

We are really curious to know what will be the new theory advanced in the present crisis by the skeptics, and how they will account for such an apostasy of several of their luminaries, as has just occurred. The venerable accusations of *non compos mentis*, and “dotage” will not bear another refurbishing: the eminent perverts are increasing numerically so fast, that if mental incapacity is charged upon all of them who experimentally satisfy themselves that tables can talk sense, and mediums float through the air, it might augur ill for science; there might soon be none but weakened brains in the learned societies. They may, possibly, for a time find some consolation in accounting for the lodgement of the extraordinary “delusion” in very scholarly heads, upon the theory of *atavism*—the mysterious law of latent transmission, so much favoured by the modern schools of Darwinian *evolutionism* especially in Germany, as represented by that thorough-going apostle of “modern struggle for culture,” Ernst Haeckel, professor at Jena. They may attribute the belief of their colleagues in the phenomena, to certain molecular movements of the cell in the ganglia of their once powerful brains, hereditarily transmitted to them by their ignorant mediaeval ancestors. Or, again, they may split their ranks, and establishing an *imperium in imperio* “divide and conquer” still. All this is possible; but time alone will show which of the parties will come off best.

We have been led to these reflections by a row now going on between German and Russian professors—all eminent and illustrious *savants*. The Teutons and Slavs in the case under observation, are not fighting according to their nationality but conformably to their respective beliefs and unbeliefs. Having concluded, for the occasion, an offensive as well as a defensive alliance, regardless of race—they have broken up in two camps, one representing the spiritualists, and the other the skeptics. And now war to the knife is declared. Leading one party, are Professors Zöllner, Ulrici,

and Fichte, Butleroff and Wagner, of the Leipzig, Halle and St. Petersburg Universities; the other follows Professors Wundt, Mendeleeff, and a host of other German and Russian celebrities. Hardly has Zöllner—a most renowned astronomer and physicist—printed his confession of faith in Dr. Slade’s mediumistic phenomena and set his learned colleagues aghast, when Professor Ulrici of the Halle University arouses the wrath of the Olympus of science by publishing a pamphlet entitled *The so-called Spiritualism, a Scientific Question*,* intended as a complete refutation of the arguments of Professor Wundt, of the Leipzig University, against the modern belief, and contained in another pamphlet called by its author *Spiritualism—the so-called Scientific Question*.† And now steps in another active combatant, Mr. Butleroff, Professor of Chemistry and Natural Sciences, of St. Petersburg, who narrates *his* experiments in London, with the medium Williams, and thus rouses up a most ferocious polemic. The humoristical illustrated paper *Kladderadatch* executes a war-dance, and shouts with joy, while the more serious conservative papers are indignant. Pressed behind their last entrenchments by the cool and uncontrovertible assertions of a most distinguished naturalist, the critics led forward by the St. Petersburg star—Mr. Burenin,‡ seem desperate, and evidently short of ammunition, since they are reduced to the expedient of trying to rout the enemy with the most remarkable paradoxes. The *pro* and *con* of the dispute are too interesting, and our posterity

*[Reference is here to Dr. H. Ulrici’s pamphlet entitled: *Über den Spiritismus als Wissenschaftliche Frage*. Antwortschreiben auf den offenen Brief des Herrn Professor Dr. W. Wundt. Halle, 1879.—*Compiler*.]

† *Der Spiritismus*. Offenen Brief an Herrn Prof. Dr. H. Ulrici im Halle.]

‡ [Reference is to Victor Petrovich Burenin (b. 1841), a native of Moscow, Russia, a poet and journalist, specializing in satirical and humorous poems. From 1865, he was engaged mainly in newspaper activity, being on the staff of the St. Petersburg *Vyedomosti* (Chronicle), and from 1876, on the editorial staff of the famous *Novoye Vremya* (New Time). He acquired considerable fame with his novels, articles and reviews of current literature.—*Compiler*.]

might complain were the incidents suffered to be left beyond the reach of English and American readers interested in Spiritualism, by remaining confined to the German and Russian newspapers. So, Homer-like, we follow the combatants and condense this modern *Iliad* for the benefit of our friends.

After several years of diligent research and investigation of the phenomena, Messrs. Wagner and Butleroff, both distinguished *savants* and professors in St. Petersburg University, became thoroughly convinced of the reality of the weird manifestations. As a result, both wrote numerous and strong articles in the leading periodicals in defense of the “mischievous epidemic”—as in his moments of “unconscious cerebration” and “prepossession” in favour of his own hobby Dr. Carpenter calls spiritualism. Both of the above eminent gentlemen are endowed with those precious qualities which are the more to be respected as they are so seldom met with among our men of science. These qualities, admitted by their critic himself—Mr. Burenin, are: (1) a serious and profound conviction that what they defend is true; (2) an unwavering courage in stating at every hazard, before a prejudiced and inimical public that such is their conviction; (3) clearness and consecutiveness in their statements; (4) the serene calmness and impartiality with which they treat the opinions of their opponents; (5) a full and profound acquaintance

with the subject under discussion. The combination of the qualities enumerated, adds their critic,

. . . leads us to regard the recent article by Professor Butleroff, "Empericism and Dogmatism in the Domain of Mediumship," as one of those essays whose commanding significance cannot be denied, and which are sure to strongly impress the readers. Such articles are positively rare in our periodicals; rare because of the originality of the author's conclusions, and because of the clear, precise, and serious presentation of facts. . . .

The article so eulogized may be summed up in a few words. We will not stop to enumerate the marvels of spiritual phenomena witnessed by Professor Zöllner with Dr. Slade and defended by Professor Butleroff, since they are no more marvellous than the latter gentleman's personal

experience in this direction with Mr. Williams, a medium of London, in 1876. The *séances* took place in a London hotel in the room occupied by the Honorable Alexander Aksakoff, Russian Imperial Councillor, in which, with the exception of this gentleman, there were but two other persons—Professor Butleroff and the medium. Confederacy was thus utterly impossible. And now, what took place under these conditions, which so impressed one of the first scientists of Russia? Simply this: Mr. Williams, the medium, was made to sit with his hands, feet, and even his person tightly bound with cords to his chair, which was placed in a dead-wall corner of the room, behind Mr. Butleroff's plaid hung across so as to form a screen. Williams soon fell into a kind of lethargic stupor, known among Spiritualists as the trance condition, and "spirits" began to appear before the eyes of the investigators. Various voices were heard, and loud sentences, pronounced by the "invisibles," from every part of the room; things—toilet appurtenances and so forth, began flying in every direction through the air; and finally "John King"—a sort of king of the spooks, who has been famous for years—made his appearance bodily. But we must allow Professor Butleroff to tell his phenomenal story himself.

. . . We first saw moving [he writes] several bright lights in the air, and immediately after that appeared the full figure of "John King." His apparition is generally preceded by a greenish phosphoric light which, gradually becoming brighter, illuminates, more and more, the whole bust of John King. Then it is that those present perceive that the light emanates from some kind of a luminous object held by the "spirit." The face of a man with a thick black beard becomes clearly distinguishable; the head is enveloped in a white turban. The figure appears outside the cabinet (that is to say, the screened corner where the medium sat), and finally approaches us. We saw it each time for a few seconds; then rapidly waning, the light was extinguished and the figure became invisible to reappear again in a moment or two; then from the surrounding darkness, "John's" voice is heard proceeding from the spot on which he had appeared mostly, though not always, when he had already disappeared. "John" asked us "what can I do for you?" and Mr. Aksakoff requested him to rise up to the ceiling and from there speak to us. In accordance with the wish expressed, the figure suddenly appeared above the table and towered majestically above our heads to the ceiling which became all illuminated, with the luminous object held in the spirit's hand; when

“John” was quite under the ceiling he shouted down to us: “Will that do?”

During another *séance* M. Butleroff asked “John” to approach him quite near, which the “spirit” did, and so gave him the opportunity of seeing clearly “the sparkling, clear eyes of John.” Another spirit, “Peter,” though he never put in a visible appearance during the *séances*, yet conversed with Messrs. Butleroff and Aksakoff, wrote for them on paper furnished by them, and so forth.

Though the learned professor minutely enumerates all the precautions he had taken against possible fraud, the critic is not yet satisfied, and asks, pertinently enough:

. . . Why did not the respectable *savant* catch “John” in his arms, when the spirit was but at a foot’s distance from him? Again, why did not both Messrs. Aksakoff and Butleroff try to get hold of “John’s” legs, when he was mounting to the ceiling? Indeed they ought to have done all this, if they are really so anxious to learn the truth for their own sake, as for that of science, which they struggle to lead on toward the domains of the “other world.” And, had they complied with such a simple and, at the same time, very little scientific test, there would be no more need for them, perhaps, to . . . further explain the scientific importance of the spiritual manifestations.

That this importance is not exaggerated, and has as much significance for the world of science, as for that of religious thought, is proved by so many philosophical minds speculating upon the modern “delusion.” This is what Fichte, the learned German *savant*, says of it.

. . . Modern spiritualism chiefly proves the existence of that which, in common parlance, is very vaguely and inaptly termed “*apparition of spirits*.” If we concede the reality of such apparitions, then they become an undeniable, practical proof of the continuation of our personal, conscious existence (beyond the portals of death). And such a tangible, fully demonstrated fact cannot be otherwise but beneficent in this epoch, which, having fallen into a dreary denial of immortality, thinks, in the proud self-sufficiency of its vast intellect, that it has already happily left behind it every superstition of the kind.”

If such a tangible evidence could be really found, and demonstrated to us, beyond any doubt or cavil, reasons Fichte further on—

. . . if the reality of the continuation of our lives after death were

furnished us upon positive proof, in strict accordance with the logical elements of experimental natural sciences, then it would be, indeed, a result with which, owing to its nature and peculiar signification for humanity, no other result to be met with in all the history of civilization could be compared. The old problem about man’s destination upon earth would be thus solved, and consciousness in humanity would be elevated one step. That which, hitherto, could be revealed to man but in the domain of blind faith, presentiment, and passionate hope, would become to him—positive knowledge; he would have acquired the certainty that he was a member of an eternal, a spiritual world, in which he would continue living, and that his temporary existence upon this earth forms but a fractional portion of a future eternal life, and that it is only there that he would be enabled to perceive, and fully comprehend his real destination. Having acquired this profound conviction, mankind would be thoroughly impressed with a new and animating comprehension of life, and its intellectual perceptions opened to an idealism strong with incontrovertible facts. This would prove tantamount to a complete reconstruction of man in relation to his existence as an entity and mission upon earth; it would be, so to say, a “new birth.” Whoever has lost all inner convictions as to his eternal destination, his faith in eternal life, whether the case be that of an

isolated individuality, a whole nation, or the representative of a certain epoch, he or it may be regarded as having had uprooted, and to the very core, all sense of that invigorating force which alone lends itself to self-devotion and to progress. Such a man becomes what was inevitable—an egotistical, selfish, sensual being, concerned wholly for his self-preservation. His culture, his enlightenment, and civilization, can serve him but as a help and ornamentation toward that life of sensualism, or at best, to guard him from all that can harm it.

Such is the enormous importance attributed by Professor Fichte and Professor Butleroff of Germany and Russia to the spiritual phenomena; and we may say the feeling is more than sincerely echoed in England by Mr. A. R. Wallace, F.R.S. (See his *Miracles and Modern Spiritualism*.)

An influential American scientific journal uses an equally strong language when speaking of the value that a scientific demonstration of the survival of the human soul would have for the world. If Spiritualism prove true, it says,

. . . it will become the one grand event of the world's history; it will give an imperishable lustre of glory to the Nineteenth Century. Its discoverer will have no rival in renown, and his name will be written high above any other. . . . If the pretensions of Spiritualism have a

rational foundation, no more important work has been offered to men of Science than their verification.*

And now we will see what the stubborn Russian critic (who seems to be but the mouthpiece of European materialistic science) has to say in response to the unanswerable arguments and logic of Messrs. Fichte and Butleroff. If scepticism has no stronger arguments to oppose to Spiritualism but the following original paradox, then we will have to declare it worsted in the dispute. Instead of the beneficial results foretold by Fichte in the case of the final triumph of Spiritualism, the critic forecasts quite a different state of things.

. . . As soon [he says] as such scientific methods shall have demonstrated, beyond doubt or cavil, to the general satisfaction that our world is crammed with souls of men who have preceded us, and whom we will all join in turn; as soon as it shall be proven that these "souls of the deceased" can communicate with mortals, all the earthly physical science of the eminent scholars will vanish like a soap-bubble, and will have lost all its interest for us living men. Why should people care for their proportionately short life upon earth, once that they have the positive assurance and conviction of another life to come after the bodily death; a death which does not in the least preclude conscious relations with the world of the living, or even their *post-mortem* participation in all its interests? Once, that with the help of science, based on mediumistic experiments and the discoveries of Spiritualism, such relations shall have been firmly established, they will naturally become with every day more and more intimate; an extraordinary friendship will ensue between this and the "other" worlds; that other world will begin divulging to this one the most occult mysteries of life and death, and the hitherto most inaccessible laws of the universe—those which now exact the greatest efforts of man's mental powers. Finally, nothing will remain for us in this temporary world to either do or desire, but to pass away as soon as possible into the world of eternity. *No inventions, no observations, no sciences, will be any more needed!!* Why should people exercise their brains, for instance, in perfecting the telegraphs, when nothing else will be required but to be on good terms with spirits in order to avail of their services for the instantaneous transmission of thoughts and objects, not only from Europe to America, but even to the moon, if so desired? The following are a few of the results which a communion *de facto* between this world and the "other," that certain men of

* Scientific American, 1874, as quoted in Olcott's *People from the Other World*, Preface, p. v.

science are hoping to establish by the help of Spiritualism, will inevitably lead us to: to the complete extinction of all science, and even of the human race, which will be ever rushing onward to a better life. The learned and scholarly *phantasists* who are so anxious to promote the science of Spiritualism, *i.e.*, of a close communication between the two worlds, ought to bear the above in mind.

To which, the “scholarly phantasists” would be quite warranted in answering that one would have to bring his own mind to the exact measure of microscopic capacity required to elaborate such a theory as this, before he could take it into consideration at all. Is the above meant to be offered as an objection for *serious* consideration? Strange logic! We are asked to believe that, because these men of science, who now believe in naught but matter, and thus try to fit every phenomenon—even of a mental, and spiritual character—within the Procrustean bed of their own preconceived hobbies, would find themselves, by the mere strength of circumstances forced, in their turn, to fit these cherished hobbies to *truth*, however unwelcome, and to facts wherever found—that because of that, science will lose all its charm for humanity. Nay—life itself will become a burden! There are millions upon millions of people who, without believing in Spiritualism at all, yet have faith in another and a better world. And were that blind faith to become *positive knowledge* indeed, it could but better humanity.

Before closing his scathing criticism upon the “credulous men of *science*,” our reviewer sends one more bomb in their direction, which unfortunately like many other explosive shells misses the culprits and wounds the whole group of their learned colleagues. We translate the missile *verbatim* this time for the benefit of all the European and American academicians.

. . . The eminent professor [he adds, speaking of Butleroff, and his article] among other things, makes the most of the strange fact that Spiritualism gains with every day more and more converts within the corporation of our great scientists. He enumerates a long list of English and German names among illustrious men of science, who have more or less confessed themselves in favor of the spiritual doctrines. Among these names we find such as are quite authoritative, those of the greatest luminaries of science. Such a fact is, to say the

least, very striking, and in any case, lends a great weight to Spiritualism. But we have only to ponder coolly over it, to come very easily to the conclusion *that it is just among such great men of science that Spiritualism is most likely to spread and find ready converts*. With all their powerful intellects and gigantic knowledge, our great scholars are firstly, men of sedentary habits, and, secondly, they are, with scarcely an exception, *men with diseased and shattered nerves, inclined toward an abnormal development of an overstrained brain. Such sedentary men are the easiest to hoodwink; a clever charlatan will make an easier prey of, and bamboozle with far more facility a scholar than an unlearned but practical man*. Hallucination will far sooner get hold of persons inclined to nervous receptivity, especially if they once concentrate themselves upon some peculiar ideas, or a favourite hobby. This, I believe, will explain the fact that we see so many men of science enrolling themselves in the army of Spiritualists.

We need not stop to enquire how Messrs. Tyndall, Huxley, Darwin, Herbert Spencer, Lewes, and other eminent scientific and philosophical sceptics, will like such a prospect of rickety ganglionic centres, collective softening of the brain, and the resulting “hallucinations.” The argument is not impertinent *naïvete*, but a literary monstrosity.

We are far from agreeing entirely with the views of Professor Butleroff, or even Mr. Wallace, as to the agencies at work behind the modern phenomena; yet between the extremes of spiritual negation and affirmation, there ought to be a middle ground; only pure philosophy can establish truth upon firm principles; and no philosophy can be complete unless it embraces both physics and metaphysics. Mr. Tyndall, who declares (*Science and Man*) that “Metaphysics will be welcomed when it abandons its pretensions to scientific discovery, and consents to be ranked as a kind of poetry,” opens himself to the criticism of posterity. Meanwhile, he must not regard it as an impertinence if his spiritualistic opponents retort with the answer that “physics will always be welcomed, when it abandons its pretension to psychological discovery.” The physicists will have to consent to be regarded in a near future as no more than supervisors and analysts of physical results, who have to leave the spiritual causes to those who believe in them. Whatever the issue of the present quarrel, we fear, though, that Spiritualism has made its appearance a century too late. Our

age is pre-eminently one of extremes. The earnest and philosophical, yet reverent doubters are few, and the name for those who rush to the opposite extreme is Legion. We are the children of our century. Thanks to that same law of atavism, it seems to have inherited from its parent—the eighteenth—the century of both Voltaire and Jonathan Edwards—all its extreme scepticism, and, at the same time, religious credulity and bigoted intolerance. Spiritualism is an abnormal and premature outgrowth, standing between the two; and, though it stands right on the highway to truth, its ill-defined beliefs make it wander on through by-paths which lead to anything but philosophy. Its future depends wholly upon the timely help it can receive from honest science—that science which scorns no truth. It was, perhaps, when thinking of the opponents of the latter, that Alfred de Musset wrote the following magnificent apostrophe:

“Sleepest thou content, Voltaire;
And thy dread smile hovers it still above
Thy fleshless bones . . . ?
Thine age they call too young to understand thee,
This one should suit thee better—
 Thy men are born!
And the huge edifice that, day and night, thy great hands undermined,
Is fallen upon us. . . .”*

* [This passage is from de Musset’s poem *Rolla*, section IV, the original French text being as follows:

«Dors-tu content, Voltaire, et ton hideux sourire
Voltige-t-il encore sur tes os décharnés?
Ton siècle était, dit-on, trop jeune pour te lire,
Le nôtre doit te plaire, et tes hommes sont nés.
Il est tombé sur nous, cet édifice immense
Que de tes larges mains tu sapais nuit et jour».

—*Compiler.*]

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**
1879

160

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

FOOTNOTES TO “THE BRAHMACHÂRI BÂWÂ”

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 2, November, 1879, pp. 51-52]

[These footnotes are appended by H.P.B. to a translation of the Brahmachâri’s own account of his life.]

[“. . . relying fully on the protection and omniscience of the omnipotent Master (I□war).”]

See Bulwer’s *Zanoni*—the scene where Zanoni sees and meets with his “Adonai.”

[“. . . the omnipotence of the Lord (the divine I, or Spirit, the *personal* God of every individual) .”]

By I□war and Master is not meant the personal God, whom the believers in such God suppose to be the creator of the universe, and outside the universe—Brahmachâri Bâwâ does not recognize such a god in relation to the universe. His god is Brahma, the eternal and universal essence which pervades everything and everywhere and which in man is the divine essence which is his moral guide, is recognized in the instincts of conscience, makes him aspire to immortality and leads him to it. This divine spirit in man is designated Íswar and corresponds to the name Adonai— Lord, of the Kabalists, *i.e.*, the Lord within man.

[“Dattâtraya, the universal Lord.”] In the popular sense, *Dattâtraya* is the Trinity of Brahmâ, Vishnu, and Śiva, incarnate in an *Avatâra*—of course as a triple essence. The esoteric, and true meaning is the adept’s own trinity of body, soul, and spirit; the three being all realized by him as real, existent, and potential. By Yoga training, the body becomes pure as a crystal casket, the soul purged of all its grossness, and the spirit which, before the beginning of his course of self-purification and development, was to him but a dream, has now become a reality—the man has become a demi-god.

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**
1879

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

161

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 2, November, 1879, p. 33]

“C.R.” is informed that his criticism upon the unfair treatment of natives in connection with the Civil Service management of the Indian Government, though very able and convincing, is unsuitable for these columns. Ours is strictly a religious, philosophical, and scientific journal, and it would be improper for us to either discuss political questions ourselves or permit it to be done by others. For the same reason, we must decline the poem addressed to Her Majesty, the Queen Empress, sent from Baroda State.

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**

1879

[FROM THE CAVES AND JUNGLES OF INDIA]

[It is at this time that H.P.B.'s interesting Series entitled "From the Caves and Jungles of India," began to be published in the pages of the *Moskovskiya Vedomosty* (Moscow Chronicle), the first installment appearing in the issue No. 305, of November 30, 1879. It was later republished and continued in the *Russkiy Vestnik* (Russian Messenger) of 1885. This complete Series may be found in English translation in a separate Volume of the *Collected Writings*.—*Compiler*.]

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

162

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

CHRISTMAS THEN AND CHRISTMAS NOW

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 3, December, 1879, pp. 58-59]

We are reaching the time of the year when the whole Christian world is preparing to celebrate the most noted of its solemnities—the birth of the Founder of its religion. When this paper reaches its Western subscribers there will be festivity and rejoicing in every house. In North-Western Europe and in America the holly and ivy will decorate each home, and the churches be decked with evergreens; a custom derived from the ancient practices of the pagan Druids “that sylvan spirits might flock to the evergreens, and remain unnipped by frost till a milder season.” In Roman Catholic countries large crowds flock during the whole evening and night of “Christmas Eve” to the churches, to salute waxen images of the divine Infant and his Virgin mother, in her garb of “Queen of Heaven.” To an analytical mind, this bravery of rich gold and lace, pearl-embroidered satin and velvet, and the bejewelled cradle do seem rather paradoxical. When one thinks of the poor, worm-eaten, dirty manger of the Jewish country-inn, in which, if we must credit the Gospel, the future “Redeemer” was placed at his birth for lack of a better shelter, we cannot help suspecting that before the dazzled eyes of the unsophisticated devotee the Bethlehem stable vanishes altogether. To put it in the mildest terms, this gaudy display tallies ill with the democratic feelings and the truly divine contempt for riches of the “Son of Man,” who had “not where to lay his head.” It makes it all the harder for the average Christian to regard the explicit statement that—“it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven,” as

CHRISTMAS THEN AND CHRISTMAS NOW

163

anything more than a rhetorical threat. The Roman Church acted wisely in severely forbidding her parishioners to either read or interpret the Gospels for themselves, and leaving the Book, as long as it was possible, to proclaim its truths in Latin—“the voice of one crying in the wilderness.” In that, she but followed the wisdom of the ages the wisdom of the old Aryans, which is also “justified of her children”; for, as neither the modern Hindu devotee understands a word of Sanskrit, nor the modern Parsi one syllable of the Zend, so for the average Roman Catholic the Latin is no better than Hieroglyphics. The result is that all the three—Brahmanical High Priest, Zoroastrian Mobed, and Roman Catholic Pontiff, are allowed unlimited opportunities for evolving new religious dogmas out of the depths of their own fancy, for the benefit of their respective churches.

To usher in this great day the bells are set merrily ringing at midnight, throughout England and the Continent. In France and Italy, after the celebration of the Mass in churches magnificently decorated, “it is usual for the revellers to partake of a collation (*réveillon*) that *they may be better able to sustain the fatigues of the night*,” saith a book treating upon Popish church ceremonials. This night of Christian fasting reminds one of the Śivarâtri of the followers of the god Śiva,—the great day of gloom and fasting, in the eleventh month of the Hindu year. Only, with the latter, the night’s long vigil is preceded and followed by a strict and rigid fasting. No *réveillons* or compromises for them. True, they are but wicked “heathens,” and therefore their way to salvation must be tenfold harder.

Though now universally observed by Christian nations as the anniversary of the birth of Jesus, the 25th of December was not originally so accepted. The most movable of the Christian feast days, during the early centuries, Christmas was often confounded with the Epiphany, and celebrated in the months of April and

May. As there never was any authentic record, or proof of its identification, whether in secular or ecclesiastical history, the selection of that day long remained optional; and it was only during the fourth century that, urged by Cyril of Jerusalem, the

Pope (Julius I) ordered the bishops to make an investigation and come finally to *some* agreement as to the *presumable* date of the nativity of Christ. Their choice fell upon the 25th day of December—and a most unfortunate choice it has since proved! It was Dupuis, followed by Volney, who aimed the first shots at this natal anniversary. They proved that for incalculable periods before our era, upon very clear astronomical data, nearly all the ancient peoples had celebrated the births of their sun-gods on that very day. “Dupuis says, that the celestial sign of the VIRGIN AND CHILD was in existence several thousand years before the birth of Christ”—remarks Higgins in his *Anacalypsis*.* As Dupuis, Volney, and Higgins have all been passed over to posterity as infidels, and enemies of Christianity, it may be as *well* to quote, in this relation, the confessions of the Christian Bishop of Ratisbone, “the most learned man that the Middle Ages produced”—the Dominican, Albertus Magnus. “The sign of the celestial virgin rises above the horizon at the moment in which we fix the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ,” he says.† So Adonis, Bacchus, Osiris, Apollo, etc., were all born on the 25th of December. Christmas comes just at the time of the winter solstice; the days then are shortest, and *Darkness* is more upon the face of the earth than ever. All the sun-gods were believed to be annually born at that epoch; for from this time its Light dispels more and more darkness with each succeeding day, and the power of the *Sun* begins to increase.

However it may be, the Christmas festivities that were held by the Christians for nearly fifteen centuries, were of a particularly pagan character. Nay, we are afraid that even the present ceremonies of the Church can hardly escape the reproach of being almost literally copied from the mysteries of Egypt and Greece, held in honour of Osiris and Horus, Apollo and Bacchus. Both Isis and Ceres were called “Holy Virgins,” and a DIVINE BABE may be found in every

* [Vol. I, p. 313.]

† [This passage is from Godfrey Higgins’ *Anacalypsis*, Vol. I, p. 314, where he ascribes these words to Albertus Magnus and gives as reference “Lib. de Univers.”—*Compiler*.]

“heathen” religion. We will now draw two pictures of the Merry Christmas; one portraying the “good old times,” and the other the present state of Christian worship. From the first days of its establishment as Christmas, the day was regarded in the double light of a holy commemoration and a most cheerful festivity: it was equally given up to devotion and insane merriment. “Among the revels of the Christmas season were the so-called feasts of fools and of asses, grotesque saturnalia, which were termed ‘December liberties,’ in which everything serious was burlesqued, the order of society reversed, and its decencies ridiculed”—says one compiler of old chronicles. “During the Middle Ages, it was celebrated by the gay fantastic spectacle of dramatic mysteries, performed by personages in grotesque masks and singular costumes. The show usually represented an infant in a cradle, surrounded by the Virgin Mary and St. Joseph, by bulls’ heads, cherubs, Eastern Magi (the Mobeds of old), and manifold ornaments.” The custom of singing canticles at Christmas, called Carols, was to recall the songs of the shepherds at the Nativity. “The bishops and the clergy often joined with the populace in carolling, and the songs were enlivened by dances, and by the music of tambours, guitars, violins and organs. . . .” We may add that down to the present times, during the days preceding Christmas, such mysteries are being enacted, with marionettes and dolls, in Southern Russia, Poland, and Galicia; and known as the *Koliadovki*. In Italy Calabrian minstrels descend from their mountains to Naples

and Rome, and crowd the shrines of the Virgin-Mother, cheering her with their wild music.

In England, the revels used to begin on Christmas Eve, and continue often till Candlemas (Feb. 2) every day being a holiday till Twelfth-night (Jan. 6). In the houses of great nobles a "lord of misrule," or "abbot of unreason" was appointed, whose duty it was to play the part of a buffoon. "The larder was filled with capons, hens, turkeys, geese, ducks, beef, mutton, pork, pies, puddings, nuts, plums, sugar and honey." . . . "A glowing fire, made of great logs, the principal of which was termed the 'Yule log,' or Christmas

block, which might be burnt till Candlemas eve, kept out the cold; and the abundance was shared by the lord's tenants amid music, conjuring, riddles, hot-cockles, fool-plough, snapdragon, jokes, laughter, repartee, forfeits and dances."

In our modern times, the bishops and the clergy join no more with the populace in open carolling and dancing; and feasts of "fools and asses" are enacted more in sacred privacy than under the eyes of the dangerous, argus-eyed reporter. Yet the eating and drinking festivities are preserved throughout the Christian world; and, more sudden deaths are doubtless caused by gluttony and intemperance during the Christmas and Easter holidays, than at any other time of the year. Yet, Christian worship becomes every year more and more a false pretence. The heartlessness of this lip-service has been denounced innumerable times, but never, we think, with a more affecting touch of realism than in a charming dream-tale, which appeared in the *New York Herald* about last Christmas. An aged man, presiding at a public meeting, said he would avail himself of the opportunity to relate a vision he had witnessed on the previous night.

. . . He thought he was standing in the pulpit of the most gorgeous and magnificent cathedral he had ever seen. Before him was the priest or pastor of the church, and beside him stood an angel with a tablet and pencil in hand, whose mission it was to make record of every act of worship or prayer that transpired in his presence and ascended as an acceptable offering to the throne of God. Every pew was filled with richly-attired worshippers of either sex. The most sublime music that ever fell on his enraptured ear filled the air with melody. All the beautiful ritualistic Church services, including a surpassingly eloquent sermon from the gifted minister, had in turn transpired, and yet the recording angel made no entry in his tablet! The congregation were at length dismissed by the pastor with a lengthy and beautifully-worded prayer, followed by a benediction, and yet the angel made no sign!

. . . Attended still by the angel, the speaker left the door of the church in rear of the richly-attired congregation. A poor, tattered castaway stood in the gutter beside the curbstone, with her pale, famished hand extended, silently pleading for alms. As the richly-attired worshippers from the church passed by, they shrank from the

poor Magdalen, the ladies withdrawing aside their silken, jewel-bedecked robes, lest they should be polluted by her touch.

. . . Just then an intoxicated sailor came reeling down the side-walk on the other side. When he got opposite the poor forsaken girl, he staggered across the street to where she stood, and, taking a few pennies from his pocket, he thrust them into her hand, accompanied with the adjuration, "Here, your poor forsaken cuss, take this!" A celestial radiance now lighted up the face of the recording angel, who instantly entered the sailor's act of sympathy and charity in his tablet, and departed with it as a sweat sacrifice to God.

A concretion, one might say, of the Biblical story of the judgment upon the woman taken in adultery. Be it so; yet it portrays with a master hand the state of our Christian society.

According to tradition, on Christmas Eve the oxen may always be found on their knees, as though in prayer and devotion; and “there was a famous hawthorn in the church-yard of Glastonbury Abbey, which always budded on the 24th, and blossomed on the 25th of December”; which, considering that the day was chosen by the Fathers of the church at random, and that the calendar has been changed from the old to the new style, shows a remarkable perspicacity in both the animal and the vegetable! There is also a tradition of the church, preserved to us by Olaus, archbishop of Upsala, that, at the festival of Christmas, “the men living in the cold Northern parts, are suddenly and strangely metamorphosed into wolves; and that a huge multitude of them meet together at an appointed place and rage so fiercely against mankind, that it suffers more from their attacks than ever they do from the natural wolves.”* Metaphorically viewed, this would seem to be more than ever the case with men, and particularly with Christian nations, now. There seems no need to wait for Christmas Eve to see whole nations changed into “wild beasts”—especially in time of war.

* [Olaus Magnus, *A Compendious History of the Goths, Swedes and Vandals, and other Northern Nations*. Transl. from the Latin orig., London, 1653.—*Compiler*.]

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

168

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

THE POPULAR IDEA OF SOUL-SURVIVAL

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 3, December, 1879, pp. 60-62]

At what epoch the dawning intellect of man first accepted the idea of future life, none can tell. But we know that, from the very first, its roots struck so deeply, so entwined about human instincts, that the belief has endured through all generations, and is embedded in the consciousness of every nation and tribe, civilized, semi-civilized or savage. The greatest minds have speculated upon it; and the rudest savages, though having no name for the Deity, have yet believed in the existence of spirits and worshipped them. If, in Christian Russia, Wallachia, Bulgaria and Greece, the Oriental Church enjoins that upon All-Saints day offerings of rice and drink shall be placed upon the graves; and in "heathen" India, the same propitiatory gifts of rice are made to the departed; so, likewise, the poor savage of New Caledonia makes his sacrifice of food to the skulls of his beloved dead.

According to Herbert Spencer, the worship of souls and relics is to be attributed to "the primitive idea that any property characterizing an aggregate, inheres in all parts of it. . . . The soul, present in the body of the dead man preserved entire, is also present in the preserved parts of his body. Hence, the faith in relics." This definition, though in logic equally applicable to the gold-enshrined and bejewelled relic of the cultured Roman Catholic devotee, and to the dusty, timeworn skull of the fetish-worshipper, might yet be excepted to by the former, since he would say that he does not believe the soul to be present in either the

THE POPULAR IDEA OF SOUL-SURVIVAL

169

whole cadaver, skeleton, or part, nor does he, strictly speaking, worship it. He but honours the relic as something which, having belonged to one whom he deems saintly, has by the contact acquired a sort of miraculous virtue. Mr. Spencer's definition, therefore, does not seem to cover the whole ground. So also Professor Max Müller, in his *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, after having shown to us, by citing numerous instances, that the human mind had, from the beginning, a "vague hope of a future life," explains no more than Herbert Spencer whence or how came originally such a hope; but merely points to an inherent faculty in *uncultivated* nations of changing the forces of nature into gods and demons. He closes his lecture upon the Turanian legends and the universality of this belief in ghosts and spirits, by simply remarking that "the worship of the spirits of the departed is *perhaps* the most widely spread form of natural *superstition* all over the world." [p. 211.]

Thus, whichever way we turn for a philosophical solution of the mystery; whether we expect an answer from theology which is itself bound to believe in miracles, and teach supernaturalism; or ask it from the now dominant schools of modern thought—the greatest opponents of the miraculous in nature; or, again, turn for an explanation to that philosophy of extreme positivism which, from the days of Epicurus down to the modern school of James Mill, adopting for its device the glaring sciolism "*nihil in intellectu, quod non ante fuerit in sensu*," makes intellect subservient to matter—we receive a satisfactory reply from none!

If this article were intended merely for a simple collation of facts, authenticated by travellers on the spot, and concerning but “superstitions” born in the mind of the primitive man, and now lingering only among the savage tribes of humanity, then the combined works of such philosophers as Herbert Spencer might solve our difficulties. We might remain content with his explanation that in the absence of hypothesis “foreign to thought in its earliest stage . . . primitive ideas, arising out of various experiences, derived from the inorganic world”—such as the actions of wind,

the echo, and man’s own shadow—proving to the uneducated mind that there was “an invisible form of existence which manifests power,” were all sufficient to have created a like “inevitable belief” (see Spencer’s “Genesis of Superstition,” *Popular Science Monthly*, March, 1875). But we are now concerned with something nearer to us, and higher than the primitive man of the Stone Age; the man who totally ignored “those conceptions of physical causation which have arisen only as experiences, and have been slowly organized during civilization.” We are now dealing with the beliefs of twenty millions of modern Spiritualists; our own fellow men, living in the full blaze of the enlightened 19th century. These men ignore none of the discoveries of modern science; nay, many among them are themselves ranked high among the highest of such scientific discoverers. Notwithstanding all this, are they any the less addicted to the same “form of superstition,” if superstition it be, than the primitive man? At least their interpretations of the physical phenomena, whenever accompanied by those coincidences which carry to their minds the conviction of an intelligence behind the physical Force—are often precisely the same as those which presented themselves to the apprehension of the man of the early and undeveloped ages.

What is a shadow? asks Herbert Spencer. By a child and a savage “a shadow is thought of as an entity.” Bastian says of the Benin negroes, that “they regard men’s shadows as their souls” . . . thinking “that they . . . watch all their actions, and bear witness against them.”* According to Crantz, among the Greenlanders a man’s shadow “is one of his two souls—the one which goes away from his body at night.” By the Fijians, the shadow is called “the dark spirit, as distinguished from another which each man possesses.” And the celebrated author of the *Principles of Psychology* explains that “the community of meaning, hereafter to be noted more fully, which various unallied

* [Dr. Adolf Bastian, *Zur Mythologie und Psychologie der Nigritier in Guinea*, etc., Berlin, 1894, p. 41.—*Compiler*.]

languages betray between shade and spirit, show us the same thing.*

What all this shows us the most clearly however, is that, wrong and contradicting as the conclusions may be, yet the premises on which they are based are no fictions. A thing must be, before the human mind can think or conceive of it. The very capacity to imagine the existence of something usually invisible and intangible, is itself evidence that it must have manifested itself at some time. Sketching in his usual artistic way the gradual development of the soul-idea, and pointing out at the same time how “*mythology* not only pervades the sphere of religion . . . but . . . infects more or less the whole realm of thought,” Professor Müller in his turn tells us that, when man wished for the first time to express

. . . a distinction between the body and something else within him distinct from the body, an easy name that suggested itself was *breath* . . . chosen to express at first the principle of life, as distinguished from the decaying body, afterwards the incorporeal . . . immortal part of man—his soul, his mind, his Self . . . When a

person dies, we too say that he has given up the ghost, and ghost, too, meant originally spirit, and spirit meant breath. [pp. 359-61.]

As instances of this, narratives by various missionaries and travellers are quoted. Questioned by Father F. de Bobadilla, soon after the Spanish conquest, as to their ideas concerning death, the Indians of Nicaragua told him that “when men die, there comes forth from their mouth something which resembles a person, and is called *julio* (Aztec *yuli*—‘to live’) explains M. Müller. “This being is like a person, but does not die and the corpse remains here. . . .” In one of his numerous works, Andrew Jackson Davis, whom considered the greatest American clairvoyant and known as the “Poughkeepsie Seer,” gives us what is a perfect illustration of the belief of the Nicaragua Indians. This book (*Death and the After-Life*) contains an engraved frontispiece, representing the death-bed of an old woman. It is called the “Formation of the Spiritual Body.”

Out of

* [*The Principles of Sociology*, London, 1876, pp. 129, 131.]

the head of the defunct, there issues a luminous appearance—her own rejuvenated form.*

Among some Hindus the spirit is supposed to remain for ten days seated on the eaves of the house where it parted from the body. That it may bathe and drink, two plantain leaf-cups are placed on the eaves, one full of milk and the other of water. “On the first day the dead is supposed to get his head; on the second day his ears, eyes, and nose; on the third, his hands, breast, and neck; on the fourth, his middle parts; on the fifth, his legs and feet; on the sixth, his vitals; on the seventh, his bones, marrow, veins, and arteries; on the eighth, his nails, hair, and teeth; on the ninth, all the remaining limbs, organs, and manly strength; and, on the tenth, hunger and thirst for the renewed body.” (“The Pâthâri Prabhus,” by Krishnanâth Raghunathji; in the Government *Bombay Gazetteer*, 1879.)

Mr. Davis’ theory is accepted by all the Spiritualists, and it is on this model that the clairvoyants now describe the separation of the “incorruptible from the corruptible.” But here, Spiritualists and the Aztecs branch off into two paths; for, while the former maintain that the soul is in every case immortal and preserves its individuality through-

* “Suppose a person is dying,” says the Poughkeepsie Seer, “the clairvoyant sees right over the head what may be called a magnetic halo—an ethereal emanation, in appearance golden, and throbbing as though conscious. . . . The person has ceased to breathe, the pulse is still, and the emanation is elongated and *fashioned in the outline of the human form!* Beneath it, is connected the brain . . . owing to the brain’s momentum. I have seen a dying person, even at the last feeble pulse-beat, rouse impulsively and rise up in bed to converse, but the next instant he was gone—his brain being the last to yield up the life-principles. The golden emanation . . . is connected with the brain by a very fine life-thread. When it ascends, there appears something *white* and *shining* like a human head; next, a faint outline of the face *divine*; then the *fair* neck and *beautiful* shoulders; then, in rapid succession come all parts of the new body, down to the feet—bright shining image, a little smaller than the physical body, but a perfect prototype . . . in all except its disfigurements. The fine life-thread continues attached to the old brain. The next thing is the withdrawal of the electric principle. When this thread snaps, the spiritual body is free (!) and prepared to accompany its guardian to the Summer Land.”

out eternity, the Aztecs say that “when the deceased has lived well, the *julio* goes up on high with our gods; but when he has lived ill, the *julio* perishes with the body, and there is an end of it.”*

Some persons might perchance find the “primitive” Aztecs more consistent in their logic than our modern Spiritualists. The Lapponians and Finns also maintain that while the body decays, a *new* one is given to the dead, which the Shaman can alone see.

. . . Though breath, or spirit, or ghost [says further on Professor Müller] are the most common names . . . we speak . . . of the *shades* of the departed, which meant originally their shadows. Those who first introduced this expression—and we find it in the most distant parts of the world—evidently took the shadow as the nearest approach to what they wished to express; something that should be incorporeal, yet closely connected with the body. The Greek *εἶδωλον*, too, is not much more than the Little Ones, the Small Folk. But the curious part . . . is this . . . that people who speak of the life or soul as the shadow of the body, have brought themselves to believe that a dead body casts no shadow, because the shadow has departed from it; that it becomes, in fact, a kind of Peter Schlemihl.†

Do the Amazulu and other tribes of South Africa only thus believe? By no means; it is a popular idea among Slavonian Christians. A corpse which is noticed to cast a shadow in the sun is deemed a sinful soul rejected by heaven itself. It is doomed henceforth to expiate its sins as an earth-bound spirit, till the Day of the Resurrection.

Both Lander and Catlin describe the savage Mandans as placing the skulls of their dead in a circle. “Each wife knows the skull of her former husband or child, ‘and there seldom passes a day that she does not visit it, with a dish of the best cooked food . . . There is scarcely an hour in a pleasant day, but more or less of these women may be seen sitting or lying by the skull of their child or husband—talking to it in the most pleasant and endearing language

* [Müller, *Introduction*, etc., p. 361.]

† [*Op. cit.*, p. 365.]

that they can use (as they were wont to do in former days) and *seemingly getting an answer back.*”*

What these poor, savage Mandan mothers and wives do, is performed daily by millions of civilized Spiritualists, and but the more proves the universality of the conviction that our dead hear and can answer us. From a theosophical, magnetic—hence in a certain sense a scientific—standpoint, the former have, moreover, far better reasons to offer than the latter. The skull of the departed person, so interrogated, has surely closer magnetical affinities and relations to the defunct, than a table through the tippings of which the dead ones answer the living; a table, in most cases, which the spirit while embodied had never seen nor touched. But the Spiritualists are not the only ones to vie with the Mandans. In every part of Russia, whether mourning over the yet fresh corpse, or accompanying it to the burying ground, or during the six weeks following the death, the peasant women as well as those of the rich mercantile classes, go on the grave to shout, or in Biblican phraseology to “lift up their voices.” Once there, they wail in rhythm, addressing the defunct by name, asking of him questions, pausing as if for an answer.

Not only the ancient and idolatrous Egyptians and Peruvians had the curious notion that the ghost or soul of the dead man was either present in the mummy, or that the corpse was itself conscious, but there is a similar belief now among the orthodox Christians of the Greek and the Roman churches. We reproach the Egyptians with placing their embalmed dead at the table; and the heathen Peruvians with having carried around the fields the dried-up corpse of a parent, that it might see and judge of the state of the crops. But what of the Christian Mexican of today, who under the guidance of his priest, dresses up his corpses in finery; bedecks them with flowers, and in case of the defunct happening to be a female—even paints its cheeks with

rouge. Then seating the body in a chair placed on a large table, from which the ghastly carrion presides, as it

* Quoted from Catlin by H. Spencer in *The Principles of Sociology*, London, 1876, Chap. xxi, pp. 326-27.

THE POPULAR IDEA OF SOUL-SURVIVAL

175

were, over the mourners seated around the table, who eat and drink the whole night, and play various games of cards and dice, consult the defunct as to their chances. On the other hand, in Russia, it is a universal custom to crown the deceased person's brow with a long slip of gilt and ornamented paper, called *Ventchik* (the crown), upon which a prayer is printed in gaudy letters. This prayer is a kind of a letter of introduction with which the parish priest furnishes the corpse to his patron Saint, recommending the defunct to the Saint's protection.* The Roman Catholic Basques write letters to their deceased friends and relatives, addressing them to either Paradise, Purgatory or—Hell, according to the instructions given by the Father confessor of the late addressees and, placing them in the coffins of the newly departed, ask the latter to safely deliver them in the other world, promising as a fee to the messenger, more or less masses for the repose of his soul.

At a recent *séance*, held by a well known medium in America,—(see *Banner of Light*, Boston, June 14th, 1879).

. . . Mercedes, late Queen of Spain, announced herself, and came forth in full bridal array—a magnificent profusion of lace and jewels, and spoke in several different tongues with a linguist present. Her sister, the Princess Christina, came also just after in much plainer costume, and with a timid school-girl air.

Thus, we see that not only can the dead people deliver letters, but, even returning from their celestial homes, bring back with them their “lace and jewels.” As the ancient pagan Greek peopled his Olympian heaven with feasting and flirting deities; and the American Red Indian has his happy hunting-grounds where the spirits of brave chiefs bestride their ghostly steeds, and chase their phantom game; and the Hindu his many superior lokas, where their numerous gods live in golden palaces, surrounded with all manner of sensual delights; and the Christian his New Jerusalem with streets of “pure gold, as it were transparent glass,” and the foundations of the wall of the city

* It runs in this wise: “St. Nicholas (or St. Mary so-and-so), holy patron of — (follow defunct's full name and title), receive the soul of God's servant, and intercede for remission of his (or her) sins.”

176

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

“garnished . . . with precious stones”; where bodiless chirping cherubs and the elect, with golden harps, sing praises to Jehovah; so the modern Spiritualist has his “Summer Land Zone within the Milky Way,”* though somewhat higher than the celestial territories of other people.† There, amid cities and villages abounding in palaces, museums, villas, colleges and temples, an eternity is passed. The young are nurtured and taught, the undeveloped of the earth matured, the old rejuvenated, and every individual taste and desire gratified; spirits flirt, get married, and have families of children.‡

Verily, verily we can exclaim with Paul, “O death, where is thy sting; O grave, where is thy victory!”

Belief in the survival of the ancestors is the oldest and most time-honoured of all beliefs.

Travellers tell us that all the Mongolian, Tatar, Finnish, and Tungusic tribes, besides the spirits of nature, deify also their ancestral spirits. The Chinese historians, treating of the Turanians, the Huns and the *Tukui*—the forefathers of the modern Turks—show them as worshipping “the spirits of the sky, of the earth, and the spirits of the departed.” Medhurst enumerates the various classes of the Chinese spirits thus: The principal are the celestial spirits (*tien*

* See *Stellar Key to the Summer Land*, by Andrew Jackson Davis.

† In the same author’s work—*The Spiritual Congress*, Galen says through the clairvoyant seer: “Between the Spirit Home and the earth, there are, strewn along the intervening distance . . . more than *four hundred thousand* planets, and *fifteen thousand* solar bodies of lesser magnitude.”

‡ The latest intelligence from America is that of the marriage of a spirit daughter of Colonel Eaton, of Leavenworth, Kansas, a prominent member of the National Democratic Committee. This daughter, who died at the age of three weeks, grew in some twenty-odd years in the Summer-Land, to be a fine young lady and now is wedded to the spirit son of Franklin Pierce, late President of the U.S. The wedding, witnessed by a famous clairvoyant of New York, was gorgeous. The “spirit bride” was “arrayed in a dress of mild green.” A wedding supper was spread by the spirit’s order, with lights and bouquets, and plates placed for the happy couple. The guests assembled, and the wedded ghosts fully “materialized” themselves and sat at table with them. (*New York Times*, June 29th, 1879.)

THE POPULAR IDEA OF SOUL-SURVIVAL

177

shin); the terrestrial (*ti-ki*); and the ancestral or wandering spirits (*jin kwei*). Among these, the spirits of the late Emperors, great philosophers, and sages, are revered the most. They are the public property of the whole nation, and are a part of the state religion, “while each family has its own *manes* which are treated with special reverence and honoured by many superstitious rites.”*

But if all nations equally believe in, and many worship, their dead, their views as to the desirability of a direct intercourse with these late citizens differ widely. In fact, among the educated, only the modern Spiritualists seek to communicate constantly with them. We will take a few instances from the most widely separated peoples. The Hindus, as a rule, hold that no pure spirit of a man who died reconciled to his fate, will ever come back bodily to trouble mortals. They maintain that it is only the *bhûtas*—the souls of those who depart this life, unsatisfied and having their terrestrial desires unquenched, in short, bad, sinful men and women—who become “earth-bound.” Unable to ascend at once to Moksha, they have to linger upon earth until either their next transmigration or complete annihilation, and thus take every opportunity to obsess people, especially weak women. So undesirable is to them the return or apparition of such ghosts, that they use every means to prevent it. Even in the case of the most holy feeling—the mother’s love for her infant—they adopt measures to prevent her return to it. There is a belief among some of them that whenever a woman dies in childbirth, she will return to see and watch over her child. Therefore, on their way back from the ghât, after the burning of the body—the mourners thickly strew mustard seeds all along the road leading from the funeral pile to the defunct’s home. For some inconceivable reason they think that the ghost will feel obliged to pick up, on its way back, every one of these seeds. And, as the labour is slow and tedious, the poor mother can never reach her home before the cock crows, when she is obliged—in accordance with the ghostly laws—

* [Quoted by M. Müller, in *Introduction*, etc., p. 208—*Compiler*.]

to vanish, till the following night, dropping back all her harvest. Among the Tchuvashes, a tribe inhabiting Russian domains, a son, whenever offering sacrifice to the spirit of his father, uses the following exorcism: "We honour thee with a feast; look, here is bread for thee, and different kinds of meat; thou hast all thou canst desire: but do not trouble us, do not come back near us."* Among the Lapps and Finns, those departed spirits which make their presence visible and tangible, are supposed to be very mischievous and "the most mischievous are the spirits of the priests." Everything is done to keep them away from the living. The agreement we find between this blind popular instinct and the wise conclusions of some of the greatest philosophers, and even modern specialists, is very remarkable. "Respect the spirits and—keep them at a distance"—said Confucius, six centuries B.C. Nine centuries later, Porphyry, the famous anti-theurgist, writing upon the nature of various spirits, expressed his opinion upon the spirits of the departed by saying that *he knew of no evil* which these pestilent demons would not be ready to do. And, in our own century, a kabalist, the greatest magnetizer living, Baron Du Potet, in his *La Magie Dévoilée*, warns the spiritists not to trouble the rest of the dead. For "the evoked shadow can *fasten itself* upon, follow, and for ever afterwards influence you; and we can appease it but through a pact which will bind us to it—till death!"

But all this is a matter of individual opinion; what we are concerned with now is merely to learn how the basic fact of belief in soul-survival could have so engrafted itself upon every succeeding age—despite the extravagances woven into it—if it be but a shadowy and unreal intellectual conception originating with "primitive man." Of all modern men of science, although he does his best in the body of the work to present the belief alluded to as a mere "superstition"—the only satisfactory answer is given by Prof. Max Müller, in his *Introduction to the Science of Religion*. And by his solution we have to abide for want of a better

* M. A. Castrén, *Vorlesungen über die Finnische Mythologie*, p. 122. [Quoted by Max Müller in *Introduction*, etc., p. 213.]

one. He can only do it, however, by overstepping the boundaries of comparative philology, and boldly invading the domain of pure metaphysics; by following, in short, a path forbidden by exact science. At one blow he cuts the Gordian knot which Herbert Spencer and his school have tied under the chariot of the "Unknowable." He shows us that: "there is a philosophical discipline which examines into the conditions of sensuous or intuitional knowledge," and "another philosophical discipline which examines into the conditions of rational or conceptual knowledge"; and then defines for us a third faculty. . .

. . . the faculty of apprehending the Infinite, not only in religion but in all things; a power independent of sense and reason, a power in a certain sense contradicted by sense and reason, but yet a very real power, which has held its own from the beginning of the world, neither sense nor reason being able to overcome it, while it alone is able to overcome both reason and sense."*

The faculty of *Intuition*—that which lies entirely beyond the scope of our modern biologists—could hardly be better defined. And yet, when closing his lecture upon the superstitious rites of the Chinese, and their temples devoted to the worship of the departed ancestors, our great philologist remarks: "All this takes place by slow degrees; it begins with placing a flower on the tomb; it ends with worshipping the spirits . . ."†

* [Müller, *op. cit.*, p. 18.]

† [*Op. cit.*, p. 214]

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

180

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

“LIEUTENANT-COLONEL ST. ANTHONY”

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 3, December, 1879, pp. 62-63]

In 1808 Juan VI, then Prince-Regent of Portugal, fearing Napoleon I, made his escape to Brazil; and in 1815, was crowned monarch of the United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil, and Algarve. Recalled to his country by the Cortes of Portugal, he sailed back to Lisbon in 1821. And now, a very interesting document, containing neither more nor less than the appointment of long-dead St. Anthony to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel in the Portuguese army, by this Prince, is just published in the Lisbon paper *Revista Militar*. The following is a verbatim translation from the Portuguese of this unique proclamation:

. . . Don Juan, by the will of God, Prince-Regent of Portugal and both Algarve, of the two seas on both sides of Africa, Ruler of Guinea, and master of navigation and commerce in Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia and India, etc., etc., etc. By the present we declare to all whom it may concern that, in consideration of our special devotion to the very glorious St. Anthony, who, moreover is constantly addressed in all their needs and in full faith by the inhabitants of this capital, and likewise for the reason that the belligerent powers of our armies are evidently under the protection and enjoying the blessing of God, and that thus the peace of Portugal is ensured—a propitious result which, we are firmly persuaded, is solely due to the powerful intercession of the said Saint—we have resolved: to confer upon him the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, and an adequate salary, which will be received by him in the shape of our royal decorations and orders (*forma das minhas reaes ordens*), through the office of Field-marshal Xaviers Cabra da Cunha, who in his capacity of General-Adjutant, is now temporarily holding the office of Commander-in-Chief of our armies. So be it. The said salary to be entered in the official books, and to be paid regularly at each term. In assurance of the authenticity of the present we herewith sign it with our name, and stamp it with the large seal bearing our arms. Given in the city of Rio de Janeiro, August 31st, A.D. 1814.

FOOTNOTE TO “A STRANGE REVERY”

181

We may add that this is not the first time that deceased saints have been appointed to high military positions. Saint Yago, in his capacity of Captain-General, received for years his salary from the Spanish Treasury, it being turned over by him (?) to the Church bearing his name.

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**
1879

FOOTNOTE TO “A STRANGE REVERY”

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 3, December, 1879, p. 76]

[The writer, having contributed some remarks on the ancient glory of Aryavarta, expresses his hope of seeing it soon restored through the efforts of the Theosophical Society and the help of *The Theosophist*.]

Our welcome contributor is a Rajput and imbued, apparently, with that chivalrous ardour which ever characterized that warrior race. While disclaiming for our journal or Society, all pretense of assuming the leadership, or aspiring to anything more than a very humble part in the great work of Indian national reform, we nevertheless affirm the sincerity of our motives, and publish without emendation our brother's words, in the hope and belief that his noble patriotism will awaken responsive echoes all over the land. For the regeneration of India must be effected by the efforts of her own children.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

182

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

AN OLD BOOK AND A NEW ONE

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 3, December, 1879, pp. 77-79]

The nineteenth century is the century of struggle and strife, *par excellence*; of religious, political, social, and philosophical conflict. The biologists could and would not remain silent witnesses of this memorable crisis. Clad from head to foot in the panoply of exact sciences; hardened in battles against ignorance, superstition and falsehood, they rushed to their places in the ranks of the fighters and, as those having authority, began the work of demolition.

But who destroys ought to rebuild; and *exact* science does nothing of the kind, at least so far as the question of the highest psychological aspirations of humanity is concerned. Strange to say, yet nevertheless an incontrovertible fact, the duty has fallen upon the daily augmenting body of Spiritualists, to sweep away the mangled débris of the warfare, and rebuild from the ruins of the past something more tangible, more unassailable than the dreamy doctrines of theology. From the first, Spiritualism has fortified its positions by ocular demonstrations, slowly but surely replacing fanciful hypothesis and blind faith with a series of phenomena which, when genuine, invite the crucial tests of the most exacting experimentalists.

It is one of the most curious features of the day, to see science in her double *rôle* of the aggressor and [the] attacked. And it is a sight, indeed, to follow the steady advance of the columns of "infidelity" against the strongholds of the Church, simultaneously with the pushing back of materialism towards its last entrenchments by the Spiritualists. Both the fundamental doctrines of theology, and the cold negations of science, have of late been successfully assailed by learned and skillful writers. And, it can hardly be denied, that there are strong indications of wavering

AN OLD BOOK AND A NEW ONE

183

on the part of both the attacked parties, with an evident disposition to capitulate. The *Speaker's Commentary*, followed by the new edition of the revised Bible, giving up as it despairingly does, the hitherto treasured Mosaic miracles, and the recent additions to the party of the Spiritualists of more than one great man of science, are impressive facts. Canon Farrar, of Westminster Abbey, destroys the old-fashioned belief in the eternity of hell, and the veteran and learned philosopher, Dr. Fichte of Germany, dying, all but confesses his belief in the philosophy of Spiritualism! Alas, for the Philistines of Biology; this Goliath whom they but put forth as their champion was slain by a single medium, and

the spear which seemed as big and strong “as a weaver’s beam,” has pierced their own sides!

The most recent development of this double conflict is a work which comes just at a time to palliate the evil effects of another one which preceded it. We refer to *The Mechanism of Man*, by Mr. Serjeant Cox, the *Anthropogenie* of Professor Haeckel. The latter had sown wind and reaped the whirlwind; and a furious hurricane it was at one time. The public had begun to look up to the Jena professor as to a new saviour from the “dark superstitions” of the forefathers. Reaction had come. Between the dying infallibility of the Churches, the not over-satisfactory results of Spiritualism, and, for the average masses, far too deep and philosophical researches of Herbert Spencer, Bain, and the great lights of exact Science, the public was hesitating and perplexed. On the one hand, it had a strong, and ever growing desire to follow a progress that went hand in hand with science; but, notwithstanding its late conquests, science finds missing links at every step, dreary blanks in its knowledge, “chasms” on whose brinks its votaries shudder, fearing to cross. On the other hand, the absurdly unjust ridicule cast upon the believers in phenomena, held back the general public from personal investigation. True, the Church or rather the “schoolmen’s philosophy,” miscalled Christianity, as Huxley has it, was daily offering to compromise, and with but a slight effort of diplomacy one might remain

within the fold, while disbelieving even in a personal devil, without risking to “smell of the faggott.”

But the spell was broken and the prestige quite gone. For faith there is no middle ground. It must be either completely blind, or it will see too much. Like water, it ceases to be pure as soon as the smallest foreign ingredient is introduced.

The public is a big child; cunning yet trusting, diffident and yet credulous. Is it cause for wonder then, that while it hesitated between the conflicting parties, a man like Haeckel, vain and presumptuous, notwithstanding his great learning, ever ready to dogmatize upon problems for the solution of which humanity has thirsted for ages, and which no true philosophical mind will dare presume to answer conclusively—secured at one time the greatest attention for his *Anthropogeny*? Between men like Balfour Stewart, Du Bois-Reymond, and other honest scientists, who confess their ignorance, and one who proclaims that he has solved every riddle of life, and that nature has disclosed to him her last mystery, the public will rarely hesitate. As one of Haeckel’s critics remarks, a street quack, with his panacea medicine, will often secure a far more liberal and numerous audience than an honest and cautious physician. *Anthropogeny* has plunged more minds into a profound materialism than any other book of which we have knowledge. Even the great Huxley was at one time inclined (see “Darwin and Haeckel,” *Popular Science Monthly* for March, 1875), more than was needed, to support Haeckel’s views, and laud his book, which he called “a milestone indicating the progress of the theory of evolution,” a “real life book, full of power and genius, and based upon a foundation of practical, original

work, to which few living men can offer a parallel.” Whether the father of *Protoplasm* continues to think so to this day, is a matter of little consequence, though we doubt it. The public, at least, was speedily disabused by the combined efforts of the greatest minds of Europe.

In this famous work of Haeckel’s, not only is man refused a soul, but an ancestor is forced upon him, in the

shape of a formless, gelatinous *Bathybius Haeckelii*—the protoplasmic root of man—which dwelt in the slime at the bottom of the seas “before the oldest of the fossiliferous rocks were deposited.” Having transformed himself, in good time, into a series of interesting animals—some consisting of but one bowel, and others of a single nose (*Monorhinae*), all evolved out of Professor Haeckel’s fathomless ingenuity, our genealogical line is led up to, and stops abruptly at the *soulless* man!

We have nothing whatever against the physical side of the theory of evolution, the general theory of which we thoroughly accept ourselves; neither against Haeckel’s worms, fishes, mammals, nor, finally, the tailless *anthropoid*—all of which he introduces to fill up the hiatus between ape and man—as our forefathers. No more do we object to his inventing names for them and coupling them with his own. What we object to is the utter unconcern of the Jena professor as to the other side of the theory of evolution: to the evolution of spirit, silently developing and asserting itself more and more with every newly perfected form.

What we again object to is that the ingenious evolutionist not only purposely neglects, but in several places actually sneers at the idea of a spiritual evolution, progressing hand in hand with the physical, though he might have done it as scientifically as he did the rest and—more honestly. He would thereby have missed, perhaps, the untimely praises of the protoplasmic Huxley, but won for his *Anthropogeny* the thanks of the public. *Per se*, the theory of evolution is not new, for every cosmogony—even the Jewish *Genesis*, for him who understands it—has it. And *Manu* who places special creation with periodical revolutions or *Pralayas*, followed, many thousands of years ago, the chain of transformation from the lowest animal to the highest—man, even more comprehensively if less scientifically (in the modern sense of the word) than Haeckel. Had the latter held more to the spirit of the modern discoveries of biology and physiology than to their dead-letter and his own theories, he would have led, perhaps, a new hegira of

science separating itself violently from the cold materialism of the age. No one—not even

the staunchest apostle of Positivism—will deny that the more we study the organisms of the animal world, and assure ourselves that the organ of all psychical manifestation is the nervous system, the more we find the necessity of plunging deeper into the metaphysical world of psychology, beyond the boundary line hitherto marked for us by the materialists. The line of demarcation between the two modes of life of the vegetable and animal worlds is yet *terra incognita* for every naturalist. And no more will anyone protest against the scientifically established truism that intelligence manifests itself in direct proportion with the cerebral development, in the consecutive series of the animal world. Following then, the development of this system alone—from the automatic motions produced by the simple process of what is called the *reflex action* of the ascidian mollusk, for instance, the *instinctive* motions of the bee, up to the highest order of mammals and ending, finally, with man—if we invariably find an unbroken ratio of steady increase in cerebral development, hence—a corresponding increase of reasoning powers, of intelligence—the deduction becomes irresistible that there must be a spiritual as well as a physical evolution.

This is the A.B.C. of physiology. And are we to be told that there is no *further* development, no future evolution for man? That there is a prospect on earth for the caterpillar to become a butterfly, for the tadpole to develop into a higher form, and for every bird to live after it has rid itself of its shell, while for man, who has evolved from the lowest to the highest point of physical and mental development on this earth, all further conscious, sentient development is to be arrested by the dissolution of his material organization? That, just as he has reached the culminating point, and the world of *soul* begins unfolding before his mind; just as the assurance of another and a better life begins dawning upon him; his memory, reason, feeling, consciousness, intelligence, and all his highest aspirations are to desert him in one brief moment, and go out into eternal darkness? Were it so, knowledge, science, life, and all nature

itself, would be the most idiotic of farces? If we are told that such a research does not pertain to the province of positive sciences, that no exact and accurate deductions are to be made out of purely metaphysical premises, then we will inquire, why should then deductions, as hypothetical deductions, from purely imaginary data, as in the case of Haeckel's *Bathybius* and tailless anthropoid, be accepted as scientific truths, as no such missing link has ever yet been found, any more than it has been proved that the invertebrated *moner*, the grandparent of the lovely *amphioxus*, or that philosophical recluse—the *Bathybius*, ever existed?

But now, peace to the ashes of our direct ancestor! The venerable Professor Virchow, backed by an army of infuriated naturalists, passing like the powerful *khamsin*, the wind of the desert, over the plains of hypothetical speculations, destroyed all our best hopes for a closer acquaintance with our noble relatives of the slimy ooze. Beginning with *Bathybius*, whom he dragged out of his sea-mud—to show he was not there—the Berlin savant

evinced no more respect for the *Simiae Catarrhinae* (our tail-blessed ancestor) whom he hurled back into non-being. He went further and crushed out of existence even the beautiful tailless ape—the missing link! So strong was the reaction of thought as to the merits of Haeckel's work, that it well-nigh knocked off his legs even the innocent though first cause of *Anthropogeny*—the great Charles Darwin, himself.

But the mischief is done, and it requires mighty powerful restoratives to bring the ex-admirers of Haeckel back to a belief in the human soul. Serjeant Cox's *The Mechanism of Man: An answer to the Question: What Am I?* now in its third edition, will remain as one of the most powerful answers to the soul-destroying sophistry of Haeckel and his like. It is quite refreshing to find that a work upon such an unwelcome subject—to the men of science—a book which treats of psychology and its phenomena, is so eagerly welcomed by the educated public. In reviewing it, a London weekly very truly remarks that:

. . . The Scientists have had a capital time of it lately; they have been able to raise a cloud of doubts about the most serious questions

of life; *but they have not been able to solve one of the difficulties they raised.* Into the arena which they occupied few men dared to enter and withstand them, so that the boastful cry the Scientists raised has gone echoing far and wide, that the old foundations of belief in Immortality were myths, fit for weak-minded people. In Serjeant Cox, however, the timid believers have found [a] champion able to fight the Scientists with their own weapons; able to pursue the theories raised by them to their ultimate conclusions; able to unmask the pretentious arrogance of men who would destroy simply because they cannot appreciate; men who would pull down, but cannot build up anything to take the place of the wrecked structure.

But we will now let the author speak for himself:

. . . The Scientists began by denial of the facts and phenomena, not by disproof of them; by argument *a priori* that they *cannot* be and therefore are not. That failing, the next step was to discredit the witnesses. They were not honest; if honest, they were not competent; if competent by general intelligence and experience, in the particular instances they were the victims of illusion or delusion. That is the present position of the controversy. The assertion is still repeated here, with entire confidence, that the Mechanism of Man is directed and determined by *some* intelligent force within itself; that the existence of that force is proved by the facts and phenomena attendant upon the motions of that mechanism in its normal and its abnormal conditions; that this force is by the same evidence proved to be the product of *something* other than the molecular mechanism of the body; that this *something* is an entity distinct from that molecular structure, capable of action beyond and apart from it; that this *Something* is what is called SOUL, and that this soul lives after it has parted from the body.

This subject, that man *has* a soul—which so many men of science, especially physicians and psychologists deny—is treated in the work under notice with the utmost ability. Numberless new avenues—as the result of such a knowledge when proved—are opened to us by this able pioneer; and under his skillful treatment that hope which was blighted for the moment by the brutal hand of Positivism, is rekindled in the reader's breast, and death is made to lose its terrors. So confident is the author that upon the solution of this enigma—which is one but to those who will not see—depend the most

important questions to humanity, such as disease, old age, chronic and nervous sufferings, many of which are now considered as beyond human help, that he thinks that a perfect acquaintance with psychology will be

of the utmost help in treating even the most obstinate diseases. He pointedly reminds his readers that:

. . . It seems scarcely credible, but it is literally true that the most learned physician cannot tell us by what process any one medicine he administers performs its cures! He can say only that experience has shown certain effects as often found to follow the exhibition of certain drugs. But he certainly does not know *how* those drugs produce those effects. It is strange and distressing to observe what irrational prejudices still prevail in all matters connected with the physiology of body and mind, and their mutual relationship and influences, even among persons otherwise well informed and who deem themselves educated. It is still more strange that not the least prejudiced nor the least instructed in these subjects are to be found in the profession whose business it is to keep the human machine in sound working condition.

Serjeant Cox need scarcely hope to count the practising physicians among his admirers. His last remark is more applicable to Chinese medicine, whose practitioners are paid by their patients only so long as they preserve their health, and have their pay stopped at the first symptoms of disease in their patrons—than in Europe. It seems rather the “business” of the European doctor to keep the human machine in an *unsound* condition. Human suffering is for European physicians, as the torments of purgatory for the priest—a perennial source of income.

But the author suggests that “the cause of this ignorance of the laws of life, of Mental Physiology and of Psychology” is that “they are not studied as we study the structure which that Life moves and that Intelligence directs.” He asks whether it has

. . . never occurred to the Physician and the Mental Philosopher that possibly in the laws of life, in the physiology of mind, in the relationship of the conscious Self and the body, more even than in the structure itself, are to be found the causes of many of the maladies to which that structure is subject. Therefore, that in the investigation of these laws, the secret is to be sought of the operation of remedies, rather than in the molecular structure where for centuries the Doctors have been exclusively hunting for them with so little success?

Dr. Wm. A. Hammond, of New York, the famous professor of diseases of the mind and nervous system, experimented for years with the celebrated “Perkins’ tractors,”

metal discs, whose fame at one time nearly came to grief, through the cunning fraud of an English speculator. This man, who was making a specialty of the metallic treatment, was detected in imitating the expensive gold, silver, copper, and nickel rings, with rings of

wood painted or gilded. But the results were not changed; patients were cured! Now this is a clear case of psychological and mesmeric power. And Dr. Hammond himself calls it “*nothing more than the power of one mind over another.*” This noted materialist is thoroughly convinced that if one person suggests an idea to another who has complete faith in that person’s power, the one acted upon will experience all the sensations the operator may suggest to him. He has made a number of experiments and even published presumably learned papers upon the subject. And yet Mesmerism, Spiritualism, and occult psychological phenomena in general, upon the investigation of which Serjeant Cox lays the greatest stress, have no bitterer enemy or more active opponent than the New York celebrity. We need only recall his dogmatic attitude in the case of Miss Mollie Fancher, of Brooklyn, a respectable young girl, who, according to the statement of Dr. Charles E. West, has lived without any food for over nine years. This extraordinary girl never sleeps—her frequent trances being the only rest she obtains; she reads sealed letters as though they were open; describes distant friends; though completely blind, perfectly discriminates colours; and finally, though her right hand is rigidly drawn up behind her head, by a permanent paralysis, makes embroidery upon canvas, and produces in wax, without having taken a lesson in the art, and with neither a knowledge of botany nor even models to copy, flowers of a most marvellously natural appearance. In the case of this phenomenal patient, there are numbers of thoroughly reliable and well educated witnesses to testify for the genuineness of the phenomena. The joint testimony of several respectable clergymen, of Professor West, of Mr. H. Parkhurst, the astronomer, and of such physicians as Drs. Speir, Ormiston, Kissam and Mitchell, is on record. With all this examined and proved, Dr. Hammond,

notwithstanding his personal experience of the “power of mind over matter,” had not a jot to give the reporter in explanation of the phenomenon, but the words “humbug!—a clear case of deception! . . . Simply the deception of a hysterical girl, Sir.” . . . “But has she deceived all these clergymen and physicians, and for years?” inquired the reporter.

“Oh, that’s nothing. Clergymen are the most gullible men in the world, and physicians who have not made a study of nervous diseases are apt to be imposed upon by these girls.” . . . (The *N.Y. Sun*, of Nov. 25th, 1878).

We doubt whether even Serjeant Cox’s able book, though he is President of the Psychological Society of Great Britain and ought to be a competent witness, will make any more impression upon such a mind as that of the physician Hammond than a ball of snow upon the rock. And since the multitude suffers itself to be led by such sciolists as he, this able book may have to wait another generation before receiving that need of appreciation which it merits. And yet, no author treating on psychology has ever built up with more scientific precision or force of argument his proofs of the existence of a soul in man, and its manifestation in the “mechanism of man.” He concludes the work with the following remarks:

. . . Scientists may sneer at Psychology as being visionary science, based upon mere assumption and dealing with that whose very existence is problematical. But its subject matter is as real as that with which *they* deal. Even were it not so, the more important it would be that the study of it should be pursued, with an honest endeavour to ascertain if the foundation on which it is erected be sound or baseless—that if, after due investigation, it be found to be false, the world may cease from a vain labour; but that, if it be proved a truth, Man may have the blessed assurance that, as a *fact* and not merely as a *faith*, he has a Soul and inherits an Immortality.

We wish all such learned authors completest success in their noble efforts to bring back humanity to the Light of Truth—but we have but little hope for the nineteenth century.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

192

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

NOCTURNAL THOUGHTS ON NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 3, December, 1879, pp. 79-81]

We begin with a strange story from the Gainesville *Eagle*—an American journal:—

. . . Some time ago Dr. Stephenson was prospecting the vast hornblende and chloritic slate formation between Gainesville and Jefferson, and found a singular rock on the land of Mr. Frank Harrison, which he considers one of the most interesting and inexplicable productions of the laws of chemical affinity. The boulder of hornblende weighs nearly a ton, is black, and crystallized through it in seams about one-eighth of an inch thick of white quartz are the figures 1791. They are about four inches long and placed at equal distances from each other. It is common in all plutonic rock to see seams of quartz traverse the granite, gneiss, hornblende and other classes of rocks in various directions, from one-eighth of an inch to a foot or more, which sometimes cross each other, but never with the regularity and symmetry of this. It has not been one thousand years since the Arab invented our numerals, from 1 to 10, and we find here in perfect form the same figures, made by the laws of chemical affinity on the oldest rocks, which formed the crust of the earth countless millions of years before there was a vegetable or animal in existence.

It may be a meaningless freak of nature, and it may be the freak of a sensational and not over scrupulous reporter: either is possible, and a great caution is certainly required, before we credit such an extraordinary piece of news. But what is a freak of nature? The effect of a natural cause; not even a “freak” can happen otherwise. And yet, when this cause is evident who ever presumes to go any deeper into its origination? Not the scientists; for these generally leave the prior causes to take care of themselves. Some



H. P. BLAVATSKY AROUND 1870



NORENDRONÂTH SEN
Proprietor and Editor of *The Indian Mirror* of Calcutta,
and personal pupil of Masker K. H.

NOCTURNAL THOUGHTS

193

superstitious souls and the Christians might attribute the mysterious figures to some occult and even a most intelligent cause. Some may see a connection between them and the French Revolution; others with the finger of God Himself, who traced them for some unfathomable reason, to seek to penetrate which would be a sacrilege. But now, times and men are changed. The strong-backed, convenient, maid-of-all-work called “Will of God” and “Providence,” upon which these amiable and unconscious blasphemers (regarded as very pious Christians) pile all the garbage and evils of imperfect nature—has a time of rest. The All-Perfect is no more held responsible for every calamity and inexplicable event, except by a few of the above-named pious souls. Least of all by the men of science. The Christian “Will of God” in company with the Mohammedan *Kismet* are handed over to the emotional Methodist and the irrepressible Mullah.

Hence, the cause of the figures—if figures there are—comes within the category of scientific research. Only, in this case, the latter must be taken in its broadest sense, that which embraces within the area of natural sciences psychology, and even metaphysics. Consequently, if this story of the marvellous boulder should prove something more than a newspaper hoax, originating with an idle reporter, we will have, perhaps, some comments to offer. We may then, strengthen our arguments by giving a few sentences from a curious manuscript belonging to a Fellow of the Theosophical Society in Germany, a learned mystic, who tells us that the document is already on its way to India. It is a sort of diary, written in those mystical characters, half ciphers, half alphabet, adopted by the

Rosicrucians during the previous two centuries, and the key to which, is now possessed by only a very few mystics. Its author is the famous and mysterious Count de Saint-Germain; he, who before and during the French Revolution puzzled and almost terrified every capital of Europe, and some crowned Heads; and of whom such a number of weird stories are told. All comment now would be premature. The bare suggestion of there being anything more mysterious than a

blind “freak” of nature in this particular find, is calculated to raise a scornful laugh from every quarter, with the exception, perhaps, of some Spiritualists and their natural allies, the Theosophists.

Our space is scant, so we will make room for another, and far more extraordinary story, endorsed by no less a personage than Marshal MacMahon, ex-President of the Republic of France, and credited—as in religious duty bound—by some hundred millions of Roman Catholics. We admit it the more willingly since, had any such story originated with either the Theosophists or the Spiritualists, it would have been straightway ridiculed and set down as a cock-and-bull fable. But circumstances alter cases—with the Catholics; none, however sceptical at heart, will dare laugh (above his breath) at a story of supernatural “miracles” worked by the Madonna and her Saints, or by Satan and his imps. For such “miracles” the Church holds a patent. The fact tacitly conceded, if not always secretly believed, by such a tremendous body of Christians, for anyone to discredit the power of the devil, even in this age of free thought, makes him ranked at once with the despised *infidels*. Only the Spiritualists and Theosophists have made themselves culpable in the eyes of the panegyrist of reason, and deserve to be called “lunatics” for believing in phenomena produced by *natural* causes. Even Protestants are warned against pooh-poohing the story we here quote; for they too are bound by their Calvinistic and other dogmas to believe in the power of Satan—a power accorded the Enemy of Man by the ever inscrutable—“Will of God.”

[Follows the narrative from the *Catholic Mirror* of Baltimore regarding a remarkable experience with a native sorcerer, which Marshal MacMahon had while in Algiers.]

Unlike the Marshal, we have something to say. The Spiritualists would advance a very easy and well-known theory to “account” for it, and the Theosophists—though, perhaps, slightly modifying it, would follow suit. But then, they would have the great body of Roman Catholics against them. Their theory, or, shall we say, “infallible dogma”?— is, if the story be true, that the Arab corporal had sold his

soul to the Father of Evil. But, though presumably all-powerful for mischief, old Nick

found his match in the leaden charm, or medal of the Virgin; and, gnashing his teeth, had to take to his heels before the presence of the image of the Queen of Heaven. Well, one theory is as good as any other when we come to hypotheses. But then,—the infidels might ask—why not give a slight extra stretch to that divine power, and rid humanity at once and for ever of that eternal mischief-maker, who, “as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour”? Weak is humanity and faltering the steps of man! Why not, at one clip, save it from the snares of the devil; the more so as humanity, if incapable of resisting such a power, is weak through no fault of its own, but again because it so pleased kind Providence? Surely, if a simple leaden amulet has such a virtue of putting to flight the devil, how much more ought the blessed Virgin herself do. Especially, since of late she has taken to visiting in person and so often the famous grotto at Lourdes.

But then—dreadful thought!—how could the wicked be sentenced to eternal perdition? Whither could the sinner direct his trembling steps, when once that kingdom “where the worm dieth not, and the fire is never quenched” is annexed by the Romish Imperial Raj of Heaven? Impassable chasm, sharp horns of a dilemma! So long as it bears its name, Christianity *cannot* get rid of the devil, without, so to say, committing a most dreadful, unthinkable suicide. Some years ago the pious and holy Cardinal, Father Ventura di Raulica, expressed his opinion upon the subject. “To demonstrate,” he says, “the existence of Satan, is to reestablish one of the *fundamental dogmas* of the Church, *which serve as a basis for Christianity*, and without which it would be but a name. . . .” And, the very Catholic Chevalier Gougenot des Mousseaux adds,—Satan is “the Chief Pillar of Faith. . . . But for him, the Saviour, the Crucified, the Redeemer, would be but the most ridiculous of supernumeraries, and the Cross an insult to good sense” (*Moeurs et Pratiques des Démons*, p. x).

Thus we see that the next and most logical move of the

infallible Church would be to institute a yearly vote of thanks—a *Te Deum*—to the Devil. This happy thought is not copyrighted, and His Holiness is welcome to it.

The more so, as it seems that again, for some inscrutable and providential reasons better known in heaven than comprehended upon earth, not only the Devil, but even simple mortals are allowed to do the deeds of darkness. In the following horrifying trick, played lately at the above-mentioned miracle-working grotto of Lourdes, we find the “Protectress” utterly incapable of protecting even herself. We copy this sad tale of human infamy also from our pious contemporary—*The Catholic Mirror*:

. . . DESECRATION AT LOURDES.—A very strange story comes to us from France—a story difficult to credit, but our authority is trustworthy. All who have been at the miraculous shrine at Lourdes must have been struck by the number of trophies that are the offerings of pious pilgrims, or that the quick recurring miracles have collected in the place. There is a touching appropriateness in the devotion that makes the grateful pilgrim offer at the shrine the mementoes of his disease which the mercy of heaven has rendered useless. All

the walls at Lourdes were hung with crutches, and wooden legs, and *wooden arms*, to which scrolls were attached with dates and names authenticating the miracles. These trophies, it appears, excited the malignity of the unbelievers. It was a hard thing to scoff at the miracles with such visible testimony of their truth before the eyes of the world. Therefore it was resolved that the testimony must be destroyed. In the dead of the night some miscreants penetrated to the shrine, the religious trophies were collected in a heap and set in flames. They were reduced to ashes. A beautiful rose tree that sprang from a cleft in the rocks was destroyed by the fire, and the face of the statue of the Virgin was scorched and blackened by the smoke. It would be difficult in all history to find a parallel for this dastardly and disgraceful outrage by these “apostles of reason and liberty.”

The “apostles of reason and liberty” are criminals, and ought to be punished—as incendiaries. But the majesty of the Law once vindicated, ought they not, as “apostles of reason” to be allowed to respectfully put a few questions to their judges? As, for instance: how is it that “our blessed Lady of Lourdes,” so prompt at producing “miracles” of the most astounding character, passively suffered such an appalling personal outrage? That was just *the* moment to show her power, confound the “infidels,” and vindicate her

“miracles.” A better opportunity was never lost. As it is, the criminals scorch and blacken the face of the statue and—get away unscorched, even by the fire of (the Catholic) heaven. Really, it was very indiscreet in our contemporary to publish this story! Perhaps these “apostles” were the disciples and followers of the Zouave Jacob, whose fame as a healer is not inferior to that of our Lady of Lourdes and the miraculous water.* Or, it may be, they had known J. R. Newton, the celebrated American mesmeric “healer,” whose large reception rooms are always hung, and no less than the walls of the grotto, with “trophies” of his mesmeric power, “with crutches, wooden legs, and wooden . . . arms” (?)—no! not with wooden *arms*, for this implies previous amputations of natural arms. And almost magical as are the healing powers of our respected friend Dr. Newton, we doubt whether he has ever claimed the gift of endowing human beings with the extraordinary peculiarity of a cray-fish—*i.e.*, of having a new arm to grow out of an amputated stump, as seems to have been the case at Lourdes according to the *Catholic Mirror*.

But it is not alone the wondrous “grotto” that proved powerless before the destructive element. The lightning (of God?) showed itself no more a respecter of the house of God and holy shrines than those firebolts, the “apostles of reason and liberty.” The number of churches, camp meeting tents, tabernacles and altars destroyed, during these last two years, by hurricane and lightning, in Europe and America, is appalling. And now:—

. . . The famous sanctuary of Madonna de Valmala, situated in the valley of the same name in Switzerland, was struck by lightning on Sunday, August 24th, while the priest was saying Mass at the altar. Six people were struck down by the fatal fluid, one of whom, a little girl was kneeling near her parents, was killed on the spot, and the others are injured beyond hope of recovery. Several persons who

* [Henri-Auguste Jacob was born at Saint-Martin-des-Champs (Seine & Oise), France, March 6, 1828, and died at Paris, October 13, 1913. He was a musician in the Zouave Guard, and started his remarkable healings in 1866. He became widely known for his many beneficent actions, published several curious books

and edited the *Revue théurgique* (May, 1888—April, 1889.—*Compiler.*)

were near the door had the soles of their shoes torn off. (*Catholic Mirror*, Sept. 13th)

Dear, dear! The little girl killed while kneeling in prayer, must have been a *very* wicked child—perhaps the daughter of an “apostle of reason,”—and all the rest “sinners.” Truly inscrutable are thy ways, O kind Providence! Not understanding, we have but to submit. Moreover, to fully satisfy our doubts, and tranquillize our unrestful brains, we have but to bear in mind that which the good and pious Jesuit *padris* of St. Xavier’s College, Bombay—known throughout Christendom as the most acute of logicians—teach us: namely, that it is but in the wicked logic of men that 2 and 2 necessarily make 4; God, for whom everything is possible, is not so circumscribed; if it pleases Him to command that by a miracle 2 x 2 should become 5, why, even Sir Isaac Newton would have to put up with the new formula.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 3, December, 1879, pp. 57-58, 70]

Our revered brother, the Swami Dayânand Saraswati, continues in this number his autobiographical narrative, which the whole Indian press has declared the most interesting portion of our journal. We hope the lesson of his self-sacrificing quest after divine knowledge—that true wisdom which teaches man the nature of his inner Self its source and destiny—will not be thrown away upon the youth of his country. Happy, indeed, would we feel if we could see the bright young men who are flocking into his Arya Samajes, emulating his conduct as well as reverencing his person. No Western reader need be at a loss to understand the interest that attends every movement in his preaching pilgrimage throughout India. And, object as our pandits may to his constructions of Vedic texts, not even the most orthodox can fail in respect for one who joins to a profound knowledge of Sanskrit literature an absolute purity

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

199

of motive and of life, and a fervid sense of duty never surpassed by reformers. For Theosophists of every nationality the account of his adventures among adepts of the secret (and sacred) science will have a peculiar charm.

Dr. Pandurang Gopal, G.G.M.C., a well-known surgeon-oculist and botanist, of Bombay, gives in the present number of our journal the first of a proposed series of articles upon the Indian Materia Medica. As little, or, indeed, we may say less, is known by Western science of this highly important subject than of other questions relating to the motherland of our race. With them all researches practically begin with the period of Greek learning; if we except the very recent data which the Egyptologists and Assyriologists have supplied from their excavations. Though common sense would teach them that men fell sick and were cured before the times of the Asclepiadae, the Pythagoreans, or the Galenites, the absence of translations from the Sanskrit has compelled modern medical writers to say, with the learned author of the article on “Medicine,” in Appleton’s *New American Cyclopaedia*: “In what beyond this consisted the medicine of the Egyptians, the Hindus, etc., is a matter of conjecture only.” To remove this necessity for blind guess-work, and show modern science what the Aryas knew of the infirmities to which mankind is liable, is the aim of our contributor and fellow Theosophist, Dr. Pandurang.

A WELL-PLACED PIETY.—The *Charivari*, deploring the growing infidelity of the day, gives as an instance of mediaeval piety the following letter, from the collection of autographs of Baron Girardot, which was recently advertised to be sold at auction. The mother of Cardinal Richelieu writes to a young married lady:—
“*For years I was fervently praying God to send to my son*

a mistress like you; one that has all the desired qualities. I now find that God Almighty was pleased to accept my humble prayer, since you have allowed my dear son to be your humble servant.”

Charming picture, forsooth, of mother, son, priest, church, and God!

Swâmi Dayânand Saraswati — the newest Reformer—likewise rejects direct divine revelation as an impossibility but claims *inspiration* for his primitive four Rishis.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF THE *BANNER OF LIGHT*

[*Banner of Light*, Boston, Vol. XLVI, No. 14, December 27, 1879]

Bombay, India.

To the Editor of The *Banner of Light*:

In your issue of Oct. 4th, in the “London Spiritual Notes” from your special correspondent, “Fidelity,” I find the following:

. . . Mme. Blavatsky appears in a new *rôle*, namely, as the editor of a paper printed in the interest of the Theosophists. *It is a neat little monthly*, but will scarcely be appreciated by Spiritualists generally.

And now, we must really take you to task. You, so eager usually to introduce to your readers every new and reliable medium appearing on the horizon, you have actually neglected to introduce to the public notice this phenomenal *clairvoyant* correspondent of yours! Verily he (“Fidelity”) must be endowed with a fidelity of second sight which beats hollow “Petticoat Bishop,” with Zadkiel’s *Astrological Almanac* to boot. Judge for yourself: At the time you were composing this reliable news from London—*i.e.*, October 4th, “*the neat little monthly* that will scarcely be

LETTER TO THE “BANNER OF LIGHT”

201

appreciated by Spiritualists,” had appeared in Bombay but two days before. It was born and made its first appearance before the public on the 1st of October last, and, at the time your “special correspondent” was writing to you about it in London, the “little monthly” had not even yet been set up in type!

That the journal is “appreciated” by somebody is pretty clear, since the subscription list has quadrupled since the first number appeared. In this, “Fidelity” failed. But on the other hand, what a combined gift of second sight, clairvoyance, and prophetic vision! If cultivated, it will place your correspondent on the highest pinnacle among seers. It was on the four-page *Prospectus* that he evidently based his prognostication. Describing—psychometrically—that which had not yet appeared, he thus adds one page more to the wonderful discovery of our esteemed and mutual friend, Dr. J. R. Buchanan, the Father of Psychometry.

And yet the “neat little monthly” would “scarcely appreciate” such a correspondent for

itself, though the latter does sign himself — by paraphrase, we must suppose — “Fidelity.”

Your fraternally,

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

November 12th, 1879.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

202

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

LETTRE DE MADAME BLAVATSKY DÉCOUVERTE DU DOCTEUR ROTURA

[*La Revue Spirite*, Paris, décembre, 1879]

Vous ne nous écrivez donc plus? Et pour varier vos plaisirs parisiens, vous me démolissez dans la *Revue*! C'est bien; je vous ai envoyé ma réponse. Que signifie donc cette histoire de mes «30 ans»? Vous auriez du comprendre que c'était une erreur d'imprimerie, tandis que votre journal prend mon parti de la manière la plus charmante, tout en laissant cependant ses lecteurs dans l'idée que j'ai cherché à me rajeunir! Mes amis, je puis être originale, avoir mes défauts, mais je n'ai jamais eu de vanités ridicules; je suis une *vieille femme* depuis bien des années, et l'idée de m'accuser d'une pareille sottise est vraiment un peu forte. J'ai passé 30 ans dans l'Inde; j'ai l'âge que je parais, le visage basané sillonné de rides profondes, et mes 30 ans dorment depuis nombre d'années aux antipodes de ma vie flétrie. J'offre mon portrait d'après nature à qui veut l'accepter comme preuve à l'appui, et ne veux point passer pour une sottie.

Avez-vous lu dans les journaux de France le récit de la dernière grande découverte en Australie, faite par le professeur Rotura? Il plonge les animaux dans une transe—*la mort* en apparence—qu'il laisse durer pendant vingt jours, deux mois, dix mois et plus, autant qu'il veut, il les fait revivre de suite à son gré, bien portants et joyeux; le tout *s'accomplit par une manipulation de l'une des artères du cou*, où il fait une légère piqûre avec une aiguille trempée dans le jus d'une plante, il les *anesthésise*. Le journal qui annonce cette «Découverte Merveilleuse», qui peut révolutionner les marchés du bétail, jette des cris de

LETTRE DE MADAME BLAVATSKY

203

triomphe et de joie, car, dit-il, on pourra maintenant envoyer à Londres et ailleurs des transports entiers de bétail *vivant* sans que la nourriture coûte rien, ils feront la traversée empaquetés comme des corps morts. Ce journal, dis-je, a publié la chose au premier janvier. Le *Brisham-Courier*, le *Pall Mall [Gazette]*, et d'autres journaux en Angleterre en ont parlé à satiété; cette découverte a eu lieu quelques six mois avant sa publicité, en mai ou juin 1878. Veuillez chercher *La Revue Spirite*, juillet 1878, et celle d'octobre 1878, où vous avez traduit mon entrevue avec un reporter du *World*, à New-York, et comparez ce que j'ai dit au reporter à propos du dégagement de l'âme et du corps astral chez les animaux, par les bergers de Thibet, qui en ont le secret depuis des siècles. Et j'ajoutais: «*Je prédis que, avant une année, la science aura découvert ce procédé sur les animaux*

inférieurs». Juste, un an après, Rotura le découvrait. Suisje médium? Non. Ce n'était pas une prophétie, car dans une lettre reçue de l'Inde, de l'un de nos frères et chefs ici, on *m'ordonnait de l'annoncer au monde* et je l'ai fait. J'ai contredit le reporter, dans mon article d'octobre, parce que je ne lui ai jamais dit avoir *assisté moi-même à l'opération faite par les bergers de Thibet*, qui habitent dans les Himalayas, à 28,000 pieds au-dessus du niveau de la mer, ni l'avoir fait moi-même. Mais, comme c'était jusqu'à ce jour l'un des secrets de nos adeptes, je ne me croyais pas le droit d'en parler plus qu'il ne fallait.

J'ai vu faire cette opération par nos «Frères», cinquante fois, sur des êtres humains. Ils ont opéré sur moi-même, et j'ai dormi une fois pendant onze semaines, croyant tout le temps être réveillée, et me promenant partout comme un revenant de Pontoise, sans pouvoir comprendre pourquoi les personnes n'avaient pas l'air de m'apercevoir et ne me répondaient pas. J'ignorais entièrement que j'étais débarrassée de ma vieille carcasse, qui, à cette époque-là, était un peu plus jeune d'ailleurs. C'était au commencement de mes études. Pour les animaux, la science saura le secret; pour les personnes, non, elle peut attendre encore la matérialiste. C'est le grand secret connu des fakirs, qui se laissent enterrer pour des mois et ressuscitent après un certain temps.

À notre dernier voyage, à *Jeypoor* (Radjpoutana), le pays des «*Enfant de la Race Solaire*», il y a trois mois, nous vîmes ce phénomène s'accomplir: un fakir, ou plutôt un *yogi* (car les fakirs sont musulmans en général), un *yogi* Indou se mit en transe, se fit murer dans une chambre et y resta 28 jours, devant une foule énorme et en présence de gens bien élevés, et sceptiques comme toujours; les officiers du gouvernement du Maharajah firent démurer la porte et on en sortit le *cadavre*. Au bout d'un quart d'heure, l'homme revint à lui, et saluant le public, il s'en alla. Il avait accompli cet acte de phénoménalité comme pénitence.

Nous n'avons pas *de systèmes*, mais des «faits» et par centaines, bien attestés, qui s'appuient sur une philosophie connue depuis des milliers d'années, qui explique tous ces faits *scientifiquement* et prouvant ce qu'elle dit.

Ce ne sont ni les Anglais ni les autres peuples qui mettront jamais la main sur les vieux manuscrits qui expliquent ces phénomènes; ni Brahmanes, ni Bouddhistes, qui en ont le secret, ne les livreront aux Max Müller et Cie. Mais notre *Swamy Dyananda Saraswati*, savant de première classe, homme qui connaît son sanscrit comme personne ici, un *yogi* qui a passé sept ans dans les *jungles* (forêts de broussailles vierges, déserts couverts de végétations tropicales, où ne vivent que les bêtes féroces et les *yogis* qui n'en ont aucune peur), qui est profondément versé dans les sciences occultes et les secrets de pagodes, un Brahman lui-même, fournira n'importe quel manuscrit, car nous sommes de la Société appartenant à *l'Arya-Samaj de l'Aryavarta*; puisqu'il est chef suprême de la section des Védistas (ceux qui étudient et reconnaissent les *Védas* pure et simples), de la Société Théosophique, vous comprenez que nous avons des facilités d'accès naturels auprès de ces

vieux trésors de l'ancienne littérature Védique des Aryas, comme personne autre. À Ceylan, une branche de notre Société vient d'être formée sous la direction du Grand-Prêtre du *Pic d'Adam*, le linguiste le plus distingué de Ceylan, sachant son *pali* sur le bout des doigts. Eux aussi, les Bouddhistes, nous offrent leurs manuscrits et offrent de nous traduire tout ce que

nous voudrons, car ils nous considèrent comme leurs *frères et soeurs*.

A Lhasa au Thibet, une autre branche se forme sous la direction des lâmas initiés. Vous verrez dans quelques années combien notre société sera respectée et recherchée.

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

LETTER OF MADAME BLAVATSKY DR. ROTURA'S DISCOVERY

[*La Revue Spirite*, Paris, December, 1879]

[*Translation of the foregoing original French text*]

You do not write to us any more then? And to diversify your Parisian amusements you demolish me in the *Revue*. Very good, I have sent you my answer. What, then, does this story of my “thirty years” mean? You ought to have understood that it was a printer’s error; but your paper took my part in the most charming way, though leaving its readers with the notion that I have tried to rejuvenate myself! My friends, I may be eccentric, and have my faults, but I have never had any ridiculous vanity; I have been an *old woman* for many years, and the idea of charging me with such folly is really a little strong. I have spent thirty years in India; I am as old as I look, with a face furrowed with deep wrinkles, and my thirty years have slept for a long time at the antipodes of my faded life. I present my portrait from Nature to whoever will take it as proof; I do not wish to pass as a fool.

Have you read in the French papers the account of the recent great discovery in Australia, made by Professor Rotura? He plunges animals into a trance—deathly to all appearance—which lasts for about twenty days, two months, ten months, or more, as he wishes, and then he makes them revive at his will, perfectly well and happy; the whole thing is done by the manipulation of one of the arteries in the neck, in which he makes a tiny puncture with a needle

dipped in the juice of a plant; it *anaesthetises* them. The paper which announces this “Marvellous Discovery” which may revolutionize the marketing of cattle, shouts with triumph and delight because, it says, we shall now be able to send to London and elsewhere entire cargoes of *living* cattle at no cost for feeding; they will make the journey packed like dead carcasses. This paper, I say, published this matter on January the first. The *Brisham-Courier*, the *Pall Mall* [*Gazette*], and other English papers have spoken of it to satiety; this discovery was made some six months before the publication, in May or June, 1878. Please look in *La Revue Spirite* for July, 1878, and for October, 1878, where you have translated my interview with a reporter from the *New York World*, and compare it with what I told the reporter in regard to the liberation of the soul and of the astral body in animals by the Tibetan shepherds, who have possessed the secret for ages. And I added, “*I predict that, within a year, science will have discovered that method with the lower animals.*” Exactly a year afterwards Rotura discovered it. Am I a medium? No. It was not a

prophecy, for in a letter from India from one of our Brothers and Chiefs there, *they directed me to announce it to the world* and I did so. I contradicted the reporter in my article in October, because I never said I had *myself helped in the operation done by the Tibetan shepherds*, who live in the Himâlayas at 28,000 feet above sea level, nor have I done it myself. But, as, until this day, it was one of the secrets of our Adepts I did not think I had the right to speak about it more than was necessary.

I have seen that operation done by our “Brothers” fifty times, on human beings. They have operated on me, and I once slept for eleven weeks, believing myself to be awake the whole time, and walking around like a ghost of Pontoise, without being able to understand why no one appeared to see me and to answer me. I was entirely unaware that I was liberated from my old carcass which, at that time, however, was a little younger. That was at the beginning of my studies.

As far as the animals are concerned, science will learn

the secret—for human beings it will have to wait, materialistic as it is. It is the great secret known to fakirs, who bury themselves for months and revive after a certain time. During our latest journey, three months ago, we saw this phenomenon at *Jeypoor* (Râjputâna), the land of the “*Children of the Solar Race*:” a fakir, or rather a Hindu yogi (for the fakirs are usually Mussulmans), put himself in a trance, and in the presence of a great crowd, including well educated, but as usual skeptical, persons, allowed himself to be immured in a chamber, and remained therein for twenty days; the officials of the Mahârâja’s Government opened the chamber and brought out the *cadaver*. At the end of a quarter of an hour the man came to himself and, greeting the public, went away. He accomplished this act of phenomenalism as a penitence.

We have no *systems*, but we have facts and hundreds of them, well authenticated and which are based on a philosophy known for thousands of years, which explains all these facts *scientifically*, bringing proof to support what it teaches.

It is not the English nor any other people who will ever lay their hands on the old manuscripts which explain these phenomena; neither the Brâhmanas nor the Buddhists, who have access to them, will hand them over to Max Müller and Co., but our Swâmi Dayânanda Saraswatî, first-class scholar, a man who knows his Sanskrit as no one else here, a *Yogi* who has spent seven years in the *jungles* (a brush forest, a dense virgin growth, deserts covered with tropical vegetation where live but ferocious beasts and *Yogis* who have no fear of them), who is deeply versed in the occult sciences and the secrets of the pagodas, a Brâhmana himself, would furnish us any manuscript, for we belong to the Society which is an integral part of the *Ârya Samâj of Âryâvarta*; as he is the Supreme Chief of the Vedist Section (those who study and recognize the *Vedas* pure and simple) of the Theosophical Society, you must understand that we have facilities for natural access to those old treasures of the ancient Vedic literature of the *Âryas* such as no one else has. In Ceylon, a branch of

our Society is being formed under the direction of the High Priest of *Adam's Peak*, the

208

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

most distinguished linguist in Ceylon, who has his Pâli at his fingertips. The Buddhists also place their manuscripts at our disposal and are glad to translate any of them we may wish, because they regard us as their *brothers* and *sisters*.

At *Lhasa*, in Tibet, another branch is being formed under the direction of initiated Lâmas. Within a few years you will see how our Society will be honored and sought after.

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1879

THEOSOPHY—THE ESSENCE OF PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE

[The original of the following fragment is in the Adyar Archives, namely, four odd sheets in H.P.B.'s handwriting; the above title was written by her on the back of the last sheet. The last paragraph gives an approximate clue to the date of this piece of writing, sometime in 1879.—*Compiler.*]

To obtain a glimpse of the first *Theosophists*, we will have to retrace the footsteps of hundreds of generations. To return for a moment to the dim traditions of “our abysmal past” as Mr. Tyndall would eloquently say—and name the four primitive Rishis—Agni, Vâyu, Aditya and Angiras, who, under the inspiration of the Omnipresent Spirit (Sarva Vipayas) gave utterance [to] the four *Vedas*.* It is such men as these who knew of no other Deity but that which dwelt in them as they felt themselves inseparable from It, that Emerson must have had in his mind when writing his Essay on the *Oversoul*.

Alone Emerson, one of the most transcendental idealists of our century, in his Essay on the *Oversoul* gives in a few words the most superb definition of the psychological states above referred to. Speaking of the commingling of the individual with the Universal Soul, he describes it by saying: “I, the imperfect, adore *my own* Perfect.” Among those

* See Swâmi Dayânanda Saraswati's *Veda-Bhâshya*.



H. SUMANGALA

High Priest of Adam's Peak; President of the
Widyodaya College, Colombo, Ceylon; Vice-President
of The Theosophical Society in 1880.



JUDGE KHÂN BAHÂDUR N. D. KHANDALAVALA
Valuable Supporter of the Founders.

who come right under Vaughan's definition of *Theosophists*, Emerson stands conspicuous. His writings, remarks a pious critic, would have been at once welcomed. . . " had it not been for some startling paradoxes and audacious statements, which, while they were in direct conflict with the theological beliefs of the people, were supported neither by facts nor arguments, but *rested on the simple testimony of the author's individual consciousness.*" Rapidly passing by the uninterrupted series of subsequent mystics and Seers, we will stop to record but the founders of the six great schools of Indian Philosophy; then noting down @ankarâchârya, Kabir and a few others, pass onward to return to our starting point. And here, in the present century, we will find ourselves face to face with, and recognize as Brother Theosophists, such original thinkers as Swami Narayan, Ram Mohun Roy, Brahmachârya Bâwâ, Keshub Chunder Sen, and finally, last, though by far not least on our catalogue—Swami Dayananda Saraswati, the learned Pandit, eminent Vedic scholar and elocutionist, and the founder of the Aryan Reformation.

We could now retrace our steps once more, and begin a new nomenclature with the earliest Theosophists of the Aryan Greece. Whether the separation of the nations took place after the final establishment of the Aryan tribes who migrating southward possessed themselves of the "Seven Rivers," or earlier, at that time, when the ancestors of the modern nationalities were all living together in more northern regions, it matters little; we still find in the oldest theosophies of the emigrants who now form the principal nations of Northwestern Asia and Europe the same metaphysical conceptions, hopes and aspirations—less dreamy, perhaps, but in some cases carried out as far as the speculations of the Indian Aryans. Professor Max Müller assigning to the migration of the latter, across the Himalayas, a period which he terms "the first dawn of traditional history,"* it is but fair to leave the question an open one, until further and stronger proofs are adduced to contradict the

* See "The Vedas," in *Chips from a German Workshop*.

chronology of the ancient as well as of some modern Hindu scholars. It is sufficient for us to know, that all these nations had once lived together, thought together, and struggled in their attempts to solve the eternal problems, perceive the Unseen, and fathom the Incomprehensible. And as, according to the same great philologist, “there never was a nation believing so firmly in another world, and so little concerned about this . . . and, nowhere have religious and metaphysical ideas struck root so deep in the mind of a nation as in India.” Such ideas must have . . . [break in the MS.] . . . great flood of oblivion bits and scraps of the earliest records of contemporaneous writers to see that thus it ever was, and thus it ever must be. That each age furnishes the one and same characteristic in humanity, showing that, as nature itself—whether in its abstract or concrete sense—has its opposite poles, so Societies must ever be composed of two conflicting elements, subdivided into an infinity of smaller ones, which yet for that very law of opposite polarity, attract each other, thus equilibrizing and helping its onward and progressive motion. And that thus, men—especially philosophers—seem to be born only to disagree. As far back as history can reach, gods were constantly created and worshipped by one part, while pulled down and desecrated by the other. And, though Satire is more cruel than Medusa and as blind as blindfolded Themis, yet it has never proved its self-sufficiency as an argument, any more than a blow from a stronger hand has proved its right to stand to reason. Both, unless they kill on the spot, have to recoil some day before logic and reason. At Lucian’s *Sale of Philosophers*, the great Pythagoras is made to elbow the cynical Diogenes in his rags; and though one fetches ten minae and the other but two oboli, yet both—the immortal philosopher and the filthy Athenian mountebank are made to serve as the same target for the arrows of the iconoclastic Syrian humorist. Nevertheless, some historians, if not history, have dealt impartially with both and given in subsequent ages each its due. Often those, who have grappled the most fiercely with the superstitions and bigotry of their own age, find themselves reviled by a more fortunate successor in the following.

THEOSOPHY—THE ESSENCE OF PHILOSOPHY

211

Socrates was called for generations an infidel; Suidas, for pulling down the popular gods and endeavouring to unmask the pseudo-prophet of Paphlagonia, calls Lucian a “Blasphemer” . . .

“Union is strength” says the Wisdom of the ages. Having such a variety of enemies to contend with, a few scattered mystics and independent thinkers have joined four years ago into a small body. At the end of the year they had become a small army and their ranks are ever and continually increasing.

H.P.B.

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**
1880

“YOGA PHILOSOPHY”

215

**INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO
“YOGA PHILOSOPHY”**

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 4, January, 1880, p. 86]

[The writer who signs himself “Truth Seeker” quotes a lengthy passage from *The Dream of Ravan: A Mystery*. This remarkable piece of writing was published anonymously in the pages of *The Dublin University Magazine*, appearing in installments in the issues of October, November and December, 1853, and January 1854. There is every likelihood that the author of this series was a most profound student of genuine occultism, but his identity has never been ascertained. The text of this story was republished in book form by The Theosophical Publishing Society, London, in 1895. A more recent reprint, with an Introduction by Sophia Wadia, has been issued by the International Book House, Ltd., Bombay, India.

The writer asks for more information of a definite kind “as to all the best modes of soul-emancipation and will-culture.” The highly mystical subject treated upon in the quoted passages is introduced by H.P.B. with the following remarks:]

The following communication, from a European Theosophist, will be read with attention and interest by Hindu students of Yoga. The references to “vital air,” “wind,” “tubular vessels,” “moon fluid of immortality,” “chambers of the body,” and such like, may be incomprehensible to the materialist unfamiliar with the figurative nomenclature of mystics; but he who has advanced even a single pace along the road of self-development towards spirituality, will comprehend easily enough what is meant by these terms.

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**
1880

216

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

**EDITOR'S CLOSING NOTE TO
"BRAHMA, ISWARA AND MAYA"**

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 4, January, 1880, p. 88]

[Advertising to an article of identical title, published by Prof. Pramada Dasa Mitra in *The Theosophist*, Vol. I, October, 1879, the author, Vara Guru, makes a number of observations from the standpoint of a Vedântist, and closes by saying that "before . . . the Theosophists extend their researches to one and all of the above specified *Bhashyas*, and discover by which of them these mighty problems are clearly solved, it is too premature to uphold the doctrine laid down by Pramada Dasa Mitra."

Commenting on this and introducing a reply by Prof. Mitra himself, H.P.B. says:]

The Theosophists *not* having as yet studied all these *Bhashyas*, have no intention to uphold any particular sectarian school. They leave this to the pandits, for whose especial benefit, among others, this journal was founded. A great American quarterly—the *North American Review*—adopts the plan of submitting some famous contributor's manuscript to one or more equally famous writers of very antagonistic views, and then printing all of the criticisms together. By this wise device, the reader of the magazine is able to see what can be said of a given subject from every point of view. We will do likewise; and, as a beginning, here is Professor Pramada Dasa Mitra's criticism upon his critic, after reading the above. "Du choc des opinions jaillit la vérité,"—said a great French philosopher.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

THE LIFE OF ŚANKARACHARYA

217

FOOTNOTES TO “THE LIFE OF ANKARACHARYA, PHILOSOPHER AND MYSTIC”

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 4, January, 1880, p. 89; No. 8, May, 1880, p. 203]

[In the second installment of this article, the writer, Kashinath Trimbak Telang, M.A., LL.B., recounted how on a certain occasion the sage “caused his soul to enter the corpse” of King Amâraka. The following is a footnote appended by H.P.B.]

This incident is too important to pass by without editorial comment. The power of the Yogi to quit his own body and enter and animate that of another person, though affirmed by Patañjali and included among the Siddhis of Krishna, is discredited by Europeanized young Indians. Naturally enough, since, as Western biologists deny a soul to man, it is an unthinkable proposition to them that the Yogi’s soul should be able to enter another’s body. That such an unreasoning infidelity should prevail among the pupils of European schools, is quite reason enough why an effort should be made to revive in India those schools of Psychology in which the Aryan youth were theoretically and practically taught the occult laws of Man and Nature. We, who have at least some trifling acquaintance with modern science, do not hesitate to affirm our belief that this temporary transmigration of souls is possible. We may even go so far as to say that the phenomenon has been experimentally proven to us in New York, among other places. And, since we would be among the last to require so marvelous a statement to be accepted upon any one’s unsupported testimony, we urge our readers to first study Aryan literature, and then get from personal experience the corroborative evidence. The result must inevitably be to satisfy every honest inquirer that Patañjali and

218

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

Śankaracharya did, and Tyndall, Carpenter and Huxley do not, know the secrets of our being.

[Further on, K. T. Telang says that “Sankara, learning in some supernatural way of his mother’s being at the point of death, hastened to her side, and at her request for spiritual counsel, instructed her, or rather attempted to instruct her, in the formless Brahma.” To this H.P.B. remarks:]

We must take issue with our distinguished contributor upon this point. We do not believe in “supernatural ways,” and we do believe and know that it was not at all difficult for an initiate like Śankara to learn by his interior faculties, of his mother’s state. We have seen too many proofs of this faculty to doubt it.

[In the third installment of the same article, K. T. Telang writes: "Sankara suddenly caught the disease, called Bhagandara, which had been sent upon him by the necromantic spells of Abhinavagupta, who had performed a special sacrifice to accomplish his malicious plot. The greatest physicians attended on Sankara, but in vain. Meanwhile the patient himself behaved stoically . . . but at last, when the disease could not be cured, he prayed to Mahadeva . . . the anger of Padmapada once more came to the relief of the Vedantism of Sankara. For, though dissuaded by Sankara himself, he muttered some mystic incantations which transferred the disease to Abhinavagupta himself, who died of it." On this, H.P.B. comments as follows:]

[Bhagandara]—a terrible form of ulcerated sore, or fistula.

An important point for the student of occult science is here made and should not be overlooked. The law of physics that action and reaction tend to equilibrate each other holds in the realm of the occult. This has been fully explained in *Isis Unveiled** and other works of the kind. A current of Akaśa directed by a sorcerer at a given object with an evil intent, must either be propelled by such intensity of will as to break through every obstacle and overpower the resistant will of the selected victim, or it will rebound against the sender, and afflict him or her in the same way as it was intended the other should be hurt. So

* [For instance in Vol. I, pp. 142-45.—*Compiler*.]

well is this law understood that it has been preserved to us in many popular proverbs, such as the English ones, "curses come home to roost," "the biter's bit," etc., the Italian one, "la bestemia gira e gira e gira e torna adosso a chi la tira," etc. This reversal of a maleficent current upon the sender may be greatly facilitated by the friendly interference of another person who knows the secret of controlling the Akaśic currents—if it is permissible for us to coin a new word that will soon be wanted in the Western parlance.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

THE ENSOULED VIOLIN*

(By Hillarion Smerdis, F.T.S.)

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 4, January, 1880, pp. 95-97]

The almost supernatural or magic art of Nicolo Paganini—the greatest violin player that the world has ever produced—was often speculated upon, never understood. The sensation he produced upon his audience was marvellous, overpowering. The great Rossini wept like a sentimental German maiden, upon hearing him play for the first time. The Princess Eliza of Lucca, sister of the great Napoleon, though he was in her service as the director of her private orchestra, was for a long time unable to hear him play without fainting. In women he produced nervous fits and hysterics at his will; stout-hearted men he drove to frenzy. He changed cowards into heroes, and made the bravest soldiers become as nervous girls. Thousands of dreary tales

* [To judge by the name of the writer of this story, which appears immediately under the title, it is either from the pen of Master Hillarion, or was written by H.P.B. in collaboration with him, as is hinted at in Letter No. 20 in the *Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom*, 1st Series.

This is the first and shorter version of this story. Much later, not long before her passing, H.P.B. rewrote it, making of it a very much longer story. It is this longer version which was published in 1892 in the collection of stories known as *Nightmare Tales*. The longer version appeared also in *Lucifer*, Vol. X, March and April, 1892. For the sake of historical accuracy and completeness, we publish both versions.—*Compiler*.]

circulated about this mysterious Genoese, the modern Orpheus of Italy. For besides his remarkable appearance—termed by his friends eccentric, and by his victims diabolical—he had experienced great difficulties in refuting certain rumours of his having murdered his wife, and after her, his mistress, both of whom loved him passionately. Their unquiet souls, it was whispered, had been made through his magic art to pass into his violin—the famous “Cremona:” superstition not utterly ungrounded in view of his extraordinary facility in drawing out of his instrument the most unearthly sounds, and positively human voices. These effects well-nigh startled his audiences into terror; and, if we add to it the impenetrable mystery connected with a certain period of his youth, we will find the wild tales told of him in a measure excusable; especially among a people whose ancestors knew the Borgias and Medici of black art fame.

We will now give a fact—a page from his biography—connected with, and based

upon, such a tale. The press got hold of it at the time of its occurrence, and the annals of the literature of Italy preserve the record of it until now, though in many and various other forms.

It was in 1831. The great, the “diabolical” Paganini was creating at the house of the Paris Opera an enthusiasm unsurpassed by any triumph he had previously gleaned. After hearing him, several of the leading musicians of the noblest orchestra in the Western world, broke their instruments . . .

At that time, there lived at Paris another violinist gifted with an extraordinary talent, but poor and unknown, a German, whose name was Franz Stenio. He was young and a philosopher, imbued with all the mysticism of Hoffmann’s *Chant d’Antonia*, and nursed in the atmosphere of the old haunted castles on the Rhine. He had studied the occult arts and dabbled in alchemy, but otherwise was interested but little in the matters of this world. The whole of his aspirations mounted, incense-like, together with the wave of heavenly harmony which he drew forth from his four-stringed instrument, to a higher and a nobler sphere.

His mother, his only love on earth and whom he had never left, died when he was thirty. It was then that he

found he had been left poor indeed; poor in purse, still poorer in earthly affections. His old violin teacher, Samuel Klaus, one of those grotesque figures which look as if they had just stepped out of some old mediaeval panel, with the speaking and piercing voice of a “show Punch,” and the fantastic allures of a night goblin, then took him by the hand, and, leading him to his violin, simply said:—“Make yourself famous. I am old and childless, I will be your father, and we will live together.” And they went to Paris.

Franz had never heard Paganini. He swore he would either eclipse all the violinists of those days, or break his instrument and at the same time put an end to his own life. Old Klaus rejoiced, and jumping on one leg like an old satyr, flattered and incensed him, believing himself all the while to be performing a sacred duty for the holy cause of art.

Franz was making himself ready for his first appearance before the public, when Paganini’s arrival in the great capital of fashion was loudly heralded by his fame. The German violinist resolved to postpone his *début*, and at first smiled at the enthusiastic mentions of the Italian’s name. But soon this name became a fiery thorn in the heart of Franz, a threatening phantom in the mind of old Samuel. Both shuddered at the very mention of Paganini’s successes.

At last the Italian’s first concert was announced, and the prices of admission made enormous. The master and the pupil both pawned their watches and got two modest seats. Who can describe the enthusiasm, the triumphs of this famous, and at the same time, fatal night? At the first touch of Paganini’s magic bow, both Franz and Samuel felt as if the icy hand of death had touched them. Carried away by an irresistible enthusiasm which turned into a violent, unearthly, mental torture, they dared neither look into each

other's faces, nor exchange one word during the whole performance.

At midnight, while the chosen delegates of the Musical Society of Paris, unhitching the horses, were dragging in triumph Paganini home in his carriage, the two Germans having returned to their obscure apartment, were sitting

mournful and desperate in their usual places at the fire-corner. "Samuel!" exclaimed Franz, pale as death itself,—“Samuel,—it remains for us now but to die! . . . Do you hear me? . . . We are worthless . . . worthless! We were two mad men to have hoped that anyone in this world would ever rival . . . *him!*—“The name of Paganini stuck in his throat as in utter despair he fell into his arm-chair.

The old professor's wrinkles suddenly became purple; and his little greenish eyes gleamed phosphorescently as, bending toward his pupil, he whispered to him in a hoarse and broken voice—“Thou art wrong, my Franz! I have taught thee, and thou hast learned all of the great art that one simple mortal and a good Christian can learn from another and as simple a mortal as himself. Am I to be blamed because these accursed Italians, in order to reign unequalled in the domain of art, have recourse to Satan and the diabolical effects of black magic?”

Franz turned his eyes upon his old master. There was a sinister light burning in those glittering orbs; a light telling plainly that to secure such a power, he too, would not scruple to sell himself, body and soul, to the Evil One.

Samuel understood the cruel thought, but yet went on with feigned calmness—“You have heard the unfortunate tale rumoured about the famous Tartini? He died on one Sabbath night, strangled by his familiar demon, who had taught him the way, by means of incantations, to animate his violin, with a human soul, by shutting up in it the soul of a young Virgin . . . Paganini did more; in order to endow his instrument with the faculty of emitting human sobs, despairing cries, in short the most heart-rending notes of the human voice, Paganini became the murderer of a friend, who was more tenderly attached to him than any other on this earth. He then made out of the intestines of his victim the four cords of his magic violin. This is the secret of his enchanting talent, of that overpowering melody, and that combination of sounds, which you will never be able to master, unless. . .”

The old man could not finish the sentence. He staggered before the fiendish look of his pupil, and covered his face

with his hands. “And, . . . you really believe . . . that had I the means of obtaining human

intestines for strings, I could rival Paganini?" asked Franz, after a moment's pause, and casting down his eyes.

The old German unveiled his face, and, with a strange look of determination upon it, softly answered. "Human intestines only are not sufficient for the purpose: these must have belonged to one that has loved us well, and with an unselfish, holy love. Tartini endowed his violin with the life of a virgin; but that virgin had died of unrequited love for him . . . The fiendish artist had prepared beforehand a tube in which he managed to catch her last breath as she expired in pronouncing his beloved name, and then transferred this breath into his violin.* As to Paganini—I have just told you his tale. It was with the consent of his victim though, that he murdered him to get possession of his intestines . . . Oh for the power of the human voice!" Samuel went on, after a brief pause: "What can equal the eloquence, the magic spell, of the human voice! Do you think, my poor boy, I would not have taught you this great, this final secret, were it not, that it throws one right into the clutches of *him* . . . who must remain unnamed at night?"

Franz did not answer. With a calm, awful to behold, he left his place, took down his violin from the wall where it was hanging, and with one powerful grasp of the cords tore them out and flung them into the fire.

The old Samuel suppressed a cry of horror. The cords were hissing upon the coals, where, among the blazing logs, they wriggled and curled like so many living snakes.

Weeks and months passed away. This conversation was never resumed between the master and the pupil. But a

*Giuseppe Tartini, the great Italian composer and violinist of the XVIIth century, produced such an impression by his inspired performance that he was commonly styled the "Master of Nations." He eloped with a high-born young lady of great beauty. His most marvellous composition was the *Sonate du diable*, or *Tartini's Dream* which he confessed to have written "on awakening from a dream, in which he had heard it performed by the devil, in consequence of a bargain struck with him."

profound melancholy had taken possession of Franz, and the two hardly exchanged a word together. The violin hung mute, cordless, and full of dust, upon its habitual place. It was like the presence of a soulless corpse between them.

One night, as Franz sat, looking particularly pale and gloomy, old Samuel, suddenly jumped from his seat, and after hopping about the room in a magpie fashion approached his pupil, imprinted a fond kiss upon the young man's brow, and then squeaked at the top of his voice, "It is time to put an end to all this!" . . . Whereupon starting from his usual lethargy, Franz echoed, as in a dream:—"Yes, it is time to put an end to this." Upon which the two separated and went to bed.

On the following morning, when Franz awoke, he was astonished at not seeing his old teacher at his usual place to give him his first greeting. "Samuel! My good, my dear . . . Samuel!" exclaimed Franz, as he hurriedly jumped from his bed to go into his master's chamber. He staggered back frightened at the sound of his own voice, so

changed and hoarse it seemed to him at this moment. No answer came in response to his call. Naught followed but a dead silence . . . There exists in the domain of sounds, a silence which usually denotes death. In the presence of a corpse, as in the lugubrious stillness of a tomb, silence acquires a mysterious power, which strikes the sensitive soul with a nameless terror . . .

Samuel was lying on his bed, cold, stiff and lifeless . . . At the sight of him, who had loved him so well, and had been more than a father, Franz experienced a dreadful shock. But the passion of the fanatical artist got the better of the despair of the man, and smothered the feelings of the latter.

A note addressed with his own name was conspicuously placed upon a table near the corpse. With a trembling hand, the violinist tore open the envelope, and read the following:—

MY BELOVED FRANZ,

When you read this, I will have made the greatest sacrifice your best and only friend and professor could have accomplished, for your

fame. He, who loved you most, is now but an inanimate body; of your old teacher there now remains but a clod of cold organic matter. I need not prompt you as to what you have to do with it. Fear not stupid prejudices. It is for your future fame that I have made an offering of my body, and you would become guilty of the blackest ingratitude, were you now to render this sacrifice useless. When you shall have replaced the cords upon your violin and these cords—a portion of my own self,—will acquire under your touch my voice, my groans, my song of welcome, and the sobs of my infinite love for you, my boy,—then, oh, Franz, fear nobody! Take your instrument along with you, and follow the steps of him who filled our lives with bitterness and despair. . . . Appear on the arena, where, hitherto, he has reigned without a rival, and bravely throw the gauntlet of defiance into his face. Oh, Franz! then only wilt thou hear with what a magic power the full note of love will issue forth from thy violin; as with a last caressing touch of its cords, thou wilt, perhaps, remember that they have once formed a portion of thine old teacher, who now embraces and blesses thee for the last time.—

SAMUEL.

Two burning tears sparkled in the eyes of Franz, but they dried up instantly under the fiery rush of passionate hope and pride. The eyes of the future magician-artist, riveted to the ghastly face of the corpse, shone like the eyes of the church owl.

Our pen refuses to describe what took place later on that day, in the death room, after the legal autopsy was over. Suffice to say, that, after a fortnight had passed, the violin was dusted and four new stout cords had been stretched upon it. Franz dared not look at them. He tried to play, but the bow trembled in his hand like a dagger in the grasp of a novice-brigand. He made a vow not to try again until the portentous night when he should have a chance to rival—nay, surpass Paganini.

But the famous violinist had left Paris and was now giving a series of triumphant concerts at an old Flemish town in Belgium.

One night, as Paganini sat in the bar room of the hotel at which he stopped, surrounded by a crowd of admirers, a visiting-card was handed to him which had a few

words written in pencil upon its back, by a young man with wild and staring eyes. Fixing upon the intruder a look which

few persons could bear, but receiving back a glance as determined and calm as his own, Paganini slightly bowed and then dryly said:—"Sir, it will be as you desire . . . name the night . . . I am at your service . . ."

On the following morning the whole town was startled at the sight of numerous bills posted at the corner of every street. The strange notice ran thus:—

Tonight at the Grand Theatre of, and for the first time, will appear before the public, Franz Stenio, a German Violinist, arrived purposely to throw the gauntlet at, and challenge the world-famous Paganini to a duel—upon their violins. He purposes to compete with the great "virtuoso" in the execution of the most difficult of his compositions. The famous Paganini has accepted the challenge. Franz Stenio will have to play in competition with the unrivalled violinist the celebrated "Fantaisie caprice" of the latter, known as "The Witches."

The effect of the notice proved magical. Paganini, who amid his greatest triumphs, never lost sight of a profitable speculation, doubled the usual price of admission. But still the theatre could not hold the crowds that flocked to it on that memorable night.

At the terrible hour of the forthcoming struggle, Franz was at his post, calm, resolute, almost smiling. It was arranged that Paganini should begin. When he appeared upon the stage, the thick walls of the theatre shook to their foundation with the applause that greeted him. He began and ended his famous composition *The Witches* amid uninterrupted bravos. The cries of public enthusiasm lasted so long that Franz began to think that his turn would never come. When at last, Paganini, amid the roaring applause of a frantic public, was allowed to retire behind the scenes, and his eye fell upon Stenio, who was tuning his violin, he felt amazed at the serene calmness, and the air of assurance of the unknown German artist.

When Franz approached the footlights, he was received with an icy coldness. But for all that he did not feel in the least disconcerted: he only scornfully smiled, for he was sure of his triumph.

At the first notes of the *Prelude* of "*The Witches*" the audience became dumb struck with astonishment. It was

Paganini's touch, and—it was something else besides. Some—and that some the majority—thought that never, in his best moments of inspiration had the Italian artist himself, while executing this diabolical composition of his, exhibited such an equally

diabolical power. Under the pressure of the long muscular fingers, the cords wriggled like the palpitating intestines of a disembowelled victim, the Satanic eye of the artist fixed upon the soundboard, called forth hell itself out of the mysterious depths of his instrument. Sounds transformed themselves into shapes, and gathering thickly, at the evocation of the mighty magician, whirled around him, like a host of fantastic, infernal figures, dancing the witches' "goat dance." In the emptiness of the stage background behind him, a nameless phantasmagoria produced by the concussion of unearthly vibrations, seemed to draw pictures of shameless orgies, and the voluptuous hymens, of the witches' Sabbath . . . A collective hallucination got hold of the public. Panting for breath, ghastly, and trickling with the icy perspiration of an inexpressible terror, they sat spellbound, and unable to break the charm of the music by the slightest motion. They experienced all the illicit enervating delights of the paradise of Mohammed that come into the discorded fancy of an opium-eating Mussulman, and felt at the same time the abject terror, the agony of one who struggles against an attack of *delirium tremens* . . . Many ladies fainted, and strong men gnashed their teeth in a state of utter helplessness! . . .

Then came the *finale* . . . The magic bow was just drawing forth its last quivering sounds—imitating the precipitate flight of the witches saturated with the fumes of their night's Saturnalia, when the notes suddenly changed in their melodious ascension into the squeaking, disagreeable tones of a street *punchinello*,* screaming at the top of his senile voice: "Art thou satisfied, Franz, my boy? . . . Have I well kept my promise, eh" . . . And then, the slender graceful figure of the violinist suddenly appeared to the public as

* Punch and Judy show—an old and very popular street amusement among Western nations.

entirely enveloped in a semi-transparent form, which clearly defined the outlines of a grotesque and grinning but terribly awful-looking old man, whose bowels were protruding and ended where they were stretched on the violin!

Within this hazy, quivering veil, the violinist was then seen driving furiously his bow upon the *human cords* with the contortions of a demoniac, as represented on a mediaeval Cathedral painting!

An indescribable panic swept over the audience, and, breaking through the spell which had bound them for so long motionless in their seats, every living creature in the theatre made one mad rush to the door. It was like the sudden outburst of a dam; a human torrent, roaring amid a shower of discordant notes, idiotic squeaking, prolonged and whining moans, and cacophonous cries of frenzy, above which, like the detonations of pistol shots, was heard the consecutive bursting of the four cords upon the bewitched violin . . .

.

When the theatre was emptied of its last occupant, the terrified manager rushed on the stage in search of the unfortunate performer. They found him dead and stiff, behind the footlights, twisted up in the most unnatural of postures, and his violin shattered into a thousand fragments . . .

Cyprus, October 1st, 1879.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

THE ENSOULED VIOLIN

229

THE ENSOULED VIOLIN

[*Longer version*]

[Published almost simultaneously in *Lucifer*, Vol. X, March and April, 1892, and as part of the little volume called *Nightmare Tales*, which was printed on the H.P.B. Press in London, and was placed on sale sometime during the Summer of 1892.]

I

In the year 1828, an old German, a music teacher, came to Paris with his pupil and settled unostentatiously in one of the quiet faubourgs of the metropolis. The first rejoiced in the name of Samuel Klaus; the second answered to the more poetical appellation of Franz Stenio. The younger man was a violinist, gifted, as rumor went, with extraordinary, almost miraculous talent. Yet as he was poor and had not hitherto made a name for himself in Europe, he remained for several years in the capital of France—the heart and pulse of capricious continental fashion—unknown and unappreciated. Franz was a Styrian by birth, and, at the time of the event to be presently described, he was a young man considerably under thirty. A philosopher and a dreamer by nature, imbued with all the mystic oddities of true genius, he reminded one of some of the heroes in Hoffmann's *Contes Fantastiques*. His earlier existence had been a very unusual, in fact, quite an eccentric one, and its history must be briefly told—for the better understanding of the present story.

Born of very pious country people, in a quiet burg among the Styrian Alps; nursed “by the native gnomes who watched

230

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

over his cradle”; growing up in the weird atmosphere of the ghouls and vampires who play such a prominent part in the household of every Styrian and Slavonian in Southern Austria; educated later, as a student, in the shadow of the old Rhenish castles of Germany; Franz from his childhood had passed through every emotional stage on the plane of the so-called “supernatural.” He had also studied at one time the “occult arts” with an enthusiastic disciple of Paracelsus and Khunrath; alchemy had few theoretical secrets for him; and he had dabbled in “ceremonial magic” and “sorcery” with some Hungarian Tziganes. Yet he loved above all else music, and above music—his violin.

At the age of twenty-two he suddenly gave up his practical studies in the occult, and

from that day, though as devoted as ever in thought to the beautiful Grecian Gods, he surrendered himself entirely to his art. Of his classic studies he had retained only that which related to the muses—Euterpe especially, at whose altar he worshipped—and Orpheus whose magic lyre he tried to emulate with his violin. Except his dreamy belief in the nymphs and the sirens, on account probably of the double relationship of the latter to the muses through Calliope and Orpheus, he was interested but little in the matters of this sublunary world. All his aspirations mounted, like incense, with the wave of the heavenly harmony that he drew from his instrument, to a higher and nobler sphere. He dreamed awake, and lived a real though an enchanted life only during those hours when his magic bow carried him along the wave of sound to the Pagan Olympus, to the feet of Euterpe. A strange child he had ever been in his own home, where tales of magic and witchcraft grow out of every inch of the soil; a still stranger boy he had become, until finally he had blossomed into manhood, without one single characteristic of youth. Never had a fair face attracted his attention; not for one moment had his thoughts turned from his solitary studies to a life beyond that of a mystic Bohemian. Content with his own company, he had thus passed the best years of his youth and manhood with his violin for his chief idol and with the Gods and Goddesses of old Greece for his

audience, in perfect ignorance of practical life. His whole existence had been one long day of dreams, of melody and sunlight, and he had never felt any other aspirations.

How useless, but oh, how glorious those dreams! how vivid! and why should he desire any better fate? Was he not all that he wanted to be, transformed in a second of thought into one or another hero; from Orpheus, who held all nature breathless, to the urchin who piped away under the plane tree to the naiads of Callirrhoe's crystal fountain? Did not the swift-footed nymphs frolic at his beck and call to the sound of the magic flute of the Arcadian shepherd—who was himself? Behold, the Goddess of Love and Beauty herself descending from on high, attracted by the sweet-voiced notes of his violin! . . . Yet there came a time when he preferred Syrinx to Aphrodite—not as the fair nymph pursued by Pan, but after her transformation by the merciful Gods into the reed out of which the frustrated God of the Shepherds had made his magic pipe. For also, with time, ambition grows and is rarely satisfied. When he tried to emulate on his violin the enchanting sounds that resounded in his mind, the whole of Parnassus kept silent under the spell, or joined in heavenly chorus; but the audience he finally craved was composed of more than the Gods sung by Hesiod, verily of the most appreciative *mélomanes* of European capitals. He felt jealous of the magic pipe, and would faint have had it at his command.

“Oh! that I could allure a nymph into my beloved violin!”—he often cried, after awakening from one of his daydreams. “Oh, that I could only span in spirit-flight the abyss of Time! Oh, that I could find myself for one short day a partaker of the secret arts of the Gods, a God myself, in the sight and hearing of enraptured humanity; and, having

learned the mystery of the lyre of Orpheus, or secured within my violin a siren, thereby benefit mortals to my own glory!”

Thus, having for long years dreamed in the company of the Gods of his fancy, he now took to dreaming of the transitory glories of fame upon this earth. But at this time he was suddenly called home by his widowed mother from

one of the German universities where he had lived for the last year or two. This was an event which brought his plans to an end, at least so far as the immediate future was concerned, for he had hitherto drawn upon her alone for his meagre pittance, and his means were not sufficient for an independent life outside his native place.

His return had a very unexpected result. His mother, whose only love he was on earth, died soon after she had welcomed her Benjamin back; and the good wives of the burg exercised their swift tongues for many a month after as to the real causes of that death.

Frau Stenio, before Franz's return, was a healthy, buxom, middle-aged body, strong and hearty. She was a pious and a God-fearing soul too, who had never failed in saying her prayers, nor had missed an early mass for years during his absence. On the first Sunday after her son had settled at home—a day that she had been longing for and had anticipated for months in joyous visions, in which she saw him kneeling by her side in the little church on the hill—she called him from the foot of the stairs. The hour had come when her pious dream was to be realized, and she was waiting for him, carefully wiping the dust from the prayer-book he had used in his boyhood. But instead of Franz, it was his violin that responded to her call, mixing its sonorous voice with the rather cracked tones of the peal of the merry Sunday bells. The fond mother was somewhat shocked at hearing the prayer-inspiring sounds drowned by the weird, fantastic notes of the “Dance of the Witches”; they seemed to her so unearthly and mocking. But she almost fainted upon hearing the definite refusal of her well-beloved son to go to church. He never went to church, he coolly remarked. It was loss of time; besides which, the loud peals of the old church organ jarred on his nerves. Nothing should induce him to submit to the torture of listening to that cracked organ. He was firm, and nothing could move him. To her supplications and remonstrances he put an end by offering to play for her a “Hymn to the Sun” he had just composed.

From that memorable Sunday morning, Frau Stenio lost

her usual serenity of mind. She hastened to lay her sorrows and seek for consolation at

the foot of the confessional; but that which she heard in response from the stern priest filled her gentle and unsophisticated soul with dismay and almost with despair. A feeling of fear, a sense of profound terror, which soon became a chronic state with her, pursued her from that moment; her nights became disturbed and sleepless, her days passed in prayer and lamentations. In her maternal anxiety for the salvation of her beloved son's soul, and for his *post-mortem* welfare, she made a series of rash vows. Finding that neither the Latin petition to the Mother of God written for her by her spiritual adviser, nor yet the humble supplications in German, addressed by herself to every saint she had reason to believe was residing in Paradise, worked the desired effect, she took to pilgrimages to distant shrines. During one of these journeys to a holy chapel situated high up in the mountains, she caught cold, amidst the glaciers of the Tyrol, and redescended only to take to a sick bed, from which she arose no more. Frau Stenio's vow had led her, in one sense, to the desired result. The poor woman was now given an opportunity of seeking out in *propria persona* the saints she had believed in so well, and of pleading face to face for the recreant son, who refused adherence to them and to the Church, scoffed at monk and confessional, and held the organ in such horror.

Franz sincerely lamented his mother's death. Unaware of being the indirect cause of it, he felt no remorse; but selling the modest household goods and chattels, light in purse and heart, he resolved to travel on foot for a year or two, before settling down to any definite profession.

A hazy desire to see the great cities of Europe, and to try his luck in France, lurked at the bottom of this travelling project, but his Bohemian habits of life were too strong to be abruptly abandoned. He placed his small capital with a banker for a rainy day, and started on his pedestrian journey *via* Germany and Austria. His violin paid for his board and lodging in the inns and farms on his way, and he passed his days in the green fields and in the solemn silent woods, face to face with Nature, dreaming all the time as usual with

his eyes open. During the three months of his pleasant travels to and fro, he never descended for one moment from Parnassus; but, as an alchemist transmutes lead into gold, so he transformed everything on his way into a song of Hesiod or Anacreon. Every evening, while fiddling for his supper and bed, whether on a green lawn or in the hall of a rustic inn, his fancy changed the whole scene for him. Village swains and maidens became transfigured into Arcadian shepherds and nymphs. The sand-covered floor was now a green sward; the uncouth couples spinning round in a measured waltz with the wild grace of tamed bears became priests and priestesses of Terpsichore; the bulky, cherry-cheeked and blue-eyed daughters of rural Germany were the Hesperides circling around the trees laden with the golden apples. Nor did the melodious strains of the Arcadian demigods piping on their syrinxes, and audible but to his own enchanted ear, vanish with the dawn. For no sooner was the curtain of sleep raised from his eyes than

he would sally forth into a new magic realm of day-dreams. On his way to some dark and solemn pine forest, he played incessantly, to himself and to everything else. He fiddled to the green hill, and forthwith the mountain and the moss-covered rocks moved forward to hear him the better, as they had done at the sound of the Orphean lyre. He fiddled to the merry-voiced brook, to the hurrying river, and both slackened their speed and stopped their waves, and, becoming silent, seemed to listen to him in an entranced rapture. Even the long-legged stork who stood meditatively on one leg on the thatched top of the rustic mill, gravely resolving unto himself the problem of his too-long existence, sent out after him a long and strident cry, screeching, "Art thou Orpheus himself, O Stenio?" It was a period of full bliss, of a daily and almost hourly exaltation. The last words of his dying mother, whispering to him of the horrors of eternal condemnation, had left him unaffected, and the only vision her warning evoked in him was that of Pluto. By a ready association of ideas, he saw the lord of the dark nether kingdom greeting him as he had greeted the husband of Eurydice before him. Charmed with the magic sounds of his violin,

the wheel of Ixion was at a standstill once more, thus affording relief to the wretched seducer of Juno, and giving the lie to those who claim eternity for the duration of the punishment of condemned sinners. He perceived Tantalus forgetting his never-ceasing thirst, and smacking his lips as he drank in the heaven-born melody; the stone of Sisyphus becoming motionless, the Furies themselves smiling on him, and the sovereign of the gloomy regions delighted, and awarding preference to his violin over the lyre of Orpheus. Taken *au sérieux*, mythology thus seems a decided antidote to fear, in the face of theological threats, especially when strengthened with an insane and passionate love of music; with Franz, Euterpe proved always victorious in every contest, aye, even with Hell itself!

But there is an end to everything, and very soon Franz had to give up uninterrupted dreaming. He had reached the university town where dwelt his old violin teacher, Samuel Klaus. When this antiquated musician found that his beloved and favourite pupil, Franz, had been left poor in purse and still poorer in earthly affections, he felt his strong attachment to the boy awoken with tenfold force. He took Franz to his heart, and forthwith adopted him as his son.

The old teacher reminded people of one of those grotesque figures which look as if they had just stepped out of some mediaeval panel. And yet Klaus, with his fantastic *allures* of a night-goblin, had the most loving heart, as tender as that of a woman, and the self-sacrificing nature of an old Christian martyr. When Franz had briefly narrated to him the history of his last few years, the professor took him by the hand, and leading him into his study simply said:

"Stop with me, and put an end to your Bohemian life. Make yourself famous. I am old and childless and will be your father. Let us live together and forget all save fame."

And forthwith he offered to proceed with Franz to Paris, *via* several large German cities, where they would stop to give concerts.

In a few days Klaus succeeded in making Franz forget his vagrant life and its artistic independence, and reawakened in his pupil his now dormant ambition and desire for

worldly fame. Hitherto, since his mother's death, he had been content to receive applause only from the Gods and Goddesses who inhabited his vivid fancy; now he began to crave once more for the admiration of mortals. Under the clever and careful training of old Klaus his remarkable talent gained in strength and powerful charm with every day, and his reputation grew and expanded with every city and town wherein he made himself heard. His ambition was being rapidly realized; the presiding genii of various musical centres to whose patronage his talent was submitted soon proclaimed him the *one* violinist of the day, and the public declared loudly that he stood unrivalled by any one whom they had ever heard. These laudations very soon made both master and pupil completely lose their heads. But Paris was less ready with such appreciation. Paris makes reputations for itself, and will take none on faith. They had been living in it for almost three years, and were still climbing with difficulty the artist's Calvary, when an event occurred which put an end even to their most modest expectations. The first arrival of Nicolo Paganini was suddenly heralded, and threw Lutetia into a convulsion of expectation. The unparalleled artist arrived, and—all Paris fell at once at his feet.

II

Now it is a well-known fact that a superstition born in the dark days of mediaeval superstition, and surviving almost to the middle of the present century, attributed all such abnormal, out-of-the-way talent as that of Paganini to "supernatural" agency. Every great and marvellous artist had been accused in his day of dealings with the devil. A few instances will suffice to refresh the reader's memory.

Tartini, the great composer and violinist of the XVIIth century, was denounced as one who got his best inspirations from the Evil One, with whom he was, it was said, in regular league. This accusation was, of course, due to the almost magical impression he produced upon his audiences. His

inspired performance on the violin secured for him in his native country the title of "Master of Nations." The *Sonate du Diable*, also called "Tartini's Dream"—as every one

who has heard it will be ready to testify—is the most weird melody ever heard or invented: hence, the marvellous composition has become the source of endless legends. Nor were they entirely baseless, since it was he, himself, who was shown to have originated them. Tartini confessed to having written it on awakening from a dream, in which he had heard his sonata performed by Satan, for his benefit, and in consequence of a bargain made with his infernal majesty.

Several famous singers, even, whose exceptional voices struck the hearers with superstitious admiration, have not escaped a like accusation. Pasta's splendid voice was attributed in her day to the fact that, three months before her birth, the diva's mother was carried during a trance to heaven, and there treated to a vocal concert of seraphs. Malibran was indebted for her voice to St. Cecilia, while others said she owed it to a demon who watched over her cradle and sang the baby to sleep. Finally, Paganini—the unrivalled performer, the mean Italian, who like Dryden's Jubal striking on the “chorded shell” forced the throngs that followed him to worship the divine sounds produced, and made people say that “less than a God could not dwell within the hollow of his violin”—Paganini left a legend too.

The almost supernatural art of the greatest violin-player that the world has ever known was often speculated upon, never understood. The effect produced by him on his audience was literally marvellous, overpowering. The great Rossini is said to have wept like a sentimental German maiden on hearing him play for the first time. The Princess Elisa of Lucca, a sister of the great Napoleon, in whose service Paganini was, as director of her private orchestra, for a long time was unable to hear him play without fainting. In women he produced nervous fits and hysterics at his will; stout-hearted men he drove to frenzy. He changed cowards into heroes and made the bravest soldiers feel like so many nervous schoolgirls. Is it to be wondered at, then, that hundreds of weird tales circulated for long years about and

around the mysterious Genoese, that modern Orpheus of Europe? One of these was especially ghastly. It was rumoured, and was believed by more people than would probably like to confess it, that the strings of his violin were made of *human intestines*, according to all the rules and requirements of the *Black Art*.

Exaggerated as this idea may seem to some, it has nothing impossible in it; and it is more than probable that it was this legend that led to the extraordinary events which we are about to narrate. Human organs are often used by the Eastern Black Magician, so-called, and it is an averred fact that some Bengâlî Tântrikas (reciters of *tantras*, or “invocations to the demon,” as a reverend writer has described them) use human corpses, and certain internal and external organs pertaining to them, as powerful magical agents for bad purposes.

However this may be, now that the magnetic and mesmeric potencies of hypnotism are recognized as facts by most physicians, it may be suggested with less danger than

heretofore that the extraordinary effects of Paganini's violin-playing were not, perhaps, entirely due to his talent and genius. The wonder and awe he so easily excited were as much caused by his external appearance, "which had something weird and demoniacal in it," according to certain of his biographers, as by the inexpressible charm of his execution and his remarkable mechanical skill. The latter is demonstrated by his perfect imitation of the flageolet, and his performance of long and magnificent melodies on the G string alone. In this performance, which many an artist has tried to copy without success, he remains unrivalled to this day.

It is owing to this remarkable appearance of his—termed by his friends eccentric, and by his too nervous victims, diabolical—that he experienced great difficulties in refuting certain ugly rumours. These were credited far more easily in his day than they would be now. It was whispered throughout Italy, and even in his own native town, that Paganini had murdered his wife, and, later on, a mistress, both of whom he had loved passionately, and both of whom he had

not hesitated to sacrifice to his fiendish ambition. He had made himself proficient in magic arts, it was asserted, and had succeeded thereby in imprisoning the souls of his two victims in his violin—his famous Cremona.

It is maintained by the immediate friends of Ernest T. W. Hoffmann, the celebrated author of *Die Elixire des Teufels*, *Meister Martin*, and other charming and mystical tales, that Councillor Crespel, in the *Violin of Cremona*, was taken from the legend about Paganini. It is, as all who have read it know, the history of a celebrated violin, into which the voice and the soul of a famous diva, a woman whom Crespel had loved and killed, had passed, and to which was added the voice of his beloved daughter, Antonia.

Nor was this superstition utterly ungrounded, nor was Hoffmann to be blamed for adopting it, after he had heard Paganini's playing. The extraordinary facility with which the artist drew out of his instrument, not only the most unearthly sounds, but positively human voices, justified the suspicion. Such effects might well have startled an audience and thrown terror into many a nervous heart. Add to this the impenetrable mystery connected with a certain period of Paganini's youth, and the most wild tales about him must be found in a measure justifiable, and even excusable; especially among a nation whose ancestors knew the Borgias and the Medicis of Black Art fame.

III

In those pre-telegraphic days, newspapers were limited, and the wings of fame had a heavier flight than they have now.

Franz had hardly heard of Paganini; and when he did, he swore he would rival, if not eclipse, the Genoese magician. Yes, he would either become the most famous of all living violinists, or he would break his instrument and put an end to his life at the same time.

Old Klaus rejoiced at such a determination. He rubbed his hands in glee, and jumping about on his lame leg like

a crippled satyr, he flattered and incensed his pupil, believing himself all the while to be performing a sacred duty to the holy and majestic cause of art.

Upon first setting foot in Paris, three years before, Franz had all but failed. Musical critics pronounced him a rising star, but had all agreed that he required a few more years' practice, before he could hope to carry his audiences by storm. Therefore, after a desperate study of over two years and uninterrupted preparations, the Styrian artist had finally made himself ready for his first serious appearance in the great Opera House where a public concert before the most exacting critics of the old world was to be held; at this critical moment Paganini's arrival in the European metropolis placed an obstacle in the way of the realization of his hopes, and the old German professor wisely postponed his pupil's *début*. At first he had simply smiled at the wild enthusiasm, the laudatory hymns sung about the Genoese violinist, and the almost superstitious awe with which his name was pronounced. But very soon Paganini's name became a burning iron in the hearts of both the artists, and a threatening phantom in the mind of Klaus. A few days more, and they shuddered at the very mention of their great rival, whose success became with every night more unprecedented.

The first series of concerts was over, but neither Klaus nor Franz had as yet had an opportunity of hearing him and of judging for themselves. So great and so beyond their means was the charge for admission, and so small the hope of getting a free pass from a brother artist justly regarded as the meanest of men in monetary transactions that they had to wait for a chance, as did so many others. But the day came when neither master nor pupil could control their impatience any longer; so they pawned their watches, and with the proceeds bought two modest seats.

Who can describe the enthusiasm, the triumphs, of this famous, and at the same time fatal night! The audience was frantic; men wept and women screamed and fainted; while both Klaus and Stenio sat looking paler than two ghosts. At the first touch of Paganini's magic bow, both Franz and

Samuel felt as if the icy hand of death had touched them. Carried away by an irresistible enthusiasm, which turned into a violent, unearthly mental torture, they dared neither look into each other's faces, nor exchange one word during the whole performance.

At midnight, while the chosen delegates of the Musical Societies and the

Conservatory of Paris unhitched the horses, and dragged the carriage of the grand artist home in triumph, the two Germans returned to their modest lodging, and it was a pitiful sight to see them. Mournful and desperate, they placed themselves in their usual seats at the fire corner, and neither for a while opened his mouth.

“Samuel!” at last exclaimed Franz, pale as death itself. “Samuel—it remains for us now but to die! . . . Do you hear me? . . . We are worthless! We were two madmen to have ever hoped that any one in this world would ever rival . . . him!”

The name of Paganini stuck in his throat, as in utter despair he fell into his arm chair.

The old professor’s wrinkles suddenly became purple. His little greenish eyes gleamed phosphorescently as, bending toward his pupil, he whispered to him in hoarse and broken tones:

“*Nein, nein!* Thou art wrong, my Franz! I have taught thee, and thou hast learned all of the great art that a simple mortal, and a Christian by baptism, can learn from another simple mortal. Am I to blame because these accursed Italians, in order to reign unequalled in the domain of art, have recourse to Satan and the diabolical effects of Black Magic?”

Franz turned his eyes upon his old master. There was a sinister light burning in those glittering orbs; a light telling plainly, that, to secure such a power, he, too, would not scruple to sell himself, body and soul, to the Evil One.

But he said not a word, and, turning his eyes from his old master’s face, he gazed dreamily at the dying embers.

The same long-forgotten incoherent dreams, which, after seeming such realities to him in his younger days, had been given up entirely, and had gradually faded from his mind,

now crowded back into it with the same force and vividness as of old. The grimacing shades of Ixion, Sisyphus and Tantalus resurrected and stood before him, saying:

“What matters hell—in which thou believest not. And even if hell there be, it is the hell described by the old Greeks, not that of the modern bigots—a locality full of conscious shadows, to whom thou canst be a second Orpheus.”

Franz felt that he was going mad, and, turning instinctively, he looked his old master once more right in the face. Then his bloodshot eye evaded the gaze of Klaus.

Whether Samuel understood the terrible state of mind of his pupil, or whether he wanted to draw him out, to make him speak, and thus to divert his thoughts, must remain as hypothetical to the reader as it is to the writer. Whatever may have been in his mind, the German enthusiast went on, speaking with a feigned calmness:

“Franz, my dear boy, I tell you that the art of the accursed Italian is not natural; that it is due neither to study nor to genius. It never was acquired in the usual, natural way. You need not stare at me in that wild manner, for what I say is in the mouth of millions of people. Listen to what I now tell you, and try to understand. You have heard the

strange tale whispered about the famous Tartini? He died one fine Sabbath night, strangled by his familiar demon, who had taught him how to endow his violin with a human voice, by shutting up in it, by means of incantations, the soul of a young virgin. Paganini did more. In order to endow his instrument with the faculty of emitting human sounds, such as sobs, despairing cries, supplications, moans of love and fury—in short, the most heart-rending notes of the human voice—Paganini became the murderer not only of his wife and his mistress, but also of a friend, who was more tenderly attached to him than any other being on this earth. He then made the four chords of his magic violin out of the intestines of his last victim. This is the secret of his enchanting talent, of that overpowering melody, that combination of sounds, which you will never be able to master, unless . . .”

The old man could not finish the sentence. He staggered back before the fiendish look of his pupil, and covered his face with his hands.

Franz was breathing heavily, and his eyes had an expression which reminded Klaus of those of a hyena. His pallor was cadaverous. For some time he could not speak, but only gasped for breath. At last he slowly muttered:

“Are you in earnest?”

“I am, as I hope to help you.”

“And . . . and do you really believe that had I only the means of obtaining human intestines for strings, I could rival Paganini?” asked Franz, after a moment’s pause, and casting down his eyes.

The old German unveiled his face, and, with a strange look of determination upon it, softly answered:

“Human intestines alone are not sufficient for our purpose; they must have belonged to some one who had loved us well, with an unselfish holy love. Tartini endowed his violin with the life of a virgin; but that virgin had died of unrequited love for him. The fiendish artist had prepared beforehand a tube, in which he managed to catch her last breath as she expired, pronouncing his beloved name, and he then transferred this breath to his violin. As to Paganini, I have just told you his tale. It was with the consent of his victim, though, that he murdered him to get possession of his intestines.

“Oh, for the power of the human voice!” Samuel went on, after a brief pause. “What can equal the eloquence, the magic spell of the human voice? Do you think, my poor boy, I would not have taught you this great, this final secret, were it not that it throws one right into the clutches of him . . . who must remain unnamed at night?” he added, with a sudden return to the superstitions of his youth.

Franz did not answer; but with a calmness awful to behold, he left his place, took down his violin from the wall where it was hanging, and, with one powerful grasp of the chords, he tore them out and flung them into the fire.

Samuel suppressed a cry of horror. The chords were

hissing upon the coals, where, among the blazing logs, they wriggled and curled like so many living snakes.

“By the witches of Thessaly and the dark arts of Circe!” he exclaimed, with foaming mouth and his eyes burning like coals; “by the Furies of Hell and Pluto himself, I now swear, in thy presence, O Samuel, my master, never to touch a violin again until I can string it with four human chords. May I be accursed for ever and ever if I do!”

He fell senseless on the floor, with a deep sob, that ended like a funeral wail; old Samuel lifted him up as he would have lifted a child, and carried him to his bed. Then he sallied forth in search of a physician.

IV

For several days after this painful scene Franz was very ill, ill almost beyond recovery. The physician declared him to be suffering from brain fever and said that the worst was to be feared. For nine long days the patient remained delirious; and Klaus, who was nursing him night and day with the solicitude of the tenderest mother, was horrified at the work of his own hands. For the first time since their acquaintance began, the old teacher, owing to the wild ravings of his pupil, was able to penetrate into the darkest corners of that weird, superstitious, cold, and, at the same time, passionate nature; and—he trembled at what he discovered. For he saw that which he had failed to perceive before Franz as he was in reality, and not as he seemed to superficial observers. Music was the life of the young man, and adulation was the air he breathed, without which that life became a burden; from the chords of his violin alone, Stenio drew his life and being, but the applause of men and even of Gods was necessary to its support. He saw unveiled before his eyes a genuine, artistic, *earthly* soul, with its divine counterpart totally absent, a son of the Muses, all fancy and brain poetry, but without a heart. While listening to the ravings of that delirious and unhinged fancy Klaus felt as if he were for the first time in his long life exploring a

marvellous and untravelled region, a human nature not of this world but of some incomplete planet. He saw all this and shuddered. More than once he asked himself whether it would not be doing a kindness to his “boy” to let him die before he returned to consciousness.

But he loved his pupil too well to dwell for long on such an idea. Franz had bewitched his truly artistic nature, and now old Klaus felt as though their two lives were inseparably linked together. That he could thus feel was a revelation to the old man; so

he decided to save Franz, even at the expense of his own old, and, as he thought, useless life.

The seventh day of the illness brought on a most terrible crisis. For twenty-four hours the patient never closed his eyes, nor remained for a moment silent; he raved continuously during the whole time. His visions were peculiar, and he minutely described each. Fantastic, ghastly figures kept slowly swimming out of the penumbra of his small, dark room, in regular and uninterrupted procession, and he greeted each by name as he might greet old acquaintances. He referred to himself as Prometheus, bound to the rock by four bands made of human intestines. At the foot of the Caucasian Mount the black waters of the river Styx were running . . . They had deserted Arcadia, and were now endeavouring to encircle within a sevenfold embrace the rock upon which he was suffering . . .

“Wouldst thou know the name of the Promethean rock, old man?” he roared into his adopted father’s ear . . . “Listen then . . . its name is . . . called . . . Samuel Klaus . . .”

“Yes, yes! . . .” the German murmured disconsolately. “It is I who killed him, while seeking to console. The news of Paganini’s magic arts struck his fancy too vividly . . . Oh, my poor, poor boy!”

“Ha, ha, ha, ha!” The patient broke into a loud and discordant laugh. “Aye, poor old man, sayest thou? . . . So, so, thou art of poor stuff, anyhow, and wouldst look well only when stretched upon a fine Cremona violin! . . .”

Klaus shuddered, but said nothing. He only bent over the poor maniac, and with a kiss upon his brow, a caress

as tender and as gentle as that of a doting mother, he left the sickroom for a few instants, to seek relief in his own garret. When he returned, the ravings were following another channel. Franz was singing, trying to imitate the sounds of a violin.

Toward the evening of that day, the delirium of the sick man became perfectly ghastly. He saw spirits of fire clutching at his violin. Their skeleton hands, from each finger of which grew a flaming claw, beckoned to old Samuel . . . They approached and surrounded the old master, and were preparing to rip him open . . . him, “the only man on this earth who loves me with an unselfish, holy love, and . . . whose intestines can be of any good at all!” he went on whispering, with glaring eyes and demon laugh . . .

By the next morning, however, the fever had disappeared, and by the end of the ninth day Stenio had left his bed, having no recollection of his illness, and no suspicion that he had allowed Klaus to read his inner thought. Nay; had he himself any knowledge that such a horrible idea as the sacrifice of his old master to his ambition had ever entered his mind? Hardly. The only immediate result of his fatal illness was, that as, by reason of his vow, his artistic passion could find no issue, another passion awoke, which might avail to feed his ambition and his insatiable fancy. He plunged headlong into the study of the Occult Arts, of Alchemy and of Magic. In the practice of Magic the young

dreamer sought to stifle the voice of his passionate longing for his, as he thought, forever lost violin . . .

Weeks and months passed away, and the conversation about Paganini was never resumed between the master and the pupil. But a profound melancholy had taken possession of Franz, the two hardly exchanged a word, the violin hung mute, chordless, full of dust, in its habitual place. It was as the presence of a soulless corpse between them.

The young man had become gloomy and sarcastic, even avoiding the mention of music. Once, as his old professor, after long hesitation, took out his own violin from its dust-covered case and prepared to play, Franz gave a convulsive shudder, but said nothing. At the first notes of the bow,

however, he glared like a madman, and rushing out of the house, remained for hours, wandering in the streets. Then old Samuel in his turn threw his instrument down, and locked himself up in his room till the following morning.

One night as Franz sat, looking particularly pale and gloomy, old Samuel suddenly jumped from his seat, and after hopping about the room in a magpie fashion, approached his pupil, imprinted a fond kiss upon the young man's brow, and squeaked at the top of his shrill voice:

“Is it not time to put an end to all this?” . . .

Whereupon, starting from his usual lethargy, Franz echoed, as in a dream:

“Yes, it is time to put an end to this.”

Upon which the two separated, and went to bed.

On the following morning, when Franz awoke, he was astonished not to see his old teacher in his usual place to greet him. But he had greatly altered during the last few months, and he at first paid no attention to his absence, unusual as it was. He dressed and went into the adjoining room, a little parlour where they had their meals, and which separated their two bedrooms. The fire had not been lighted since the embers had died out on the previous night, and no sign was anywhere visible of the professor's busy hand in his usual housekeeping duties. Greatly puzzled, but in no way dismayed, Franz took his usual place at the corner of the now cold fire-place, and fell into an aimless reverie. As he stretched himself in his old arm-chair, raising both his hands to clasp them behind his head in a favourite posture of his, his hand came into contact with something on a shelf at his back; he knocked against a case, and brought it violently on the ground.

It was old Klaus' violin-case that came down to the floor with such a sudden crash that the case opened and the violin fell out of it, rolling to the feet of Franz. And then the chords, striking against the brass fender emitted a sound, prolonged, sad and mournful as the sigh of an unrestful soul; it seemed to fill the whole room, and reverberated in the head and the very heart of the young man. The effect of that broken violin-string was magical.

“Samuel!” cried Stenio, with his eyes starting from their sockets, and an unknown terror suddenly taking possession of his whole being. “Samuel! what has happened? . . . My good, my dear old master!” he called out, hastening to the professor’s little room, and throwing the door violently open. No one answered, all was silent within.

He staggered back, frightened at the sound of his own voice, so changed and hoarse it seemed to him at this moment. No reply came in response to his call. Naught followed but a dead silence . . . that stillness which, in the domain of sounds, usually denotes death. In the presence of a corpse, as in the lugubrious stillness of a tomb, such silence acquires a mysterious power, which strikes the sensitive soul with a nameless terror . . . The little room was dark, and Franz hastened to open the shutters.

Samuel was lying on his bed, cold, stiff, and lifeless . . . At the sight of the corpse of him who had loved him so well, and had been to him more than a father, Franz experienced a dreadful revulsion of feeling, a terrible shock. But the ambition of the fanatical artist got the better of the despair of the man, and smothered the feelings of the latter in a few seconds.

A note bearing his own name was conspicuously placed upon a table near the corpse. With trembling hand, the violinist tore open the envelope, and read the following:

MY BELOVED SON, FRANZ,

When you read this, I shall have made the greatest sacrifice, that your best and only friend and teacher could have accomplished for your fame. He, who loved you most, is now but an inanimate lump of clay. Of your old teacher there now remains but a clod of cold organic matter. I need not prompt you as to what you have to do with it. Fear not stupid prejudices. It is for your future fame that I have made an offering of my body, and you would be guilty of the blackest ingratitude were you now to render useless this sacrifice. When you shall have replaced the chords upon your violin, and these chords a portion of my own self, under your touch it will acquire the power of that accursed sorcerer, all the magic voices of Paganini’s instrument. You will find therein my voice, my sighs and groans, my song of welcome, the prayerful sobs of my infinite and sorrowful sympathy, my love for you. And now, my Franz, fear nobody! Take your instrument with you, and dog the steps of him who filled our

lives with bitterness and despair! . . . Appear in every arena, where, hitherto, he has reigned without a rival, and bravely throw the gauntlet of defiance in his face. O Franz! then only wilt thou hear with what a magic power the full notes of unselfish love will issue forth from thy violin. Perchance, with a last caressing touch of its chords, thou wilt remember that they once formed a portion of thine old teacher, who now embraces and blesses thee for the last time.

SAMUEL.

Two burning tears sparkled in the eyes of Franz, but they dried up instantly. Under the fiery rush of passionate hope and pride, the two orbs of the future magician-artist, riveted to the ghastly face of the dead man, shone like the eyes of a demon.

Our pen refuses to describe that which took place on that day, after the legal inquiry was over. As another note, written with the view of satisfying the authorities, had been prudently provided by the loving care of the old teacher, the verdict was, "Suicide from causes unknown"; after this the coroner and the police retired, leaving the bereaved heir alone in the death room, with the remains of that which had once been a living man.

Scarcely a fortnight had elapsed from that day, ere the violin had been dusted, and four new, stout strings had been stretched upon it. Franz dared not look at them. He tried to play, but the bow trembled in his hand like a dagger in the grasp of a novice-brigand. He then determined not to try again, until the portentous night should arrive, when he should have a chance of rivalling, nay, of surpassing, Paganini.

The famous violinist had meanwhile left Paris, and was giving a series of triumphant concerts at an old Flemish town in Belgium.

V

One night, as Paganini, surrounded by a crowd of admirers, was sitting in the dining-room of the hotel at which he was staying, a visiting card, with a few words written on

it in pencil, was handed to him by a young man with wild and staring eyes.

Fixing upon the intruder a look which few persons could bear, but receiving back a glance as calm and determined as his own, Paganini slightly bowed, and then dryly said:

"Sir, it shall be as you desire. Name the night. I am at your service."

On the following morning the whole town was startled by the appearance of bills posted at the corner of every street, and bearing the strange notice:

On the night of . . . , at the Grand Theatre of . . . , and for the first time, will appear before the public, Franz Stenio, a German violinist, arrived purposely to throw down the gauntlet to the world-famous Paganini and to challenge him to a duel—upon their violins. He purposes to compete with the great "virtuoso" in the execution of the most difficult of his compositions. The famous Paganini has accepted the challenge. Franz Stenio will play, in competition with the unrivalled violinist, the celebrated "Fantaisie Caprice" of the latter, known as "The Witches."

The effect of the notice was magical. Paganini, who, amid his greatest triumphs, never lost sight of a profitable speculation, doubled the usual price of admission, but still the theatre could not hold the crowds that flocked to secure tickets for that memorable performance.

At last the morning of the concert day dawned, and the "duel" was in everyone's mouth. Franz Stenio, who, instead of sleeping, had passed the whole long hours of the preceding midnight in walking up and down his room like an encased panther, had, toward morning, fallen on his bed from mere physical exhaustion. Gradually he passed into a deathlike and dreamless slumber. At the gloomy winter dawn he awoke, but finding it too early to rise he fell asleep again. And then he had a vivid dream—so vivid

indeed, so lifelike, that from its terrible realism he felt sure that it was a vision rather than a dream.

He had left his violin on a table by his bedside, locked in its case, the key of which never left him. Since he had strung it with those terrible chords he never let it out of his sight for a moment. In accordance with his resolution he had

not touched it since his first trial, and his bow had never but once touched the human strings, for he had since always practised on another instrument. But now in his sleep he saw himself looking at the locked case. Something in it was attracting his attention, and he found himself incapable of detaching his eyes from it. Suddenly he saw the upper part of the case slowly rising, and, within the chink thus produced, he perceived two small, phosphorescent green eyes—eyes but too familiar to him—fixing themselves on his, lovingly, almost beseechingly. Then a thin, shrill voice, as if issuing from these ghastly orbs—the voice and orbs of Samuel Klaus himself—resounded in Stenio’s horrified ear, and he heard it say:

“Franz, my beloved boy . . . Franz, I cannot, no *I cannot* separate myself from . . . *them!*”

And “they” twanged piteously inside the case.

Franz stood speechless, horror-bound. He felt his blood actually freezing, and his hair moving and standing erect on his head . . .

“It’s but a dream, an empty dream!” he attempted to formulate in his mind.

“I have tried my best, Franzchen . . . I have tried my best to sever myself from these accursed strings, without pulling them to pieces . . .” pleaded the same shrill, familiar voice. “Wilt thou help me to do so? . . .”

Another twang, still more prolonged and dismal, resounded within the case, now dragged about the table in every direction, by some interior power, like some living, wriggling thing, the twangs becoming sharper and more jerky with every new pull.

It was not for the first time that Stenio heard those sounds. He had often remarked them before—indeed, ever since he had used his master’s viscera as a footstool for his own ambition. But on every occasion a feeling of creeping horror had prevented him from investigating their cause, and he had tried to assure himself that the sounds were only a hallucination.

But now he stood face to face with the terrible fact, whether in dream or in reality he knew not, nor did he

care, since the hallucination—if hallucination it were—was far more real and vivid than any reality. He tried to speak, to take a step forward; but, as often happens in nightmares, he could neither utter a word nor move a finger . . . He felt hopelessly paralyzed.

The pulls and jerks were becoming more desperate with each moment, and at last something inside the case snapped violently. The vision of his Stradivarius, devoid of its magical strings, flashed before his eyes throwing him into a cold sweat of mute and unspeakable terror.

He made a superhuman effort to rid himself of the incubus that held him spell-bound. But as the last supplicating whisper of the invisible Presence repeated:

“Do, oh, do . . . help me to cut myself off—”

Franz sprang to the case with one bound, like an enraged tiger defending its prey, and with one frantic effort breaking the spell.

“Leave the violin alone, you old fiend from hell!” he cried, in hoarse and trembling tones.

He violently shut down the self-raising lid, and while firmly pressing his left hand on it, he seized with the right a piece of rosin from the table and drew on the leather-covered top the sign of the six-pointed star—the seal used by King Solomon to bottle up the rebellious djins inside their prisons.

A wail, like the howl of a she-wolf moaning over her dead little ones, came out of the violin-case:

“Thou art ungrateful . . . very ungrateful, my Franz!” sobbed the blubbing “spirit-voice.” “But I forgive . . . for I still love thee well. Yet thou canst not shut me in . . . boy. Behold!”

And instantly a grayish mist spread over and covered case and table, and rising upward formed itself first into an indistinct shape. Then it began growing, and as it grew, Franz felt himself gradually enfolded in cold and damp coils, slimy as those of a huge snake. He gave a terrible cry and—awoke; but, strangely enough, not on his bed, but near the table, just as he had dreamed, pressing the violin case desperately with both his hands.

“It was but a dream . . . after all,” he muttered, still terrified, but relieved of the load on his heaving breast.

With a tremendous effort he composed himself, and unlocked the case to inspect the violin. He found it covered with dust, but otherwise sound and in order, and he suddenly felt himself as cool and as determined as ever. Having dusted the instrument he carefully rosined the bow, tightened the strings and tuned them. He even went so far as to try upon it the first notes of the “Witches”; first cautiously and timidly, then using his bow boldly and with full force.

The sound of that loud, solitary note—defiant as the war trumpet of a conqueror, sweet and majestic as the touch of a seraph on his golden harp in the fancy of the

faithful—thrilled through the very soul of Franz. It revealed to him a hitherto unsuspected potency in his bow, which ran on in strains that filled the room with the richest swell of melody, unheard by the artist until that night. Commencing in uninterrupted *legato* tones, his bow sang to him of sun-bright hope and beauty, of moonlit nights, when the soft and balmy stillness endowed every blade of grass and all things animate and inanimate with a voice and a song of love. For a few brief moments it was a torrent of melody, the harmony of which, “tuned to soft woe,” was calculated to make mountains weep, had there been any in the room, and to soothe

. . . even th’ inexorable powers of hell,

the presence of which was undeniably felt in this modest hotel room. Suddenly, the solemn *legato* chant, contrary to all laws of harmony, quivered, became *arpeggios*, and ended in shrill *staccatos*, like the notes of a hyena laugh. The same creeping sensation of terror, as he had before felt, came over him, and Franz threw the bow away. He had recognized the familiar laugh, and would have no more of it. Dressing, he locked the bedevilled violin securely in its case, and, taking it with him to the dining-room, determined to await quietly the hour of trial.

VI

The terrible hour of the struggle had come, and Stenio was at his post calm, resolute, almost smiling.

The theatre was crowded to suffocation, and there was not even standing room to be got for any amount of hard cash or favouritism. The singular challenge had reached every quarter to which the post could carry it, and gold flowed freely into Paganini’s unfathomable pockets, to an extent almost satisfying even to his insatiate and venal soul.

It was arranged that Paganini should begin. When he appeared upon the stage, the thick walls of the theatre shook to their foundations with the applause that greeted him. He began and ended his famous composition “The Witches” amid a storm of cheers. The shouts of public enthusiasm lasted so long that Franz began to think his turn would never come. When, at last, Paganini, amid the roaring applause of a frantic public, was allowed to retire behind the scenes, his eye fell upon Stenio, who was tuning his violin, and he felt amazed at the serene calmness, the air of assurance, of the unknown German artist.

When Franz approached the footlights, he was received with icy coldness. But for all that, he did not feel in the least disconcerted. He looked very pale, but his thin white lips wore a scornful smile as response to this dumb unwelcome. He was sure of his triumph.

At the first notes of the prelude of “The Witches” a thrill of astonishment passed over the audience. It was Paganini’s touch, and—it was something more. Some—and they were the majority—thought that never, in his best moments of inspiration, had the

Italian artist himself, in executing that diabolical composition of his, exhibited such an extraordinary diabolical power. Under the pressure of the long muscular fingers of Franz, the chords shivered like the palpitating intestines of a disembowelled victim under the vivisector's knife. They moaned melodiously, like a dying child. The large blue eye of the artist, fixed with a satanic expression upon the sounding-board, seemed to summon forth Orpheus himself from the infernal regions, rather than the

musical notes supposed to be generated in the depths of the violin. Sounds seemed to transform themselves into objective shapes, thickly and precipitately gathering as at the evocation of a mighty magician, and to be whirling around him, like a host of fantastic, infernal figures, dancing the witches' "goat dance." In the empty depths of the shadowy background of the stage, behind the artist, a nameless phantasmagoria, produced by the concussion of unearthly vibrations, seemed to form pictures of shameless orgies, of the voluptuous hymens of a real witches' Sabbath . . . A collective hallucination took hold of the public. Panting for breath, ghastly, and trickling with the icy perspiration of an inexpressible horror, they sat spellbound, and unable to break the spell of the music by the slightest motion. They experienced all the illicit enervating delights of the paradise of Mahommed, that come into the disordered fancy of an opium-eating Mussulman, and felt at the same time the abject terror, the agony of one who struggles against an attack of *delirium tremens* . . . Many ladies shrieked aloud, others fainted, and strong men gnashed their teeth in a state of utter helplessness . . .

Then came the *finale*. Thundering uninterrupted applause delayed its beginning, expanding the momentary pause to a duration of almost a quarter of an hour. The bravos were furious, almost hysterical. At last, when after a profound and last bow, Stenio, whose smile was as sardonic as it was triumphant, lifted his bow to attack the famous *finale*, his eye fell upon Paganini, who, calmly seated in the manager's box, had been behind none in zealous applause. The small and piercing black eyes of the Genoese artist were riveted to the Stradivarius in the hands of Franz, but otherwise he seemed quite cool and unconcerned. His rival's face troubled him for one short instant, but he regained his self-possession and, lifting once more his bow, drew the first note.

Then the public enthusiasm reached its acme, and soon knew no bounds. The listeners heard and saw indeed. The

witches' voices resounded in the air, and beyond all the other voices, one voice was heard—

Discordant, and unlike to human sounds;
It seem'd of dogs the bark, of wolves the howl;
The doleful screechings of the midnight owl;
The hiss of snakes, the hungry lion's roar;
The sounds of billows beating on the shore;
The groan of winds among the leafy wood,
And burst of thunder from the rending cloud;—
'Twas these, all these in one . . .

The magic bow was drawing forth its last quivering sounds—famous among prodigious musical feats—imitating the precipitate flight of the witches before bright dawn; of the unholy women saturated with the fumes of their nocturnal Saturnalia, when—a strange thing came to pass on the stage. Without the slightest transition, the notes suddenly changed. In their aerial flight of ascension and descent, their melody was unexpectedly altered in character. The sounds became confused, scattered, disconnected . . . and then—it seemed from the sounding-board of the violin—came out squeaking jarring tones, like those of a street Punch, screaming at the top of a senile voice:

“Art thou satisfied, Franz, my boy? . . . Have not I gloriously kept my promise, eh?”

The spell was broken. Though still unable to realize the whole situation, those who heard the voice and the Punchinello-like tones, were freed, as by enchantment, from the terrible charm under which they had been held. Loud roars of laughter, mocking exclamations of half-anger and half-irritation were now heard from every corner of the vast theatre. The musicians in the orchestra, with faces still blanched from weird emotion, were now seen shaking with laughter, and the whole audience rose, like one man, from their seats, unable yet to solve the enigma; they felt, nevertheless, too disgusted, too disposed to laugh to remain one moment longer in the building.

But suddenly the sea of moving heads in the stalls and the

pit became once more motionless, and stood petrified as though struck by lightning. What all saw was terrible enough—the handsome though wild face of the young artist suddenly aged, and his graceful, erect figure bent down, as though under the weight of years; but this was nothing to that which some of the most sensitive clearly perceived. Franz Stenio's person was now entirely enveloped in a semi-transparent mist, cloud-like, creeping with serpentine motion and gradually tightening round the living form, as though ready to engulf him. And there were those also who discerned in this tall and ominous pillar of smoke a clearly-defined figure, a form showing the unmistakable outlines of a grotesque and grinning, but terribly awful-looking old man, whose viscera were protruding and the ends of the intestines stretched on the violin.

Within this hazy, quivering veil, the violinist was then seen, driving his bow

furiously across the human chords, with the contortions of a demoniac, as we see them represented on mediaeval cathedral paintings!

An indescribable panic swept over the audience, and breaking now, for the last time, through the spell which had again bound them motionless, every living creature in the theatre made one mad rush towards the door. It was like the sudden outburst of a dam, a human torrent, roaring amid a shower of discordant notes, idiotic squeakings, prolonged and whining moans, cacophonous cries of frenzy, above which, like the detonations of pistol shots, was heard the consecutive bursting of the four strings stretched upon the sound-board of that bewitched violin.

When the theatre was emptied of the last man of the audience, the terrified manager rushed on the stage in search of the unfortunate performer. He was found dead and already stiff, behind the footlights, twisted up into the most unnatural of postures, with the “catguts” wound curiously around his neck, and his violin shattered into a thousand fragments . . .

When it became publicly known that the unfortunate would-be rival of Nicolo Paganini had not left a cent to pay for his funeral or his hotel bill, the Genoese, his

proverbial meanness notwithstanding, settled the hotel-bill and had poor Stenio buried at his own expense.

He claimed, however, in exchange, the fragments of the Stradivarius—as a memento of the strange event.

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**
1880

EDITOR'S NOTE TO "SWAMI VERSUS MISSIONARY"

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 4, January, 1880, p. 100]

[Munshi Samarthatan, having given an authentic report of a debate which took place at Ajmere, on November 28th, 1878, between Pandit Dayânanda Saraswatî and the Rev. Dr. Gray, H. P. B. commented upon it as follows:]

The above affords a fair example of Missionary tactics in India. Open debate with learned natives before audiences is avoided whenever practicable, and their work, as a rule, confined to the lowest and most ignorant castes. Teachers in mission schools and sectarian colleges even avoid discussing theological questions put by bright native youths, before the classes, bidding them come to them privately and have their interrogatories answered. The fact forces itself upon the attention of every unprejudiced visitor to India that the Oriental missionary scheme is a wretched failure, and the millions contributed to it by the benevolent are virtually wasted. This appears to be the opinion of most old Anglo-Indians of all ranks. It is intended to publish testimony upon this very important subject in these pages and communications are invited.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

NATURE WORSHIP

259

EDITOR'S NOTE TO "NATURE-WORSHIP"

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 4, January, 1880, p. 106]

[In the above-mentioned article, the author, who signs himself "H. H. D.—B. A.," traces "the birth and growth of the idea among the Aryans of India, as viewed from Rig-Vedic poetry, etc., and a further Transition to Science, as observed historically." H. P. B. comments on the article as follows:]

We have not been willing to interrupt the rhythmic flow of our correspondent's language with any commentaries of our own, but must add a word of supplement. The outward phase of the idea of nature-worship he has succinctly and eloquently traced. But he, in common with most modern scholars, completely ignores one chief factor. We allude to the experience, once so common among men, now so comparatively rare, of a world of real beings, whose abode is in the four elements, beings with probable though as yet ill-defined powers, and a perceptible existence. We are sorry for those who will pity us for making this admission; but fact is fact, science or no science. The realization of this inner world of the *Elementals* dates back to the beginning of our race, and has been embalmed in the verse of poets and preserved in the religious and historical records of the world. Granted that the perception of phenomena developed nature-worship, yet, unless our materialistic friends admit that the range of these phenomena included experiences with the spirits of the elements and the higher and noble realities of Psychology, it would trouble them to account for the universality of belief in the various races of the Unseen Universe.

Why should but one of the elements, namely, earth, be so densely populated, and fire, water, air, etc., be deemed empty voids, uninhabited by their own beings—the "viewless races," as the great Bulwer-Lytton called them? Is this

260

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

partiality of nature a logical hypothesis of science? Who that observes the marvellous adaptations of the organs of sense and the natures of beings to their environment, dares say that these elementals do not exist, until he is well assured that the perceptive faculties of our bodies are capable of apprehending all the secret things of this and other worlds? Why may not the spirits of the kingdoms of earth, air, fire and water be non-existent to us—and we to them—only because neither has the organs to see or feel the other? Another aspect of this subject was treated in our December issue.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 4, January, 1880, pp. 83, 84, 92]

Most opportunely there comes a communication upon the missionary question, which will be found elsewhere. The writer, one of the most estimable ladies in India, is wife of Lt.-Col. William Gordon, F.T.S., Staff Corps, District Superintendent of Police, Mânbehûm, Bengal. A recent letter of hers to *The Pioneer*, upon the subject of Spiritualism, occasioned a very active discussion; and since she now expresses the opinion of all Anglo-Indians as regards missionary work in India, it is probable that the public will be favored with a much needed ventilation of a gross abuse of long standing. A false delicacy has hitherto prevented this matter from being gone into as its importance deserves. It is a pity to see so many sacrifices made by good people in the West merely to support a party of inefficient in the profitless because hopeless occupation of trying to persuade the people of India and other Asiatic countries to relinquish their ancestral faith for one which the missionaries are utterly unable to defend when questioned by even tolerably educated "heathen." The money is sorely needed at home to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and rescue the vicious from their state of lawlessness and degradation. It does no good here—except to the missionary.

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

261

An interesting archaeological discovery has just been made in the Government of Poltava (Russia). The *Kievlyanin* announces that the well-known antiquarian, Mr. Kibaltchitch, has just excavated *an enormous settlement of the primitive man, on the shores of the river Trubezh*, near the village Selishtoch, in the district of Pereyaslavl. So far there have been found 2 stone implements, used to break bones with; 372 specimen pieces of stone arrows and knives; 2 clay, rudely fashioned "boulinas"; 26 pieces of fossil bones of men and animals; 8 pieces of charred wood; 17 pieces of broken pottery, ornamented with vertical lines and holes; 5 bronze arrow heads (or tips); 2 glass (?) "boulinas"; and an iron link from a chain-mail [*sic*]. "As far as we know," says a St. Petersburg paper, "this is the only spot in southern Russia which has given such rich scientific results in relation to the Stone Age of the men who inhabited that place."

Paris is undoubtedly one of the best places in the world for the study of that Protean malady, hysteria; two years ago the "Charité" could display a fasting girl who might have held her own against any of the female saints of the Middle Ages, and who thrived

on the diet that proved fatal to her Welsh sister. Now Monsieur Dujardin-Beaumetz has discovered a “femme lithographique” in whom the lightest contact gives rise to an urticarious eruption. Upon tracing his name upon her flesh, the letters immediately appear in red relief, and this is accompanied by a local rise of temperature of from 1° to 2°.

There is a complete anaesthesia of the whole body. Those who have studied the occult sciences know that this last symptom used to be a mark of demoniacal possession, and it will be remembered that the mother superior of the bewitched convent of Loudun could produce on her arms the raised names of the devils who infested her body. A few years ago the spiritualists of Toronto used to converse with their departed friends by the same means through the arms

of a servant girl of that city; and a similar phenomenon is observed with “mediums.” It will be well, therefore, to weigh thoroughly the claims of the supernatural before giving a scientific explanation of the phenomenon, and it would perhaps be better to look on the “femme lithographique” as an embryonic St. Catherine, rather than run the risk of being considered an atheist by explaining away stigmatisation by a theory of periodic urticaria.

[Speaking of sacred places in India, such as Badrînâth, for instance, and of the holy men who are said to inhabit them, a writer says that “none but those who are Dhyânîs succeed in having their company.” To this H. P. B. remarks:]

One who has succeeded in obtaining “Dhyâna” is called “Dhyâni.” By the word “Dhyâna” is not here meant any knowledge but the knowledge of the mysterious laws of nature and consequently what is obtained by Yoga training. Until therefore a person reaches a certain degree of the knowledge of Yoga philosophy, he cannot see these Mahâtmas.

[From H.P.B.’s *Scrapbook*, Vol. X, Part I, p. 148]

[In connection with an article in *The Pioneer* of Dec. 30, 1879, concerning the action of Mr. Wall, the Collector of Benares, prohibiting a speech by Swâmi Dayânanda Saraswatî on Vedântic philosophy, H.P.B. quotes the following sentence from a private letter of Babu Shishir Ghose, Editor of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, to Col. Olcott: “The miracle is not in that you converted the Editor of *The Pioneer* to Theosophy . . . But it would be a *miracle* indeed, were you to convert *The Pioneer* itself to speak against an Englishman and in defence of a *native*.” Below this, with a hand pointing to it, H.P.B. has written in pen and ink:]

Effect of Theosophy, and our answer. The “miracle” accomplished.

ARMENIANS

263

[From H.P.B.'s *Scrapbook*, Vol. X, Part I, p. 207]

[In connection with an article from *The Medium and Daybreak*, London, Jan. 2, 1880, entitled "The Philosophy of Spirit," by William Oxley, in which appears a picture of "Busiris the Ancient, Author of the Mahabarat," H.P.B. places several exclamation and question marks in blue and red, and writes the following in blue pencil:]

Oh shades of the great Rishis, forgive these credulous *idiots*—the Spiritualists!

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

ARMENIANS

[*The Pioneer*, Allahabad, January 20, 1880]

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir,—The London *Economist* of a recent date, in an article headed “What England has inflicted upon India,” and copied in most of the local papers, has the following:—“The salt of life is taken out of the mass, and an ambitious Indian lad, full of half-developed power, is in a more hopeless position than an Armenian under St. Petersburg, or an Algerian under Paris.” Having on general principles, but little love for politics, perhaps because physiologically unfit to understand, and therefore appreciate, the wonderful scheme which goes under the name—I have nothing to say as to the remark about the “Algerian under Paris.” My ideas of the “Algerian” being vaguely associated with the *pastilles de Sérial*, sold by these free sons of the boundless deserts, in the Parisian street corners, the protest may be

264

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

taken up by a Frenchman, if he chooses. But, though an American citizen, and entirely divorced from Russia’s paternal sway over my own person, besides being a born Russian, I am yet one of those who, by the very combativeness of their nature, feel compelled to give even “the devil his due,” though the devil be the Muscovite Government, whenever unjustly attacked. And the imputation of the *Economist* as to the hopeless position of the “Armenian under St. Petersburg” is as unjust as it is foolish, liable, as it is, to such an easy refutation. Surely the Editor of the London Magazine, who has allowed this remark to be published, must either have forgotten, or never knew, the fact that the late Commander-in-Chief of the expeditionary army now in Central Asia was an “Armenian”; that General Tergukasoff, one of the heroes of the late war in Asiatic Turkey, and who has just replaced the defunct Lazareff, is an “Armenian”; that General Loris-Melikoff, just created a “count” for valiant service in Kars and elsewhere, is another “Armenian,” without one drop of European blood in any of them; that the army, as well as the Civil Service in the Caucasus, have been from the first days of Russia’s sway over the country full of Armenian, Georgian, and even Mussulman colonels, generals, commanders, and other high Government officials; that the greatest Caucasian heroes were nearly all either Armenians, Georgians, or Tatars, such as the Prince Bebutoff (who acted during the Crimean War as Viceroy in the Caucasus), the several Melikoffs, the Tarhanoffs, the Orbeliani, the Bagrations, the Chan Adil’-Guirey, and so many others, that finally, in the “Mohammedan regiments,” out of which the

splendid body of men known as the “Czar’s Mussulman Bodyguard” is chosen, from the lowest soldier up to the highest General, they are all Mohammedans. Doubtless the recent suffix of the “off” in Tergukasoffs and some other Armenian names led the *Economist* into such an unconscious blunder. In view of the present development it will not be without a certain interest to your readers to learn, as something worthy of note, that among the “Guy Fawkes” band of Nihilists and their sentenced criminals, we have not hitherto met

with a single Armenian, Georgian, or Mussulman name. The “Asiastics” have, in fact, proved the most loyal among the subjects of the Czar.*

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

* [Some information concerning the various individuals referred to by H.P.B. may be of interest to the reader.

Lieutenant-General Arzas Artelyevich Tergukasoff (1819-81) was in 1859 Commander of the Apsheron Infantry Regiment; he took part in the storming of Gunib; in 1868, he administered the Province of Tersk; in 1869, he commanded the 38th Infantry Division. At the start of the Turkish war, he was appointed Commander of the Erivan’ contingent; in 1877, he occupied Bajaset and Alashkert, and in 1879 was appointed Commander of the 2nd Caucasian Corps.

The Bebutoffs were a Princely family descended from Ashhar-Bek, an Armenian who was *melik* or city-commandant of Tiflis in the reign of the Georgian King Teymuraz II. Prince Vassiliy Ossipovich Bebutoff (1791-1858) was General of Infantry, Member of the State Council and a well-known military and civil figure.

The Princes Tarhanoff-Muravyeff were an Armenian family descended from a certain Saakadze (meaning “son of Isaac”). The Shah of Persia granted George Saakadze a princely title and a hereditary *tarhanship*; the latter is a Mongolian word which means free from taxation, of noble birth, as well as, artist and man skilled in some trade. One of the members of this family was Ivan Romanovich Tarhanoff, a well-known Russian physiologist of the 19th century.

The Princes Orbeliani, or Djambakurian-Orbelian, were of a princely family which, according to tradition, came from China and settled in Georgia some 600 years B.C. They became hereditary commanders-in-chief of the Georgian armed forces, and placed the crown on the head of the Kings during coronation ceremonies. Prince George Dimitriyevich Orbeliani (1800-83) was a General-of-Infantry and member of the State Council.

The Princes Bagration were one of the oldest and most renowned families of Georgia, which produced through the centuries several of the Armenian and Georgian Kings. It originated from Athanasius Bagratid, whose son, Ashod Kuropalat (d. 826), was King of Georgia.

Adil’-Guirey ruled over the tribe of the Kumiks and became in 1718 a subject of Russia. When he had become Shamhal of Tarkov, he transferred his possessions to Russia. Later on, however, urged by the Turks to do so, he attacked Russia in 1725; he was annihilated by Kropotoff, and died in prison at Kola.

The Lazareff mentioned by H.P.B. is most likely Lieutenant-General Ivan Danilovich (1821-79), a descendant from the beks of Karabag; he was very active during the Turkish war of 1877-78.

Count Michael Tarielovich Loris-Melikoff (1826-88) was the son of an Armenian merchant; he was born at Tiflis, Caucasus, on Jan. 1st, 1826, and educated in St. Petersburg, first in the Lazareff School of Oriental Languages, and later in the Guard's Cadet Institute. After joining a Hussar regiment, he was sent in 1847 to the Caucasus, where he stayed for twenty years. From 1855 to 1876, he was Governor of the Terek district, endeavoring to educate the people, so as to make possible the transition from military to civil government. During the Turkish war of 1877-78, he commanded a separate army corps in Asia Minor. He took the fortresses of Ardahan and Kars, and laid siege to Erzerum. He was granted the title of Count for these services. In 1879 he was appointed temporary governor-general of the Lower Volga region, to combat an outbreak of the plague. He was later transferred to the provinces of Central Russia to combat the Nihilists and Anarchists, who had assassinated the governor of Kharkov. Loris-Melikoff advocated removing the causes of the growing popular discontent, and for this purpose recommended to Emperor Alexander II a large scheme of administrative and economic reforms. The Emperor appointed him minister of the interior with exceptional powers. The proposed scheme of reforms was, however, never carried out. On the very day, March 13, 1881, when the Emperor signed an ukaz creating the necessary commissions, he was assassinated, and his successor, Alexander III, adopted a reactionary policy. Loris-Melikoff resigned, and lived in retirement at Nice, France, where he died Dec. 22, 1888.—*Compiler.*]

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

LO! THE POOR MISSIONARY

267

LO! THE “POOR MISSIONARY”

BY MELMOTH, THE WANDERER.

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 5, February, 1880, pp. 112-113]

Decidedly the year A.D. 1880 begins as unpropitious and gloomy for that long-suffering, self-sacrificing class, known in Europe as Protestant Missionaries, but in India as padris—as was the now departed year 1879! The free-thinkers and infidels, like a swarm of wicked mosquitoes buzzing around, worry them worse than ever. Their Roman Catholic brothers played, and are still preparing to play, all manner of unholy tricks upon them, and though the abuse lavished upon the heads of these pious and meek Christians, was mutual—especially when brought under the public notice in the shape of pamphlets issued by the Bible Society—yet it was anything but edifying and offered some impediments to future conversions. For years they have drawn, we may say, no other converts in India but those who go more for ready cash or money’s worth, than holy grace; and they feel, do these good men of God, that for the average Christian to stand by and see these “heathen brands plucked from the burning,” flying from the Catholic sanctuary unto the tabernacle of the Protestant Lord, and *vice versa*, according to the fluctuations of the market, was as good as a game of shuttlecock and battledore.

And now the rumblings of 1880 are beginning to be heard. Amanda Smith, the mother pilgrim from the land of the Pilgrim Fathers, proved, outside the small community of the true believers—a failure. Even their best, and, as

268

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

I believe, their only undeteriorated specimen of native preacher, the hitherto indefatigable Parsee convert, begins to show unmistakable signs of weariness and the blackest melancholy. This illustrious Zoroastrian, who used, with the punctuality of a timepiece and—as if in derision of his former god—just before sunset, to daily squeeze himself among the bas-reliefs of the Dhobi Talav fountain, was missed at his usual place for several afternoons. The spot from which he lifted up his voice—as one conscious of crying in the wilderness—was actually deserted for several days! Wicked tongues report him becoming hoarse; he looks ill, they say, hence, perhaps his slackening zeal. And yet, if he loses it altogether—the voice, I mean, not his zeal—perchance his always scant now absent audiences may return all the sooner. Indeed he has more chances, the ex-pious son of Zoroaster, of attracting the multitude by placing himself to be stared at and even listened to as a speechless caryatid, in all the motionless solemnity of a stone

idol than ever before, when after narrating the touching story of his miraculous conversion, he drew a flood of briny tears from his black eyes and let it trickle down the steps prepared for the sweet rippling waters of the ever-dry fountain. True, his fine baritone was never calculated to enhance the charm of the Methodist hymn and like a new Orpheus charm Heathen man and beast. His was not the voice to make the water-buffalo to desist from grazing, or the buggy-wallah cease plying the persuasive stick. It was evidently a neglected organ and the padris might do worse than insist upon his taking a few lessons in singing—were it but from the ebony-browed nightingale newly landed from America—before further compromising their cause by allowing him to sing the average heathen to the verge of suicide.

No less inimical than the unregenerate infidels, the Roman Catholic rivals, and the unmusical convert, becomes public opinion as regards the padris. The tide recedes, and the milk of kindness hitherto so freely drawn by them from the full udder of the nursing mother church of the “innocents at home,” is evidently curdling and turning sour. Traditions are current of well-meaning, God-fearing Christians

who, with their minds full of heart-rending tales about the hardships and privations of the “poor missionary” in the land of the gentiles, and their pockets swelling with religious tracts forced upon them on board the P. and O. were suddenly brought to a cruel disenchantment. Their first, and as yet tottering steps upon treading the shores of the land of the sacred cow and the starving bullock, were crossed by “poor” missionaries driving in fashionable dogcarts, or reclining in elegant victorias with a red-garbed and skeleton-legged heathen *sais* or two hanging on behind, like two large clots of blood. . . . Then came several violent raps upon the “poor missionary’s” knuckles from earnest correspondents, writing in respectable orthodox London papers, besides daily attacks published by a hundred freethinking, though not less respectable daily journals throughout Christendom as well as in Heathendom. So, for instance, there appeared some time ago a savage attack upon these inoffensive, and well-meaning men, which requires notice. They were asked to first turn their attention to other and more needy directions than the lands of the “heathen.” Speaking of the enormous sums annually spent on foreign missions, a writer, signing himself *Pilot*, in a letter addressed to the *Weekly Times* (London, Aug. 31st, 1879), is struck with “the anomaly which continually presents itself to the most casual observer. . . . While the Kaffir, the Heathen Chinese, the mild Hindu, the poor African, and the Australian aboriginal” come in, every one of them, for their due share of physical and religious attention, “there comes case upon case before public tribunals, showing the lamentable ignorance of the dregs of our own population” . . . We quote the rest of the letter:

In one recent instance, a girl of fourteen was questioned by the magistrate as to the *Bible*, a book which she declared she had never before heard mentioned. She was in an equal condition of ignorance as to the words God and Church, which conveyed no more meaning to this denizen of London than they

would to a Hottentot. A few days after, an almost exactly similar state of mental darkness was displayed before another Police court, and yet we are engaged in sending cargoes of tracts to the uttermost parts of the earth. This condition of things is nothing less than a public disgrace to us as a country.

Suppose we institute some system of home missions to remove the beam out of our own eye before we attempt to eradicate the mote of Buddhism, and other equally harmless forms of belief. With the passing of an Education Act some people fancy that such things as I have described are impossible; but it will be years before the seething mass of ignorance and vice underlying the whited sepulchre of our social system can be visibly affected by the efforts of the State. The metropolis is no startling exception in these matters, for the same unfortunate ignorance is prevalent in most large cities, and some parts of the black country and the brick-making districts are even worse than the towns. How long, then, shall we go on subscribing hundreds of thousands of pounds to disseminate a civilization which is wanted at home? *It is nothing less than a hypocritical farce to spend money on proselytizing cannibals, when we have brother and sister heathen at our very doors.* Charity should begin at home; but there evidently is not the same glory to be won rescuing an English waif in the purlieu of Ratcliff-highway as there is in converting a stray nigger in the wilds of Africa.

And now, as the last *coup de grâce* after this impertinence from home, comes in a stern rebuke in a highly respectable and strictly orthodox organ. This once it is neither an “infidel pigmy” like *The Theosophist* (the latest epithet bestowed upon it by a missionary organ, which, though famous for our great kindness, we must abstain from advertising) nor a second-class paper of London, which “goes for” the padris, but that great authoritative organ of India and, as we are told, true barometer of the Indian press, which—to use a French expression—“makes the rain and the sunshine,” and tunes the violins of all minor papers—*The Pioneer*, in short. The rebuke, though indirect, and aimed rather at the collective body of missions than at the Indian in particular, must be very hard to bear. We sympathise heartily with the padris; and were not *The Pioneer* such a Goliath of the journalistic Gath, perchance the Quixotic spirit of our suckling David, this “infidel pigmy,” might even be aroused in defence of the poor missionary. As it is, we are obliged to eat the leek and we advise our friendly and esteemed padristic contemporaries to do the same. But what a fuss to be sure, for an infidel Turkish *Mullah*, whom the kind padris, trying to save him from eternal damnation, had *bribed* into translating the *Bible*! And such an irreverent language too. I reproduce it with

the minute exactness of a sincere sympathiser. Let your readers judge, verifying our quotation by reference to *The Pioneer* for Jan. 5th, 1880. The italics in the quotation are mine:

The quarrel at Constantinople has been healed somehow or other, and England is spared the ridicule

that would have attached to her government if a regular rupture of diplomatic relations had been the consequence of the absurd incident of the *mullah*. As far as one can understand the case yet, Sir Henry Layard's interference in that matter was altogether unwarrantable. The people whom he might properly have interfered with, *would have been the troublesome fanatics who engaged the mullah, in the first instance, to help them in their Bible translation.*

Our relations with Turkey are far too delicate at present to be imperilled by the escapades of *foolish missionaries*. There is a time for all things, and this is not the time for letting ignorant enthusiasts bring the good faith of Great Britain into disrepute in the East, by pecking, in an absurd way, at the religious sentiment of Islam. Englishmen are not Mohammedans and they need not pretend to think Mohammedanism a nice religion; but it is an essential condition of success for Great Britain in the large political undertakings that she has in hand that she should conscientiously act up to the principles of perfect toleration she professes. It is repugnant to British sentiment to interfere with private liberty, and thus *missionaries wander where they will,—bringing about some hypothetical conversions and a good deal of disturbance.* None the less is it clear that missionary work ought to be under some intelligent regulation where its indiscretions are liable to compromise the peace of Europe. How Sir Henry Layard can have failed to see that the treatment of the Turkish *mullah* by the Turkish Government was a matter with which he had absolutely no concern, is as yet a mystery. But, at any rate, it is most important for Mohammedans all over the world to understand that the British Government is incapable of importing religious bigotry into its political action.

The pen drops from my hand in horror. . . . Decidedly Sir H. Layard is here but a transparent pretext, and *The Pioneer* editor has become a rank infidel!

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

272

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

FOOTNOTE TO “AN INDIAN AETHROBAT”

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I. No. 5, February, 1880, p. 120]

[The writer, Babu Krishna Indra Sandyal, speaking of the various *Siddhis*, says that “it is quite clear that the Siddhis *Anima* and *Mahima* pertain to the conditions of even the physical body as was manifest in *virat rupa darshana*” (*Gîtâ*, ch. XI). To this H.P.B. remarks as follows:]

Babu Krishna is wrong. It is impossible to so inflate the extremities of the human body with simple air as to cause it to float in air. A body floats in water because it displaces an equal bulk with its own of that denser element. If he will but figure to himself a vessel of any material as dense as human flesh and bone, filled ever so compactly with common air and left lying on the ground, he will see that his theory of aethrobacy is untenable; for, just as the vessel in question would lie on the ground where placed an indefinite time without showing the slightest tendency to rise, so would the ascetic’s body, though pumped full of air from crown to toes. No, there is another cause for this aethrobacy and it is the one described by F.T.S. ∴* as “altered polarity.” The system of inhalations and exhalations practiced in Yoga effect the polaric change by alterations produced, of both a physiological and psychological character.

* [This refers to a lengthy essay on “Yoga Vidya” which was published serially in the Oct., Nov., 1879, and Jan., 1880, issues of *The Theosophist*, Vol. I. The author of this series was never revealed, but the three dots following the initials might indicate a man of certain spiritual attainment.—*Compiler*.]

FOOTNOTES TO INDRA

273

The Babu is also mistaken in supposing that this body of flesh can be separated into atoms and made to fill the whole void of space, or compressed into one infinitesimal atomic point like a diamond-grain. Let him reflect but one instant upon the nature of bioplastic matter and he will see the fact as it is. It is the inner self which, by virtue of its ethereal nature and its relationship to the all-pervading “Anima Mundi” or World-Soul, is capable of exhibiting the properties of *Anima* and *Mahima*. Anything in Aryan literature seeming to convey a contrary idea may be at once taken as figurative language intended to be understood only by the *wise*. The sages who wrote these books were adepts in psychological science, and we must not take them to have been ignorant of its plainest laws.

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**
1880

FOOTNOTES TO “INDRA”

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 5, February, 1880, p. 121]

[Indra] Derived from the Sanskrit *Ind*, which probably meant “to see, to discover,” hence literally, “he who sees or discovers,” *scil.* the doings of the world.

[The writer describes the attributes of Indra and some of the deeds which were ascribed to him by his worshippers. To this H.P.B. remarks:]

The attentive reader of the Christian Bible is constantly impressed with its strong resemblance to the Aryan sacred writings, and since the Hebrews are a far younger nation than the Aryas, it is a fair inference that if their literature was not copied from, it was at least inspired by, the primitive sublime model. Compare the Vedic conception of Indra, for instance, as alike the protector of his worshippers and the destroyer of cities, with these passages from the *Psalms* of David.

[H.P.B. then quotes from *Ps.* xxxviii, xvii, xxix, xviii, lxviii, lxxviii, lxxxix, xcvi, and cxxxv, and closes by saying:]

Scores of similar passages might be quoted to show that for thunder-hurling, the martial tutelary deity of the Hebrews, JAH or JAHVE, who was adopted by the Christians as the chief personage of their Trinity and made the putative father of their second personage, Jesus, was almost if not quite a reminiscence of the Aryan Indra.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

A GREAT LIGHT UNDER A BUSHEL

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 5, February, 1880, pp. 125-129]

If, according to the ironical definition of a French writer, language were not given to man “that he might the better dissimulate his thought,” at some future day, in a catechism of sciences, we might hope to see the following answer under the heading of *Physiology*.

Ques.—What is Physiology?

Ans.—The art of denying all that its specialists have not yet come to know, and, of unconsciously disfiguring that which they do know.

The relevancy of this answer posterity will fully recognize and appreciate; especially when mesmerism, or animal magnetism, shall have become a recognized science, and generations of stubborn physicians shall have been publicly accused by history, of having sacrificed generations of their contemporary suffering millions to their ferocious conceit and obstinacy.

For those of our readers who may know but little of this most ancient science, practiced since prehistoric times in India, Egypt and Chaldaea; and, who have never heard that it was the basis of the wonderful “magic art” of the Phrygian Dactyls and of the initiated priests of Memphis, we will briefly sketch its history, and show what—as now

confessed by the greatest men of modern science—it is able to perform.

“ANIMAL MAGNETISM, called also mesmerism, [is] a force or fluid by means of which a peculiar influence may be exerted on the animal system,” says the *New American Cyclopaedia*. Since the destruction of the pagan temples and after an interval of several centuries, it was practiced and taught by Paracelsus, the great mystic and one of the sect of the “fire-philosophers.” Among these this force was known under the various names of “living fire,” the “Spirit of light,” etc.; the Pythagoreans called it the “Soul of the world” (*anima mundi*), and the Alchemists, “*magnes*,” and the “Celestial Virgin.” About the middle of the 18th century, Max Hell, Professor of Astronomy at Vienna, and a friend of Dr. F. Anthony Mesmer, advised him to try whether, like another Paracelsus and Kircher, he could not cure diseases with the magnet. Mesmer improved upon the idea and ended in performing the most miraculous cures—no more by mineral, but, as he claimed, by *animal magnetism*. In 1778 Mesmer went to Paris; caused in this city the greatest excitement, and from the first, firmly mastered public opinion. He

would not, however, give his secret to the government, but instead of that formed a class, and nearly 4,000 persons studied under his directions at various times; Lafayette, the Marquis de Puységur, and the famous Dr. Charles d'Eslon being his pupils. His methods were not those of the present day, but he treated his patients by placing magnets on various parts of their bodies, or by having them sit round a covered tub from the cover of which an iron rod went out to each person, the whole party thus being connected by touching hands. He also made passes with his hands over their bodies. While Mesmer, provoking in the body and limbs of the sick persons a cold prickling sensation, nervous twitchings, drowsiness, sleep, and procuring thereby an alleviation and often a total cure, did not go further than to cure nervous diseases, it was the Marquis de Puységur, his pupil, who discovered somnambulism—the most important result of animal magnetism. And it was Deleuze, the famous naturalist of the Jardin des Plantes, a

man greatly respected for his probity and as an author, who published in 1813 a *Critical History of Animal Magnetism*.* At this time, notwithstanding its evident success and benefit, mesmerism had nearly lost ground. In 1784, the French Government had ordered the Medical Faculty of Paris to make an enquiry into Mesmer's practices and theory, and report. A commission was appointed of such men as the American Philosopher Franklin, Lavoisier, Bailly, and others. But, as Mesmer refused to deliver his secret and make it public, the result was that having carefully investigated the mode of treatment, the report admitted that a great influence was wrought upon the subjects, but this influence was ascribed by them *chiefly to imagination!* The impression left thereby on the public mind was that Mesmer was a charlatan, and his pupils—dupes.

Notwithstanding the general prejudice, magnetism thrived and got known over the whole world. It had made an invasion upon the grounds of medical routine and fought its way step by step. It appealed from the stubborn hostility of the Academy and the old traditions of its members to the judgment of the multitude, promising to abide by the decree of the majority. "It was in vain that its friends were treated as charlatans by the medical faculty and the majority of the learned," writes Deleuze; "the man, who had witnessed mesmeric experiments among his friends, would believe despite all the authority which could be brought to bear upon him." At last, in 1825, owing to the efforts of Dr. P. F. Foissac, a young physician of note and an enthusiastic admirer of Mesmer, the Royal Academy of Medicine in Paris appointed another learned commission and had a serious investigation made. Would anyone believe it? Owing to numerous intrigues, the opinion of the learned investigators was withheld for over five years; and it was only in 1831, that the report was rendered, and then found to the great discomfiture of the old academical and mouldy

* [The work which is meant here is *Histoire critique du magnétisme animal*, by Jean Philippe François Deleuze (Paris: Mame, 1813. 2 Vols. 8vo.).—*Compiler*.]

brains to contain a *unanimous* decision to the following effect:

It was reported that—

(1) *Mesmerism* is a force capable of exercising a powerful influence on the human system; (2) that this influence does not depend upon *imagination*; (3) that it does not act with equal force on all persons, and upon some is entirely powerless; (4) that it produces somnambular sleep; (5) that in this sleep injury to the nerves of sensation does not cause the slightest sense of pain; (6) that the sleeper can hear no sound save the voice of the magnetizer; (7) that the sleeper's nerves of touch and smell carry no sensation to the brain, unless excited by the magnetizer; (8) that some sleepers can see with their eyes closed, *can foretell accurately*, even months in advance (as was amply proved) various events, and especially the time of the return of epileptic fits, their cure, and discover the diseases of persons with whom they are placed in magnetic connection; and that persons suffering with weakness, pains, epilepsy, and paralysis, were partially or entirely cured by magnetic treatment.

The report created the greatest sensation. Mesmerism extended all over the world. Students of the new science became more numerous than ever, the ablest writers kept track of its progress and high among all others as a mesmerizer and a writer stood Baron J. D. Du Potet.* About the year 1840, Baron Karl von Reichenbach, an eminent German chemist, and the discoverer of creosote, discovered a new force, fluid, or principle—which we regard rather as one of the correlations of the *Anima Mundi*—which he called *od* or *odyle*. This agent, according to his theory, “is not confined to the animal kingdom, but pervades the universe, is perceived in various ways by sensitives, has the

* Besides many modern and very able periodicals such as the *Chaîne Magnétique* conducted under the patronage of the venerable Baron Du Potet, Honorary Fellow of our Society, at Paris, and the *Revue Magnétique*, by Donato, among the best works upon magnetism are those of H. G. Atkinson, Dr. Elliotson, and Professor William Gregory, of Edinburgh.

greatest influence upon life and health, and like electricity and galvanism, has two opposite poles, and may be accumulated in, or conducted away from, animal bodies.”* Then came the discovery of Dr. Braid of Manchester, who found that he could produce sleep in patients by ordering them to look steadily at some small and brilliant object,

about a foot from their eyes and above their level. He called the process *hypnotism* and gave to his theory the graceful name of *neurypnology*, setting it down as a mesmeric antidote.

Such is, in brief, the history of this wonderful principle in nature; a principle, as little understood as were electricity and galvanism in days of old. And yet while the latter, as soon as demonstrated, were unanimously accepted and even greeted, the former, however great its claims for alleviating the pains of suffering humanity, however much demonstrated, is today as bitterly denied and decried as it was in the days of Mesmer. Shall we say why? Because, while electricity and galvanism in their practical application by, and meaning in, science are the gross manifestations of the universal Proteus, the great *Anima Mundi*—Magnetism, in its broadest and most mysterious sense, discovers beyond mere physical results horizons so mysterious and vast, that the matter of fact and sceptical scientists stagger and repulse its spiritual possibilities with all the might of their narrow-minded materialism. Once that they admit its existence and give it rights of citizenship, the whole of their schools will have to be remodelled. On the other hand, the clergy are as bitter against it, for its results, in their beneficent effects, upset every necessity for believing in divine “miracles,” or fearing the diabolical, and give the lie direct to their old slanders.

We will now show the progress of magnetism under its various modern names of mesmerism, magnetism, hypnotism, and other *isms*, among the men of science, and mesmerizers who explain it, each in his own way.

* [Reichenbach, *Researches on Magnetism*. See mainly the “Conclusions” at the end of the Seventh Treatise.—*Compiler*.]

MESMERISM AND HYPNOTISM IN FRANCE

As we propose to deal with that dangerous bugbear of physical science — mesmerism — we will have to examine these apples of discord freshly plucked by us in the garden of the scientists, with due caution and respect. We mean to cut off every possible retreat for the enemy, and will, therefore, strictly hold but to the personal experiments and explanations of some of the recognized leaders of medicine.

One such is Monsieur Naquet, deputy of Vaucluse, Professor of the Faculty of Medicine at Paris, and author of *Ancient and Modern Revelations*. * This gentleman, who is a hard-shelled materialist, to whom the mere idea of soul in man is as unwelcome as the smell of incense used to be to the traditional devil, is just now giving a series of scientific lectures in Paris, the main object of which seems to be to admit the phenomena of mesmerism (at last!) and—fight against the theory of the human soul having anything to do with them. Having successfully pulled out the props from under the ancient revelation, *i.e.*, the Bible—and demonstrated the absurdity of belief in the modern

Catholic “miracles” of Lourdes and Salette—against which position we will not protest—he tries his hand at Spiritualism and Mesmerism. Unfortunately for the able lecturer he seems to labour under the impression that the votaries of both *spirit* intercourse and Mesmer must necessarily believe in Supernaturalism—hence *miracles*. Of course, he makes a mess of it. We quote, translating portions of his lectures *verbatim*:

Hand in hand with these persons (the spiritualists) who bring forward such weak arguments, we find moving, nevertheless, a few others (mesmerizers) whose ideas deserve to be taken into consideration and discussed. These pretend [?] to produce at will in some human beings a peculiar kind of sleep, called the magnetic. They affirm their ability to communicate to certain subjects the faculty of seeing through opaque bodies, and they maintain that such facts remain inexplicable unless we admit the existence of a soul in man.

* *Révélation Antique et Révélation Moderne*.

To begin with: are the facts from which these men draw their conclusions at all certain?* Admitting that they are, cannot they be explained upon any other hypothesis than the existence of this Soul?

The facts under consideration are affirmed by enlightened and honourable men; thus, in this case, they do not offer *that startling character of imbecility and imposture which constitutes the fundamental feature of Spiritualism*.† Therefore, I will not immediately pronounce upon the unreality of all they tell us of magnetism; but, at the same time I propose to show that these facts, however real, do not in the least prove any necessity for the intervention of a soul to account for them.

Magnetic sleep can be explained quite naturally. The phenomena of electric attraction daily produced before our very eyes, and which no one ever attempted to attribute to a supernatural cause, are at least as extraordinary as the mesmeric influence of one man upon another man. For the last several years, sleep, followed by complete insensibility and identical in all points with the magnetic sleep, is produced by purely mechanical means. To obtain it, one has but to approach a light to the patient’s nose. The fixing of his eyes upon the luminous point produces a cerebral fatigue which results in sleep. At this day, it is no longer to be doubted that magnetism belongs to a phenomenon of the same kind, light being replaced by other agents and expedients which bring on the same cerebral fatigue, and finally sleep.

Lucidity seems more doubtful than simple magnetic sleep, and it becomes still more difficult to give it credence. Admitting it to be demonstrated, however, we could again explain it without meddling with the *Spirit*.

We will know that light and heat are but vibratory motions; that light and heat differ but in the length of their undulations; that these undulations which are perceptible to our eye, are of various lengths, producing in us the sensation of various colours; that moreover among the undulatory motions, which we recognize as heat, there are waves of different lengths; that there exists, in short, such a thing as a real calorific *spectrum*. On the other hand, as, beyond the red ray, there are motions which remain unperceivable by the eye, but which become sensible to the touch as heat, so there are others beyond the violet ray, which develop in us neither impressions of heat nor those of

*At the time of this lecture the eminent physician believed but little in the mesmeric phenomena. Since then, having repeatedly witnessed experiments of animal magnetism by Professor Charcot, he doubts no longer; nay—he believes, and yet, while finding it impossible to doubt, he tries to explain the whole upon his own materialistic hypothesis.—Ed., *Theos*.

† More than one spiritualist might return the compliment to materialism and with usury.—Ed., *Theos*.

luminosity, but which we can make manifest by the chemical influence which they exercise upon certain substances. Finally, experiment shows to us that there are bodies permeable to heat, yet perfectly impermeable to light, and *vice versa*.

Thus, we can admit the production of vibrations or waves of various lengths and infinitely variable. But of all such possible motions there is but a certain number only, within very restricted limits, that are perceived by us as light, heat, or chemical rays. All greater and smaller motions escape our senses, as would the luminous motions, had we no organ of sight. They escape us simply because we have no organs fit to perceive them.

Let us now suppose that, owing to a nervous sur-excitement, our organs may become impressionable to the extra-calorific or extra-luminous rays. THE FACTS OF MAGNETIC LUCIDITY WOULD BE PERFECTLY EXPLAINED.

We thank modern Science for teaching us such truths and explaining such a profoundly involved problem. But we can hardly refrain from reminding the erudite lecturer that he but repeats that which was explained by nearly every ancient philosopher and repeated by many a modern writer, who has treated upon clairvoyance.

The Neo-Platonists explained clairvoyance on the same principle; Baptiste van Helmont in his *Opera Omnia*, A.D. 1652 (p. 720), treats this second sight in the realm of the occult universe most elaborately. The Hindu Yogi reaches clairvoyance by purely physiological processes, which does not prevent him from often discerning things *real*, not *imaginary*.

“Light, heat, and chemical rays,” our wise lecturer goes on to say, “are propagated by means of vibrations, and according to the same law; thus, must it be for the rays which remain imperceptible to our senses. Let only our eyes become fit for perceiving them, and the ‘double sight’ has nothing in it to surprise us. . . . *The day when these facts (of mesmerism) shall be sufficiently proved, our hypothesis will become more acceptable than that of the soul. It will allow of every explanation, without trespassing beyond the laws which govern the universe.*”

We make haste to deny and emphatically protest against the imputation of believing in the supernatural. The hypothesis of Monsieur Naquet, the physiologist, if ever

accepted, beyond the small minority of his colleagues, will never prove “acceptable.” As to accusing, as he does, the vast body of Spiritualists, Spiritists, and Mesmerists of trespassing in their explanation *beyond the laws which govern the universe*, it is as false as it is ridiculous. Once more it shows how apt are our opponents, and especially physiologists, to disfigure facts whenever these clash with their ideas. Their arguments

were unique. If, said they, artificial sleep can be produced by purely *mechanical* means (hypnotism), what use is there in calling *spirit* and *soul* to our help to explain this phenomenon? No use whatever, indeed. But neither did we ever pretend to explain this preliminary stage to clairvoyance-sleep whether natural, hypnotic, or mesmeric, by any soul or spirit theory. This imputation lies only in the case of uneducated Spiritualists, who attribute all such phenomena to “disembodied spirits.” But can they themselves—these high priests of intellect—the agency of the spiritual *ego* being put aside—any more rationally explain the phenomenon of somnambulism, clairvoyance (which some of them as we see are forced to admit) or even sleep and simple dreams, than we, not “scientifically trained” mortals? Even ordinary sleep with its infinite modifications is as good as unknown to physiology. Admitting even that the *will of man* is not the direct cause of magnetic effects, it yet, as Monsieur Donato, the celebrated magnetizer of Paris, remarks, “plays upon and guides many a mysterious force in nature, the mere existence of which is totally unknown to science.”

DR. CHARCOT OF PARIS

(*The Illustrious Discoverer of the “Hysterical Cock”*)

Meanwhile science fishes in the same water with the mesmerizers and for the same fish—only inventing for it, when caught, a new, and as it thinks, a more scientific name. The above accusation is easily demonstrated. As a proof, we may cite the case of Dr. Charcot. It is the same great Parisian professor who, having proved to his own satisfaction that no mesmeric effects can be obtained with

a subject unless this subject be naturally hysterical, mesmerized a rooster and thus became the original discoverer of the “Hysterical Cock.”* Professor Charcot is an authority upon all manner of nervous diseases, a high rival of Broca, Vulpian, Luys, etc., and besides being the celebrated physician of the hospitals of Paris, is a member of the Academy of Medicine. Like the less scientific but equally famous Dr. W. A. Hammond, of New York, he believes in the efficacy of the metallic discs of Dr. Bürck for curing more than one incurable disease, but unlike that neurologist, does not attribute any of either the cures or other phenomena to imagination; for catalepsy can be practiced upon animals, according to his own experiments. He also gives credit in his own way to the genuineness of somnambulism and the freaks of catalepsy, attributing to the latter all mediumistic phenomena. On the authority of a correspondent of Mr. Ragazzi, the Editor of the *Journal du Magnétisme* of Geneva, he proceeds in the following fashion:

Dr. Charcot first introduces to his audience at the hospital of *La Salpêtrière* (Paris) a sick girl in a state of perfect insensibility. Pins and needles are stuck in her head and body without the least effect. An application of a collar of zinc discs for five minutes returns life into the regions of the throat. Then the two poles of a horseshoe magnet are

applied to her left arm and that spot exhibits sensibility, while the rest of the body remains in its previous state. The same magnet, placed in contact with the leg, instead of bringing the limb back to life, produces a violent contraction of the foot, drawing the toes to the heel; it ceases but upon an application of electricity.

“These experiments of *metallotherapia* and mineral magnetism remind one of the gropings of Mesmer in 1774, and of his applications of magnetized pieces in the case of nervous diseases,” says Mr. Pony, the medical student, in his letter to the *Journal du Magnétisme*, and an eye-witness.

Another subject is brought. She is hysterical like the first

* See *Revue Magnétique* for February, 1879, edited by Donato at Paris.

one, and appears in a state of complete anaesthesia. A strong ray of electric light is directed on her, and the patient is instantaneously cataleptized. She is made to assume the most unnatural positions; and, according to the attitude *commanded*, have her countenance “by suggestion,” says Dr. Charcot, “express that which her gestures imply. Thus her hands, crossed on her bosom, are followed by an expression of ecstasy on her face; her arms, stretched forward, produce in her features an air of supplication. . . .”

If, while the *subject* is in this state, the luminous ray is abruptly withdrawn, the patient collapses and falls again into *somnambulism*—a word which shocks Professor Charcot beyond description. At the command of the physician, and while he proves her utter insensibility by sticking pins in every portion of her body, the patient is made to obey the doctor at every word of command. He forces her to rise, to walk, to write, etc.

In a letter from Mr. Aksakoff, which is published further on, it will be seen that Donato, the professional magnetizer produces by *will power* all that is produced by the sceptical *savant* by electricity and *mechanical* means. Does the latter experiment prove that mesmerism is but a name? Can we not, rather, see in both a mutual corroboration; a proof, moreover, of the presence in man’s system of all those subtle powers of nature, the grosser manifestations of which are only known to us as electricity and magnetism, and the finer escaping entirely the scrutiny of physical science?

But one of the most curious features of the phenomenon, brought on by Dr. Charcot’s experiments, is to be found in the effect produced on his patients by vibrations like those felt on a railway train. Upon perceiving it, the illustrious professor had a huge diapason, 40 centimeters high, placed upon a large chest. As soon as this instrument is made to vibrate, the patients at once fall into catalepsy; and whenever the vibrations are abruptly stopped, the patients sink into complete somnambulism.

It would seem, then, that Dr. Charcot, in order to produce the above described effects, uses but two agents—*sound* and *light*. Thus, this assurance may become of an

immense importance to all the Aryan students of Theosophy, especially to those who study the Sanskrit, and who, thanks to Swami Dayanand, are now enabled to learn the real and spiritual meaning of certain disputed words. Those of our Fellows who have mastered the occult significance of the words *Vach* and *Hiranyagarbha** in their application to “sound” and “light” will have in the above an additional proof of the great wisdom of their forefathers, and the profound and spiritual knowledge contained in the *Vedas*, and even in other sacred Brahmanical books, when properly interpreted.

In considering the phenomena produced by Dr. Charcot, the cold materialist and man of science, it is highly interesting to read a letter on his own personal experiences in magnetism, with the famous magnetizer, Mr. Donato, of Paris, by Alexandre Aksakoff, F.T.S., Russian Imperial Councillor, which was recently addressed by him to a French journal. The results obtained are all the more worthy of notice from the fact that Mr. Donato had not previously attempted the so-called “transmission of thought” from one person to another by the mere will of the magnetizer and

* Translated by Professor Max Müller as “gold,” whereas it really means “divine light,” in the exact sense understood by the mediaeval alchemists. In his Sanskrit work, *Sâhitya Grantha*, the learned

philologist, on the ground that the word “gold”, हिरण्य Hiranya. is found in the Mantra *Agnihî Poorvebhihi*, takes the opportunity of going against the antiquity of the *Vedas*, and to prove that they are not as old as commonly thought, since the exploration of gold-mines is of comparatively modern date. In his turn, Swami Dayanand Saraswati shows in his *Rig-vedâdi-Bhâshya Bhûmika*, Book IV. p. 76, that the Professor is entirely wrong. The word *Hiranya* does not mean “gold” but the golden light of divine knowledge, the first principle in whose womb is contained the light of the eternal truth which illuminates the liberated soul when it has reached its highest abode. It is, in short, the “Philosopher’s Stone” of the alchemist, and the Eternal Light of the Fire Philosopher.—*Ed., Theos.*

[*Agnihî pûrvebhih* are the first two words from the second verse of the Hymn to Agni, *Rigveda*, I, 1. In pronouncing, h carries over vowel preceding it. The Sanskrit work referred to is the Hindi Introduction to Swâmi Dayânanda’s *Rigveda-bhâshya*. —Compiler.]

felt and expressed considerable doubt as to the success of his efforts in that direction.

Two French papers, the *Rappel* and the *Voltaire*, have borne flattering testimony to the character and attainments of Mr. Donato, and he is generally known as one of those men who have dared to quit the ruts traced by habit and tradition, and investigate, to quote his own words, “the occult motor which animates us, the mysterious forces which create life, the bonds that unite us to one another, our mutual affinities, and our connection with the supreme power, the eternal lever of the world.”

So much for Mr. Donato. As to Aksakoff, he is a highly intelligent and truthful

gentleman; reputed to be, in his earnest researches in the domain of magnetism and psychology not only a cautious investigator, but rather of a too distrustful nature. We here give the *verbatim* translation of his article published by him in *La Revue Magnétique*, of February, 1879.

MONSIEUR DONATO AND Mlle. LUCILE: EXPERIENCES IN
"THOUGHT TRANSMISSION."

Having had the pleasure of making, at Paris, the acquaintance of Mr. Donato and of his amiable and excellent pupil, I did not wish to lose the opportunity of attempting an experiment, under my own direction, to ascertain the possibility of transmitting thought from one human being to another by the vehicle of the will alone. It is known that one of the most ordinary aphorisms of modern psychology is: "Psychological activity cannot go beyond the periphery of the nerves." If then it can be proved that human thought is not limited to the domain of the body, but that it can act at a distance upon another human body, transmit itself to another brain without visible and recognised communication, and be reproduced by word, movement, or any other means, we obtain an immense fact before which material physiology should bow down, and which should be seized by psychology and philosophy to give a new support and a new development to their metaphysical speculations. This fact has in many ways and under many forms been proved by animal magnetism; but in the experiments which I planned, I wished to see it presented in a form at once convincing and easy to reproduce by any person acquainted with magnetism.

When I asked Mr. Donato if he would accord me a private interview for certain experiments which I had in view, he consented willingly

A GREAT LIGHT UNDER A BUSHEL

287

and promised to hold himself at my service for the day and hour I should indicate. So, having announced myself by a telegram, I went to his house on the 17th of November at two o'clock, and after a few minutes' conversation, we began our work.

First experiment.—I begged Mr. Donato to commence by putting to sleep his subject, Mlle. Lucile, and he at once placed an armchair between the two windows of the room and a few paces from the wall; in it Mlle. Lucile seated herself, and slept (magnetically) in a few moments. We took our places at the other end of the room, opposite the sleeper, and I then drew from my pocket a card-case from which I took a card and handed it to Mr. Donato, begging him, simply by looking at Mlle. Lucile, to induce her to make the movement indicated on the card. On it was written "Extend the left arm." Mr. Donato rose, remained motionless near me, and looked at Mlle. Lucile; after an instant her left arm began to move, slowly extended itself, and remained in that position until Mr. Donato replaced it by her side.

Second experiment.—I passed to Mr. Donato a white handkerchief which I had brought with me, and begged him to cover with it the face and head of Mlle. Lucile. This being done, and the edges of the handkerchief falling on her shoulders, we took our places again, and in silence I gave to Mr. Donato a second card on which was written, "Raise the right arm vertically." Mr. Donato fixed his eyes on the motionless body of Mlle. Lucile and soon her right arm, obedient to the thought which directed it, executed the movement indicated—slowly, gently, stopping always when Mr. Donato turned his head to look at me. I felicitated him on his success and begged him that all danger of overfatigue might be avoided, to remove the handkerchief and awake Mlle. Lucile.

Third experiment.—After ten minutes of conversation, Mlle. Lucile is again asleep, and her head covered by the handkerchief; we resume our places, and I pass to Mr. Donato a third card bearing the

words, "Put both hands upon your head," and I asked Mr. Donato to stand this time behind Mlle. Lucile. He expresses some doubt as to the possibility of success in this position, but makes the attempt and fails; a fact which did not surprise me, as the polaric connection between the operator and his subject was reversed. At this moment I approached Mr. Donato and a remarkable phenomenon was produced. As I wished to ask the magnetizer to concentrate his will on the occiput of the sleeper, my hand made an involuntary movement towards her back to indicate the place named, and while it was still some inches distant, Mlle. Lucile moved suddenly forward. Thus I obtained in an unexpected and conclusive manner the confirmation of the phenomenon of polarity, or of attraction and repulsion, which I had already observed at the public representations, and which proves very clearly that the sleep of Mlle. Lucile was neither natural nor feigned. "If you will allow me to use my hands," said Mr. Donato, "I am sure to succeed."



TEOTIHUACÁN, MEXICO—PYRAMID OF THE SUN
(From Eugen Kusch, *Mexiko im Bild*, 1967. Courtesy
Hans Carl, Publisher, Nürnberg, Germany.)



PALENQUE, CHIAPAS, MEXICO—TEMPLE OF INSCRIPTIONS
(From Eugen Kusch, *Mexiko im Bild*, 1967. Courtesy

“Use them,” I said, and, still behind Mlle. Lucile, he made a few passes from the shoulders to the elbows, when the hands of the subject rising slowly placed themselves upon her head.

Fourth experiment.—Mlle. Lucile still remaining asleep with her head under the handkerchief, I give to Mr. Donato a card on which was written, “Join the hands as if praying,” and I place myself on a sofa to the left of Mlle. Lucile, the better to observe the movements of Mr. Donato. He remains motionless at five or six paces from her and looks at her fixedly; her hands take the desired position and retain it until Mr. Donato removes the handkerchief and awakes her.

Fifth experiment.—After ten minutes’ rest, Mlle. Lucile goes back to the arm-chair and is again put to sleep. The fifth card orders her to make a knot with the handkerchief, and Mr. Donato, placing himself behind Mlle. Lucile, extends his hand over her head without touching her. She rises and he directs her by his thought towards the table on which the handkerchief has, unknown to her, been placed. Obeying the attraction of the hand, she reaches the table, Mr. Donato still keeping the same position behind her, and I standing near him. With growing interest we watch her movements, and see her hand seize the handkerchief, draw out one of its ends, and tie a knot. Mr. Donato himself was astonished, for this time it was no longer a simple exercise of will, but a thought transmitted and executed!

Sixth and last experiment.—It was almost useless to continue, but as Mr. Donato insisted, I handed him another card with the following inscription, “Touch your left ear with your right hand.” Mlle. Lucile still asleep was already back in her arm-chair; Mr. Donato stood in front of her, and I occupied my former place on the sofa. Motionless and silent, the magnetizer looked at his subject, whose right arm soon executed the order given, by three successive movements, the hand approaching the breast, and then the ear, which it finally touched.

These experiments were for me perfectly conclusive; Mlle. Lucile executed the movements desired without the least hesitation. The thoughts that Mr. Donato was to transmit to her were indicated to him by me only by cards prepared in advance, and in most cases he acted on her from a distance which rendered any conventional sign or signal difficult, even if her face had not been covered with a handkerchief, which I had ascertained was thick enough to hide from her any slight sign given by the hands or face of Mr. Donato; besides which it would have required a very complicated system of minute telegraphy to indicate the movements required.

I asked Mr. Donato if he had ever attempted to produce anything of the kind in public, and he answered that these experiments exacted very harmonious conditions, difficult to obtain in large assemblies, and that he did not like to risk a failure. I think if Mr. Donato would exercise his pupil oftener in this direction, he would finish by producing a series of public phenomena of this kind with the same ease

with which he produces the others. It would be well worth the trouble, for none can deny that these experiments illustrate especially the phenomena of lucidity and clairvoyance, and present them in their simplest and clearest form.

As I left Paris the day after our interview, I could only express my satisfaction to Mr. Donato by a little note which was printed in No. 16 of *La Revue*. It is with great pleasure that I now fulfil my promise to publish all the details of our experiments, and I profit by this opportunity to signify publicly to Mr. Donato

my high appreciation of the zeal, knowledge, and loyalty with which he devotes himself to the defence and promulgation of the most interesting science of human magnetism.

ALEXANDER AKSAKOFF.*

15th January, 1879.

St. Petersburg, Nevsky Prospect, No. 6.

*Russian translator of the *Magnétisme et magnétothérapie* of the Count Franz von Szapary, St. Petersburg, 1860; editor of the German Review, *Psychische Studien*.

[Vide the Bio-Bibliographical Index of Vol. I, for comprehensive data concerning Alexander Nikolayevich Aksakoff.—*Compiled*.]

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

290

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

EDITOR'S NOTE TO "A MUSSULMAN ABDAL (YOGI)"

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 5, February, 1880, p. 131]

[The contributor, Syed Mahmood, having referred to a narrative in Ch. iii of the *Bûstân** concerning a Dervish who crossed a river on a small carpet which he spread on the water, asks: "Why do the opponents not believe that *abdals* can go into water and fire?"]

This anecdote, kindly furnished by the accomplished Mr. Mahmood, has a real interest and value; in that it reminds the student of psychological science that a certain range of psycho-physiological powers may be developed, irrespective of creed or race, by whoever will undergo a certain system of training, or, as Mr. Mahmood expresses it in his note to his translation, who lead holy lives and so overcome the ordinary, that is, the more familiar, laws of matter. Mohammedan literature teems with authentic accounts of psychical phenomena performed by devotees and ascetics of that faith, and it is to be hoped that a portion, at least, may find their way into these columns through the friendly aid of Persian and Arabic scholars.

* [The *Bûstân* or "Fruit Garden" is a poem of Sa'di (1184-1291), the greatest didactic poet and the most popular writer of Persia, and was dedicated to the reigning atâbeg Abû Bekr.—*Compiler*.]

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

291

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 5, February, 1880, pp. 107-108]

A respectable Anglo-Indian journal, reviewing our January number, hinted that the feast of good things spread for our readers would not be quite complete until contributions from Parsi and Mussulman writers were secured. The present number, at least, must satisfy our critic, since it will be found to contain articles of merit from able representatives of those two faiths. Did any magazine ever before exhibit a more perfect and fraternal "Evangelical Alliance" than this?

The work we have to do in India might be so much impeded by foolish misconceptions that we heartily welcome any additional evidence showing that the public authorities are now alive to the true character of our undertaking. It has already been announced in these columns that the Political Department of the Government of India, from which the order to place our party under Police surveillance first originated, some time ago rescinded that order and announced that the Theosophists were no longer to be molested. This was all the *amende honorable* that could be made in a matter which pertained to the confidential branch of the service and had never found a place in the *Gazette*. It is pleasant to feel that the groundless, and in view of our antecedents absurd, notion that some political designs lay hidden under our intimacy with the natives and our desire to give a new impulse to the study of Oriental philosophy, has already been dissipated by the progress of time. Our friends will be additionally glad to hear that without the necessity for the slightest sacrifice of self-respect on our part, the last shade of misunderstanding on the part of Government has been cleared away. Those who know us at

292

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

all need not be told that there is no association in the world which builds its hope of success on Government favour, less than the Theosophical Society. Our business is with truth and philosophy, not with politics or administration. But the conditions of life in India are such that the modicum of Government favour which consists of freedom from the blighting effects of active disfavor, is essential to the success of even a purely intellectual movement. It is satisfactory to realize that we now receive—as we are

certainly entitled to receive—that much support from the rulers of this country to whose spiritual interests we have devoted our lives. And now that this support has been liberally granted, we cannot be misunderstood if we add that there is no organization in this land on which the British Government in India could look kindly with better reason than our own. As an independent link between two races which the Government expresses a wish to see united in closer intimacy, as a society which is sternly intolerant of seditious efforts of any kind among its members — we have already done better service to the cause of public order in this country, than its rulers are aware of having received at our hands. But so the fact stands, and thus it is that we receive, with the full satisfaction attending a conviction that we deserve it, the kindly though cautious greeting conveyed in the following letter from the Personal Assistant of the Viceroy, in acknowledgement of the receipt of the first three numbers of *The Theosophist*, forwarded by the conductor of this journal for his Excellency's perusal:

CALCUTTA, *1st January*, 1880.

DEAR MADAM,

I submitted to His Excellency the Viceroy the letter which you addressed to me and the numbers of *The Theosophist* which you were good enough to send.

His Excellency desires me to say that he is glad to find a Society of Western origin devoting itself with such zeal to the pursuit of Indian philosophy.

Yours truly,

TO MME. BLAVATSKY.

(Sd.) G. H. M. BATTEN.

LETTER FROM INDIA

293

Our party should feel deeply grateful to the London *Spiritualist* for the suggestion that Theosophy may be regarded as a “subordinate branch of Spiritualism”; meaning thereby not the general antithesis of materialism, but the Western phenomenalistic movement of our days. This is extremely liberal; about as much so as for a Manchester man to concede that the British Empire is an auxiliary branch of the county of Lancashire. When it can be shown that a part of anything can contain its whole, that the tail can wag the dog, or that the ocean can be put into a gallon measure, then it will be time to seriously debate the novel proposition put forth by the respectable metropolitan organ of the Spiritualists. Especially as it is by no means clear that it is not personal rather than public opinion which the paragraph in question reflects.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

LETTER FROM INDIA

[*Russkiy Vestnik* (Russian Messenger), Vol. 147, May, 1880, pp. 447-55]

(Translated from the original Russian text)

POONA, 18 February, 1880.

Some twenty years ago, as a warning, there was exhibited in triumphant procession all over India, Nâna-Sâhib, locked in an iron cage, delivered for that purpose by his cousin, the Mahârâja of Gwalior. Very proud of this acquisition they showed him almost continuously for all of six weeks, and they only stopped doing so when inquiries proved that the captive was not the bloodthirsty avenger, but merely a pseudo Nâna-Sâhib, some unfortunate shepherd. What they did with this miserable man remains unknown. It is said that in order to clear their conscience, they killed him so that he could not talk. How the

294

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

Mahârâja extricated himself from this predicament and what sort of an explanation he gave for this clever hoax is hidden to this day in obscurity. It is said, however, that he justified himself by stating he had never seen the captive himself, but relying on the word of his subordinates, sent the captive straight to the English.

At present, there is in Madras a new exhibit of a rebel but not a live one. The curious populace can see, pickled in alcohol, the head of Chendry—the famous rebel leader of Rumla.

For over a year, without any material resources, and with a handful of men armed with obsolete weapons, this Chendry successfully fought the armed forces of one of the most powerful nations of the globe. He entered a very dangerous arena, declaring in advance that if necessary he was determined to sacrifice his own life and that of his family, and he kept his word. The Daily *Co tka-Bazaar-Patrika*, representing the native opposition party in Calcutta and all the malcontents of India, declares Chendry a hero, placing him incomparably higher than Phadke, another leader of the rebels, recently exiled from Poona. “While the latter,” says the paper, “never rose in the estimation of the government higher than the chieftain of the *Dakoits*, Chendry, from the beginning of his career was promoted by the government to the high rank of a rebel.”

The beginning of the mutiny at Rumla was caused by the inhuman treatment accorded its inhabitants by the police. The law of Abkari,* which did not apply in their district and to which they were not subject, suddenly, and without warning, was

enforced, as a result of an arbitrary step taken by the police. From time immemorial, the inhabitants of Rumla drank their *toddy* without paying a tax for the coconut palms on their own land. The police demanded the payment of a tax on every bush and tree and not only did they beat all those who opposed them, but they also brutally raped the wives and daughters while helping

* An old law dug up by Sir John Strachey and by him put into effect as an excuse for new taxes on the *toddy*—a coconut drink.

the tax collectors. The Rumla people killed a police official. They were declared rebels and an armed force was sent to suppress them. At this time, Chendry, known for his prowess, who was hiding in the mountains of Narasapatnam, rushed to the rescue of his countrymen in Rumla, and was unanimously chosen as their leader.

Chendry's first move was to go to the hills of Vizagapatam, where he burned several police stations, beat several policemen and having confiscated their uniforms, ammunition and fire-arms, disguised his men in the uniforms of the unfortunate Sepoys he had killed. A large contingent of police, sent to capture him and his band, was dispersed by the people of Rumla, as it was impossible to distinguish them from the Sepoys, because they were wearing identical uniforms. Following this, Chendry fought a hand to hand encounter with Captain Bland until the latter turned tail and fled. Mr. Millett, chief inspector of the district of Godâvarî, then came to avenge the captain, but Chendry not only gave his detachment a thorough trouncing, but chased the fugitives for seven miles after which he besieged them for three days at Chodavaram. The detachment was saved only by the timely arrival of the garrison of Godâvarî. It is remarkable that, not only did Chendry refrain from attacking anyone else, but he also protected those natives and Englishmen who did not belong to the police. All his energy and mad vengeance appeared to be directed exclusively against the police and those who had dealings with them. He hacked police Sepoys and agents to pieces, with calculated cruelty. Having caught his victim, he took him to a nearby Pagoda and once there, forced him to circle three times around the idol and then, with one stroke of a sharp sword, beheaded him. Fanatically believing in his idols, he thought that there could be no more pleasant gift to the gods than the heads and the blood of police inspectors and Sepoys. Until recently, the mere name of Chendry made the latter tremble and turn pale.

Finally his daring rose to such a point that he sent an offer direct to the government, as if from one warring faction to another. He asked the English to release his mother, wife

and brother from prison and to recognize him as the leader and commander of the Rumla people. In which case, he would promise not to disturb them further and to grant life even to the hated police. In the last year Chendry had exasperated the English regime to distraction.

And now that Chendry's head has fallen from his shoulders, the Rumla people are not discouraged; an hour after his death they chose another leader who likewise will stop at nothing and who is ready for the most fanatical exploits. On the day that Chendry's head was sent to Madras, four hundred rebels attacked a strong police garrison, but this is not all. The government expects a sequel to the mutiny at Rumla in the district of Mysore, where there has appeared a band of from 400 to 500 Dakoits. Again the leader of the band is "a young and daring Brâhmana"—after the type of Phadke—but more clever and courageous than the latter, to judge from the remarks of *Co t kx* and of other papers, which are advising the authorities who don't know what to do with the head of Chendry, to send it to the "Brâhmana"—for timely cogitation.

"The head of Chendry"—remarks the same paper, making fun of the government—"very evidently contained very little arithmetical capacity. The computations that went on therein were so poor that it didn't take pains to figure out what awaited it in this fruitless struggle with the government. But if the head did not possess the gift of arithmetical deductions, it was however, replete with logic—that special kind of logic which alone can bring to reason a stubborn government. The logic of Chendry must convince the government, sooner or later, of the fact which its well-wishers have tried to make it see for such a long time, namely, that there is a straw which will break the back of even the most patient and long-suffering camel. The logic of Chendry opened the eyes of the government and proved that there are limits alike to the constantly increasing taxes and to the arbitrary persecution of the police."

"This head," propounds another paper, "could have been sent from one police station to another, where the officials, while looking at it, could have drawn from their own

remiscences some most philosophical deductions. Later it could have been converted, with great usefulness for India, into a paperweight and placed in the study of Sir John Strachey, where he is wont to squeeze from the bottomless depths of his creative imagination new taxation laws; in this manner, the severed head, reminding the noble gentleman of the limits of human patience regarding taxes, could have served as a yardstick for his future speculations; it could have whispered in his ear that there is a limit beyond which even the most patient of people refuse to be driven even by him, a limit where even the most peaceful and dependable of her majesty's subjects lose not only all their patience, but even, all joking aside, their heads. With equal success, our

rulers could send ‘the head’ to those of their clique who first conceived and formulated as a law, the universal disarmament of the country (*Arms Act*). This severed head alone can solve the problem as to the extent the above-mentioned law became a serious obstacle to the plans and armed maneuvers against the government, at least in the case of the ‘Dakoit’ Chendry. And only when we arrive at a categorical solution of the problem of disarmament, and consequently that of India’s ‘helplessness’ in case of a newly-conceived mutiny, only then, we say, will the government have a perfect right to exhibit such heads in the squares, loudly proclaiming to the whole world: ‘look and tremble; thus perish in the lands conquered by us, those who dare to take up arms against the power of Great Britain!’ . . .”

Local newspaper expressions of discontent, of course, do not carry much weight with the British administration in India. But an outside observer might naturally ask how is it that 60,000 Europeans can be the rulers of a discontented mass of nearly 240,000,000 people, even if that mass is lawfully disarmed. It is not arms or courage that is lacking in the Hindus, but harmony and unanimity of purpose. Century-long hatred between various sects as well as the *caste system*—that is the plank of salvation for Great Britain in her Indian Empire, and more particularly, the moribund patriotism and the lack of the feeling of self-respect. The

Brâhmana whose naked foot rubs the Śûdra into the dirt, in turn, cowers in the dust before every European. Only yesterday, while saying goodbye to a friend on the platform of the railroad station, one of the most distinguished princely descendants of Poona received a deadly insult, and he suffered it in absolute submission. For no reason, a half-drunk Englishman, who was passing by, loudly shouted, “Here is one of those traitors and intrigants—a Poona Brâhmana,” and with one fell swoop knocked his turban under the wheels of the train. A great many native policemen were around and the BrâhmaṢa, who is personally known to the Governor-General of Bombay, with whom Sir Richard Temin often dines, just blanched and helplessly looked around with amazement. The law does not permit a native policeman to arrest an Englishman, even if the latter were to commit a murder before his eyes, and there did not happen to be on the platform at the time, any European *constables*. And even if there had been, it would have been ten to one, he would not have arrested his countryman at the request of a native and he might even have appeared in court as a witness for the former. The drunken Englishman seated himself in the train and went away laughing . . . I am describing this scene as an eyewitness.

Native princes in their turn have every reason in the world to be dissatisfied with the English administration and have no reason whatsoever to love the Englishmen and to nourish feelings of loyalty.

It is true that the Prince of Wales, as well as the Duke of Edinburgh, were received with honor by these same princes and have been praised and wined and dined

and assured of loyalty. It seems that these Princes live in perfect harmony and friendship with Lord Lytton; they constantly send through their political Residents their assurances of perfect adherence and loyalty to the administration. When the Prince of Wales fell dangerously ill and the doctors feared for his life, the Hindu Princes ordered the Brâhmanas to conduct public services for his recovery, fed the poor, spent big sums of money on idols and priests and sent

telegrams every day to London. When the Prince recovered, the Mahârâjas almost went broke on public festivities. Many of them were the first to offer help in the war with Abyssinia and finally, when the Afghân war was declared, all of them, to the last one, offered help and money. In spite of all this, it is hardly possible for the British government to rely upon this seemingly sincere loyalty. The *Examiner*, summing up things, comes to the conclusion that it is utterly *impossible* for the Hindu Princes, if they are men and not blockheads, to love the Englishman. This paper reminds us that when the government took India from the East India Company, a solemn proclamation was sent all over the country, in which the Queen gave her royal promise to the native princes that as long as *they* remained loyal, nobody would interfere at any time with their internal affairs. The inviolability of their rights and privileges, of the customs of their land, their religion and their laws were especially guaranteed and the honor and dignity of their rank—the proclamation assured—were from now jealously guarded by the government of the mother-country. Well, what then? The British government in India did not abide by a single one of the promises expressed in the royal proclamation; it circumvented each one of them, one after the other; and while the Princes carried out every one of the clauses, they were persecuted and insulted on every possible occasion; there were interferences, not only in the affairs of state, but also in their local administrations and their every step was under the strict supervision of the Residents. The Princes are being pushed about like pawns; they are being deprived of their legal heritage, they are being shoved about and denied their thrones. The Mahârâja of Rewah who, more than any other, helped the English crush the rebellion of 1857 and whose services were so great that the Queen herself ordered him elevated to the illustrious rank of Grand Commander of the Star of India—this Mahârâja was *ordered* either to abdicate and receive a pension or to expect a shameful dethroning—and all this without any reason other than that of suspicion without evidence. What can we expect from Sindhia, the

most important of the independent Hindu princes? “During the rebellion,” says the *Examiner*, “he stood by us all through the difficult times, and since then proved more than once, his loyalty and goodwill, while we—we did not carry out a *single one* of the promises we gave him. We interfered with his public and private affairs, insulted him by false denunciations and treated him with the greatest distrust. We declare without the slightest hesitation that the most solemn guarantees of three Viceroys have turned out to be false . . . while Sindhia has also been raised to a Grand Commander of the Star of India for his loyalty in the years 1857-1858, our armies are occupying his capital and fortress and our guns point to his palace . . . at this very moment there is in England a Râjâ who has been denied his lawful rights by the British Administration of India; the throne to which he had a lawful right became vacant, but the rulers of India, contrary to laws, customs and proclamation and everything else, refused him the right of succession. They put in his place a bastard relative, whose behavior became so shameful that they were forced to remove him in less than a year . . . after his removal they undertook the administration of the state and its revenues themselves. As we have pointed out, the rightful heir is in London, living almost as a beggar. There are no obstacles whatsoever to his succession. He is a trustworthy and able man and, most important of all, he is the direct heir. And now, you see, while he is starving in London, trying to find justice, the British Resident receives 6,000 pounds sterling from his revenues, for peacefully ruling in his stead.”

The voice of the “alarmists” such as the *Examiner* doesn’t have much importance after all. The British government is quite secure in its domination over India. Whom could the Englishman fear in this land of conquered and weakened slaves—could be asked by the native press (in India there are published more than 3000 daily, weekly and monthly papers and journals in English and in more than fifty vernaculars)? Surely it wouldn’t be the alliance of native princes, whose every step is being watched by

the English Residents, who hold them on a leash and do not let them out of their sight, even in their own bedrooms. These princes divided among themselves by mutual distrust and envy, demoralized by English education, are not to be feared by England. There remain the people as a whole. But can such a people be dangerous? These teeming millions are timorous, patient beasts of burden, despised by the higher castes, spat upon by their own people and by strangers, ready to sell for a mere pittance or for a piece of bread, their own gods, fathers, mothers and children, accustomed to centuries of slavery and utterly indifferent to who rules the country, if only they could be less beaten and fed a little more; and who vaguely sense that were the English to retire tomorrow, they would be more badly treated by their own. A general rebellion is unthinkable in India; and local uprisings are quite familiar to Englishmen and they will always be able to crush them.

Nevertheless, this domination is bought for a high price. India has cost England in

the last years more than all her colonies put together, from the time of their acquisition. England neither sleeps nor eats, but that she is thinking of how to safeguard not only the highway to India, but every nook and cranny around it as well. Gibraltar, Malta, Aden, all these places serve as outposts and require soldiers and money. For the sake of India alone, England has bought up all the shares of the Suez Canal, taken Cyprus from the helpless Turks and Hongkong from the Chinese. On account of India, England gets constantly entangled with China, Burma, Persia, Afghânistân and especially with Russia. Her main concern at present is to watch every move of Russia. Local papers assure us that all these difficulties would vanish if the British authorities would decide to transfer the administration to the hands of the natives, giving them the right to choose and establish their own laws and to administer the country according to their best discretion. For the purpose of conducting foreign affairs, the papers favor an English governor, appointed from England. The collection of taxes must remain in the hands of the natives, who would assume the responsibilities of paying out of these,

sums for the upkeep of a certain number of British troops in India. It is permissible to have grave doubts as to whether such a plan would meet with approval from the English government and the English people . . .

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**

1880

COMMENTS ON “SWAMI VERSUS MISSIONARY”

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 6, March, 1880, p. 142]

[The above-mentioned article is a reply of the Rev. J. Gray to the remarks of Munshi Samarthadan on the debate at Ajmere, in which the reverend gentleman attempts to correct a few “inaccuracies.” H. P. B. has the following to say on this subject:]

A Hindu translation of the above having been sent to Swamiji, he writes, under date of Benares, 10th February:

When the meeting was held at Ajmere by me, I asked the *Padri* to come forward the next day and discuss, but his answer was that he would not come. Therefore, I now reply to him that it does not suit me to carry on the discussion he now proposes. If any well-educated bishop should be ready to conduct a discussion of this kind in your journal, there need be no doubt but that I would accept a proposal similar to the one now made.

Though our columns might be occupied to better advantage than with debates upon Christianity, which is moribund in its own strongholds and never was a vital issue in India, yet, that there may be no appearance of partiality in our management, *The Theosophist* will print the discussion suggested by our Brother if any bishop should be willing to expose his head to the thundering blows of a “Heathen” mace of logic. Meanwhile it might not be a bad idea for some *Padri Sahib* to read the following editorial from a recent issue of the New York *Sun*:—

[Here follows an article which attempts to find the real cause of the decline in the number of theological students in the divinity schools of some of the most important Protestant denominations. —*Compiler*.]

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**

1880

A LAND OF MYSTERY

303

A LAND OF MYSTERY BY H. P. B.

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 6, March, 1880, pp. 159-161]

Whether one surveys the imposing ruins of Memphis or Palmyra; stands at the foot of the great pyramid of Gizeh; wanders along the shores of the Nile; or ponders amid the desolate fastnesses of the long-lost and mysterious Petra; however clouded and misty the origin of these prehistoric relics may appear, one nevertheless finds at least certain fragments of firm ground upon which to build conjecture. Thick as may be the curtain behind which the history of these antiquities is hidden, still there are rents here and there through which one may catch glimpses of light. We are acquainted with the descendants of the builders. And, however superficially, we also know the story of the nations whose vestiges are scattered around us. Not so with the antiquities of the New World of the two Americas. There, all along the coast of Peru, all over the Isthmus and North America, in the canyons of the Cordilleras, in the impassable gorges of the Andes, and, especially beyond the valley of Mexico, lie, ruined and desolate, hundreds of once mighty cities, lost to the memory of men, and having themselves lost even a name. Buried in dense forests, entombed in inaccessible valleys, sometimes sixty feet underground, from the day of their discovery until now they have ever remained a riddle to science, baffling all inquiry, and they have been muter than the Egyptian Sphinx herself. We know nothing of America prior to the Conquest—positively nothing. No chronicles, not even comparatively modern ones survive; there are no traditions, even among the aboriginal tribes, as to its past events. We are as ignorant of

304

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

the races that built these cyclopean structures, as of the strange worship that inspired the antediluvian sculptors, who carved upon hundreds of miles of walls, of monuments, monoliths and altars, these weird hieroglyphics, these groups of animals and men, pictures of an unknown life and lost arts—scenes so fantastic and wild, at times, that they involuntarily suggest the idea of a feverish dream, whose phantasmagoria at the wave of some mighty magician's hand suddenly crystallized into granite, to bewilder the coming generations for ever and ever. So late as the beginning of the present century, the very existence of such a wealth of antiquities was unknown. The petty, suspicious jealousy of the Spaniards had, from the first, created a sort of Chinese wall between their American possessions and the too curious traveller; and the ignorance and fanaticism of the conquerors, and their carelessness as to all but the satisfaction of their insatiable

greediness, had precluded scientific research. Even the enthusiastic accounts of Cortez and his army of brigands and priests, and of Pizarro and his robbers and monks, as to the splendour of the temples, palaces, and cities of Mexico and Peru, were long discredited. In his *The History of America*, Dr. Wm. Robertson goes so far as to inform his reader that the houses of the ancient Mexicans were “mere huts, built with turf, or mud, or the branches of trees, like those of the rudest Indians”;^{*} and, upon the testimony of some Spaniards he even risked the assertion that “in all the extent of that vast empire,” there was not “a single monument or vestige of any building more ancient than the conquest”! It was reserved to the great Alexander Humboldt to vindicate the truth. In 1803 a new flood of light was poured into the world of archaeology by this eminent and learned traveller. In this he luckily proved but the pioneer of future discoverers. He then described but Mitla, or the Vale of the Dead. Xochicalco, and the great pyramidal Temple of Cholula. But, after him came John L. Stephens, F. C.

^{*} See J. L. Stephens’ *Incidents of Travels in Central America, Chiapas and Yucatan*, 12th ed., London 1846, Vol. I, p. 97.



CHICHÉN ITZÁ, YUCATÁN, MEXICO—PYRAMID OF
QUETZALCÓATL-KUKULKAN
(From Eugen Kusch, *Mexiko, im Bild*, 1967. Courtesy
Hans Carl, Publisher, Nürnberg, Germany.)



CUZCO, PERU
TWELVE ANGLES STONE,
IN THE HOUSE OF THE VIRGINS OF THE SUN
(From Gonzalo de Reparaz, *Peru*, 1960. Courtesy
Editiones de Arte Rep, Lima, Peru.)

Catherwood, and Squier; and, in Peru, d'Orbigny and Dr. Tschudi. Since then, numerous travellers have visited and given us accurate details of many of the antiquities. But, how many more yet remain not only unexplored, but even unknown, no one can tell. As regards prehistoric buildings, both Peru and Mexico are rivals of Egypt. Equalling the latter in the immensity of her cyclopean structures, Peru surpasses her in their number; while Cholula exceeds the grand pyramid of Cheops in breadth, if not in height. Works of public utility, such as walls, fortifications, terraces, watercourses, aqueducts, bridges, temples, burial-grounds, whole cities, and exquisitely paved roads, hundreds of miles in length, stretch in an unbroken line, almost covering the land as with a net. On the coast, they are built of sun-dried bricks; in the mountains, of porphyritic lime, granite, and silicated sandstone. Of the long generations of peoples who built them, history knows nothing, and even tradition is silent. As a matter of course, most of these lithic remains are covered with a dense vegetation. Whole forests have grown out of the broken hearts of the cities, and, with a few exceptions, everything is in ruin. But one may judge of what once was by that which yet remains.

With a most flippant unconcern, the Spanish historians refer nearly every ruin to Incal times. No greater mistake can be made. The hieroglyphics which sometimes cover from top to bottom whole walls and monoliths are, as the were from the first, a dead letter to modern science. But they were equally a dead letter to the Incas, though the history of the latter can be traced to the eleventh century. They had no clue to the meaning of these inscriptions. but attributed all such to their *unknown* predecessors; thus barring the presumption of their own descent from the first civilizers of their country. Briefly, the Incal history runs thus:—

Inca is the Quichua title for chief or emperor, and the name of the ruling and most aristocratic race or rather *caste* of the land, which was governed by them for an *unknown* period, prior to, and until, the Spanish Conquest. Some place their first appearance in Peru from regions

unknown in 1021; others, also; or conjecture, at five centuries after the Biblical “flood,” and according to the modest notions of Christian theology. Still the latter theory is undoubtedly nearer truth than the former. The Incas, judged by their exclusive privileges, power, and “infallibility,” are the antipodal counterpart of the Brahmanical caste of India. Like the latter, the Incas claimed direct descent from Deity, which, as in the case of the Sûryavanśa dynasty of India, was the Sun. According to the sole but general tradition, there was a time when the whole of the population of the now New World was broken up into independent, warring, and barbarian tribes. At last, the “Highest” deity—the Sun—took pity upon them, and, in order to rescue the people from ignorance, sent down upon earth, to teach them, his two children Manco Capac and his sister and wife, Mama Oella Huaca—the counterparts, again, of the Egyptian Osiris, and his sister and wife, Isis, as well as of the several Hindu gods and demi-gods and their wives. These two made their appearance on a beautiful island in Lake Titicaca—of which we will speak further on—and thence proceeded northward to Cuzco, later on the capital of the Incas, where they at once began to disseminate civilization. Collecting together the various races from all parts of Peru, the divine couple then divided their labour. Manco Capac taught men agriculture, legislation, architecture, and arts; while Mama Oella instructed the women in weaving, spinning, embroidery, and housekeeping. It is from this celestial pair that the Incas claimed their descent; and yet, they were utterly ignorant of the people who built the stupendous and now ruined cities which cover the whole area of their empire, and which then extended from the Equator to over 37 degrees of [South] Latitude, and included not only the western slope of the Andes, but the whole mountain chain with its eastern declivities to the Amazon and Orinoco. As the direct descendants of the Sun, they were exclusively the high priests of the state religion, and at the same time emperors and the highest statesmen in the land; in virtue of which, they, again like the Brahmans, arrogated to themselves a

divine superiority over the ordinary mortals, thus founding like the “twice-born” an exclusive and aristocratic caste—the Inca race. Considered as the son of the Sun, every

reigning Inca was the high priest, the oracle, chief captain in war, and absolute sovereign; thus realizing the double office of Pope and King, and so long anticipating the dream of the Roman Pontiffs. To his command the blindest obedience was exacted; his person was sacred; and he was the object of divine honours. The highest officers of the land *could not appear shod in his presence*; this mark of respect pointing again to an Oriental origin; while the custom of boring the ears of the youths of royal blood and inserting in them golden rings “which were increased in size as they advanced in rank, until the distention of the cartilage became a positive deformity,” suggests a strange resemblance between the sculptured portraits of many of them that we find in the more modern ruins, and the images of Buddha and of some Hindu deities, not to mention our contemporary dandies of Siam, Burma, and Southern India. In that, once more like in India, in the palmy days of the Brahmin power, no one had the right to either receive an education or study religion except the young men of the privileged Inca caste. And, when the reigning Inca died, or as it was termed, “was called home to the mansion of his father,” a very large number of his attendants and his wives were made to die with him, during the ceremony of his obsequies, just as we find in the old annals of Râjasthân, and down to the but just abolished custom of Suttee. Taking all this into consideration, the archaeologist cannot remain satisfied with the brief remark of certain historians that “in this tradition we trace only another version of the story of the civilization common to all primitive nations, and that imposture of a celestial relationship whereby designing rulers and cunning priests have sought to secure their ascendancy among men.” No more is it an explanation to say that “Manco Capac is the almost exact counterpart of the Chinese Fohi, the Hindu Buddha, the terrestrial Osiris of Egypt, the Quetzalcohuatl of Mexico, and Votan of Central America”; for all this is but too evident. What we want

to learn is, how came these nations, so antipodal to each other as India, Egypt, and America, to offer such extraordinary points of resemblance, not only in their general religious, political, and social views, but sometimes in the minutest details. The much-needed task is to find out which one of them preceded the other; to explain how these people came to plant at the four corners of the earth nearly identical architecture and arts, unless there was a time when, as assured by Plato and believed in by more than one modern archaeologist, no ships were needed for such a transit, as the two worlds formed but one continent.

According to the most recent researches, there are five distinct styles of architecture in the Andes alone, of which the Temple of the Sun at Cuzco was the latest. And this one, perhaps, is the only structure of importance which, according to modern travellers, can be safely attributed to the Incas, whose imperial glories are believed to have been the last gleam of a civilization dating back for untold ages. Dr. E. R. Heath, of Kansas (U.S.A.), thinks that

. . . long before Manco Capac, the Andes had been the dwelling-place of races, whose beginnings must

have been coëval with the savages of Western Europe. The gigantic architecture points to the Cyclopean family, the founders of the Temple of Babel, and the Egyptian pyramids. The Grecian scroll found in many places is borrowed [?] from the Egyptians; the mode of burial and embalming their dead points to Egypt . . .*

Further on, this learned traveller finds that the skulls taken from the burial-grounds, according to craniologists, represent three distinct races: the Chinchas, who occupied the western part of Peru from the Andes to the Pacific; the Aymaras, dwellers of the elevated plains of Peru and Bolivia, on the southern shore of Lake Titicaca; and the Huancas, who “occupied the plateau between the chains of Andes north of Lake Titicaca to the 9th degree of south

* [Heath, “Peruvian Antiquities,” *Kansas City Review of Science and Industry*, Nov., 1878, p. 467.—*Compiler*.]

latitude.”* To confound the buildings of the epoch of the Incas in Peru, and of Montezuma and his Caciques, in Mexico, with the aboriginal monuments, is fatal to archaeology. While Cholula, Uxmal, Quiché, Pachacamac, and Chichen were all perfectly preserved and occupied at the time of the invasion of the Spanish *banditti*, there are hundreds of ruined cities and works which were in the same state of ruin even then; whose origin was unknown to the conquered Incas and Caciques as it is to us; and which are undoubtedly the remains of unknown and now extinct peoples. The strange shapes of the heads, and profiles of the human figures upon the monoliths of Copán are a warrant for the correctness of the hypothesis. The pronounced difference between the skulls of these races and the Indo-European skulls was at first attributed to mechanical means, used by the mothers for giving a peculiar conformation to the head of their children during infancy, as is often done by other tribes and peoples. But, as the same author tells us, the finding in “a mummy of a foetus of seven or eight months having the same conformation of skull, has placed a doubt as to the certainty of this fact.” And besides hypothesis, we have a scientific and an unimpeachable proof of a civilization that must have existed in Peru ages ago. Were we to give the number of thousands of years that have probably elapsed since then, without first showing good reasons for the assumption, the reader might feel like holding his breath. So let us try.

The Peruvian *guano* (*huano*), that precious fertilizer, composed of the excrement of sea-fowl, intermixed with their decaying bodies, eggs, remains of seal, and so on, which has accumulated upon the isles of the Pacific and the coast of South America, and its formation are now well known. It was Humboldt who first discovered and drew the world’s attention to it in 1804. And, while describing the deposits as covering the granite rocks of the Chinchas and other islands to the depth of 50 or 60 feet, he states *that the accumulation of the preceding 300 years, since the*

* [*Ibid.*, p. 468.]

Conquest, had formed only a few lines in thickness. How many thousands of years, then, it required to form this deposit 60 feet deep, is a matter of simple calculation. In this connection we may now quote something of a discovery spoken of in the “Peruvian Antiquities.”*

Buried 62 feet under the ground, on the Chincha islands, stone idols and water pots were found, while 35 and 33 feet below the surface were wooden idols. *Beneath the guano* on the Guañape islands, just south of Truxillo, and Macabi just north, *mummies, birds, and birds’ eggs, gold and silver ornaments were taken.* On the Macabi the laborers found some large valuable golden vases, which they broke up and divided among themselves, even though offered weight for weight in gold coin, and thus have relics of greatest interest to the scientist been for ever lost. He who can determine the centuries necessary to deposit thirty and sixty feet of *guano* on these islands, remembering that, since the conquest three hundred years ago, no appreciable increase in depth has been noted, can give you an idea of the antiquity of these relics.†

If we confine ourselves to a strictly arithmetical calculation, then, allowing 12 lines to an inch, and 12 inches to a foot, and allowing one line to every century, we are forced to believe that the people who made these precious gold vases lived 864,000 years ago! Leave an ample margin for errors, and give two lines to a century—say an inch to every 100 years—and we will yet have 72,000 years back a civilization which—if we judge by its public works, the durability of its constructions, and the grandeur of its buildings—equalled, and in some things certainly surpassed, our own.

Having well defined ideas as to the periodicity of cycles, for the world as well as for nations, empires, and tribes, we are convinced that our present modern civilization is but the latest dawn of that which already has been seen an innumerable number of times upon this planet. It may not be exact science, but it is both inductive and deductive logic, based upon theories far less hypothetical and more palpable

* A paper published by Mr. E. R. Heath in the *Kansas City Review of Science and Industry*, November 1878.

† [*Op. cit.*, p. 463.]

than many another theory, held as strictly scientific. To express it in the words of Professor F. E. Nipher of St. Louis, “we are not the friends of theory, but of truth,” and until truth is found, we welcome every new theory, however unpopular at first, for fear

of rejecting in our ignorance the stone which may in time become the very corner-stone of the truth. “The errors of scientific men are well-nigh countless, not because they are men of science, but because they are *men*,” says the same scientist; and further quotes the noble words of Faraday—“occasionally, and frequently the exercise of the judgment ought to end in *absolute reservation*. It may be very distasteful and a great fatigue to suspend a conclusion, but as we are not infallible, so we ought to be cautious.” (*Experimental Researches*, 24th Series.)

It is doubtful whether, with the exception of a few of the most prominent ruins, there ever was attempted a detailed account of the so-called American antiquities. Yet, in order to bring out the more prominently a point of comparison, such a work would be absolutely necessary. If the history of religion and of mythology and—far more important—the origin, developing and final grouping, of the human species are ever to be unravelled, we have to trust to archaeological research, rather than to the hypothetical deductions of philology. We must begin by massing together the concrete imagery of the early thought, more eloquent in its stationary form than the verbal expression of the same, the latter being but too liable, in its manifold interpretations, to be distorted in a thousand ways. This would afford us an easier and more trustworthy clue. Archaeological Societies ought to have a whole cyclopaedia of the world’s remains, with a collation of the most important of the speculations as to each locality. For, however fantastic and wild some of these hypotheses may seem at first glance, yet each has a chance of proving useful at some time. It is often more beneficial to know what a thing *is not* than to know what *it is*, as Max Müller truly tells us.

It is not within the limits of an article in our paper that any such object could be achieved. Availing ourselves,

though, of the reports of the Government surveyors, trustworthy travellers, men of science, and even our own limited experience, we will try in future issues to give to our Hindu readers, who possibly may never have heard of these antiquities, a general idea of them. Our latest information is drawn from every reliable source; the survey of the Peruvian antiquities being mostly due to Dr. Heath’s able paper, above mentioned.

Evidently, we, Theosophists, are not the only iconoclasts in this world of mutual deception and hypocrisy. We are not the only ones who believe in cycles and, opposing

the Biblical chronology, lean towards those opinions which secretly are shared by so many, but publicly avowed by so few. We, Europeans, are just emerging from the very bottom of a new cycle, and progressing upwards, while the Asiatics Hindus especially—are the lingering remnants of the nations which filled the world in the previous and now departed cycles. Whether the Aryans sprang from the archaic Americans, or the latter from the prehistorical Aryans, is a question which no living man can decide. But that there must have been an intimate connection at some time between the old Aryans, the prehistoric inhabitants of America—whatever might have been their name—and the ancient Egyptians, is a matter more easily proved than contradicted. And probably, if there ever was such a connection, it must have taken place at a time when the Atlantic did not yet divide the two hemispheres as it does now.

In his “Peruvian Antiquities” (see *The Theosophist* for March) Dr. Heath, of Kansas City—*rara avis* among scientific men, a fearless searcher, who accepts truth wherever he finds it, and is not afraid to speak it out in the very face

of dogmatic opposition—sums up his impressions of the Peruvian relics in the following words:

Three times the Andes sank hundreds of feet beneath the ocean level, and again were slowly brought to their present height. A man’s life would be too short to count even the centuries consumed in this operation. The coast of Peru has risen eighty feet since it felt the tread of Pizarro. Supposing the Andes to have risen uniformly and without interruption, seventy thousand years must have elapsed before they reached their present altitude.

Who knows, then, but that Jules Verne’s fanciful idea* regarding the lost continent Atlanta may be near the truth? Who can say, that where now is the Atlantic Ocean, formerly did not exist a continent, with its dense population, advanced in the arts and sciences, who, as they found their land sinking beneath the waters, retired, part east and part west, populating thus the two new hemispheres? This would explain the similarity of their archæological structures and races and their differences, modified by and adapted to the character of their respective climates and countries. Thus could the llama and the camel differ, although of the same species; thus the algaroba and espino trees; thus the Iroquois Indians of North America and the most ancient Arabs call the constellation of the “Great Bear” by the same name; thus various nations, cut off from all intercourse or knowledge of each other, divide the zodiac in twelve constellations, apply to them the same names, and the Northern Hindoos apply the name Andes to their Himalayan mountains, as did the South Americans to their principal chain. † Must we fall in the old rut and suppose no other means of populating the Western Hemisphere except “by way of Behring’s Strait”? Must we still locate a geographical Eden in the East, and suppose a land equally adapted to man and as old geologically, must wait the aimless wanderings of the “lost tribe of Israel” to become populated? ‡

* This idea is plainly expressed and asserted as a fact by Plato in his *Banquet*; and was taken up by Lord Bacon in his *New Atlantis*. [H.P.B.]

† “The name *America*,” said I, in *Isis Unveiled* (Vol. I, p. 591) three years ago, “may one day be found more closely related to *Meru*, the sacred mount in the centre of the *seven* continents.” When first discovered America was found to bear among some native tribes the name of *Atlanta*. In the States of Central America we find the name *Amerih*, signifying, like *Meru*, a great mountain. The origin of the

Kamas Indians of America is also unknown. [H.P.B.]
‡ [Heath, *op. cit.*, pp. 468-69.]

Go where we may, to explore the antiquities of America—whether of Northern, Central, or Southern America—we are first of all impressed with the magnitude of these relics of ages and races unknown, and then with the extraordinary similarity they present to the mounds and ancient structures of old India, of Egypt, and even of some parts of Europe. Whoever has seen one of these mounds has seen all. Whoever has stood before the cyclopean structures of one continent can have a pretty accurate idea of those of the other. Only be it said—we know still less of the age of the antiquities of America than even of those in the Valley of the Nile, of which we know next to nothing. But their symbolism—apart from their outward form—is evidently the same as in Egypt, India, and elsewhere. As before the great pyramid of Cheops in Cairo, so before the great mound, 100 feet high, on the plain of Cahokia—near St. Louis (Missouri)—which measures 700 feet long by 500 feet broad at the base, and covers upwards of eight acres of ground, having 20,000,000 cubic feet of contents, and the mound on the banks of Brush Creek, Ohio, so accurately described by Squier and Davis, one knows not whether to admire more the geometrical precision, prescribed by the wonderful and mysterious builders in the form of their monuments, or the hidden symbolism they evidently sought to express. The Ohio mound represents a serpent, upwards of 1,000 feet long. Gracefully coiled in capricious curves, it terminates in a triple coil at the tail. “The embankment constituting the effigy, is upwards of five feet in height, by thirty feet base at the centre of the body, diminishing somewhat toward the head and tail.”* The neck is stretched out and its mouth wide opened, holding within its jaws an oval figure. “This oval is formed by an embankment four feet in height, and is perfectly regular in outline, its transverse and conjugate diameters being 160 and 80 feet respectively,” say the surveyors. The whole

* [*New American Cyclopaedia*, 1873-76, art. on “American Antiquities”; same ref. in the case of the quotation immediately following.—*Compiler*.]

represents the universal cosmological idea of the serpent and the egg. This is easy to surmise. But *how came* this great symbol of the Hermetic wisdom of old Egypt to find itself represented in North America? How is it that the sacred buildings found in Ohio

and elsewhere, these squares, circles, octagons, and other geometrical figures, in which one recognizes so easily the prevailing idea of the Pythagorean sacred numerals, seem copied from the *Book of Numbers*? Apart from the complete silence as to their origin, even among the Indian tribes, who have otherwise preserved their own traditions in every case, the antiquity of these ruins is proved by the existence of the largest and most ancient forests growing on the buried cities. The prudent archaeologists of America have generously assigned them 2,000 years. But by whom built, and whether their authors migrated, or disappeared beneath victorious arms, or were swept out of existence by some direful epidemic, or a universal famine, are questions, “probably beyond the power of human investigations to answer,” they say.* The earliest inhabitants of Mexico, of whom history has any knowledge—more hypothetical than proven—are the Toltecs. These are *supposed* to have come from the North and *believed* to have entered Anahuac in the 7th century A.D. They are also credited with having constructed in Central America, where they spread in the eleventh century, some of the great cities whose ruins still exist. In this case it is they who must also have carved the hieroglyphics that cover some of the relics. How is it then, that the pictorial system of writing of Mexico, which was used by the conquered people and learned by the conquerors and their missionaries, does not yet furnish the keys to the hieroglyphics of Palenque and Copán, not to mention those of Peru? And these civilized Toltecs themselves, who were they, and whence did they come? And who are the Aztecs that succeeded them? Even among the hieroglyphical systems of Mexico, there were some which the foreign interpreters were precluded the possibility of studying. These were the so-called schemes

* [*New Amer. Cyclop.*, as above.—*Compiler.*]

of judicial astrology “given but not explained in Lord Kingsborough’s published collection,”* and set down as purely figurative and symbolical, “intended only for the use of the priests and diviners and possessed of an esoteric significance.” Many of the hieroglyphics on the monoliths of Palenque and Copán are of the same character. The “priests and diviners” were all killed off by the Catholic fanatics—the secret died with them.

Nearly all the mounds in North America are terraced and ascended by large graded ways, sometimes square, often hexagonal, octagonal or truncated, but in all respects similar to the *teocallis* of Mexico, and to the *topes* of India. As the latter are attributed throughout this country to the work of the five Pandus of the Lunar Race, so the cyclopean monuments and monoliths on the shores of Lake Titicaca, in the republic of Bolivia, are ascribed to giants, the five exiled brothers “from beyond the mounts.” They worshipped the *moon as their progenitor* and lived before the time of the “Sons and Virgins of the *Sun*.” Here, the similarity of the Aryan with the South American tradition

is again but too obvious, and the Solar and Lunar races—Sûrya-Van□a and the Chandra-Van□a—reappear in America.

This Lake Titicaca, which occupies the centre of one of the most remarkable terrestrial basins on the whole globe, is “160 miles long and from 50 to 80 broad, and discharges through the valley of El Desaguadero, to the south-east into another lake called Lake Aullagas, which is probably kept at a lower level by evaporation or filtration, since it has no known outlet. The surface of the lake is 12,846 feet above the sea, and it is the most elevated body of water of similar size in the world.”† As the level of its waters has very much decreased in the historical period, it is believed on good grounds that they once surrounded the elevated spot on which are found the remarkable ruins of Tiahuanaco.

* [This has reference to Agostino Àglio’s *Antiquities of Mexico*, edited with copious notes by E. King, Viscount Kingsborough, London, 1830-48, 9 vols., fol.—*Compiler*.]

† [*New Amer. Cyclop.*, art. on “Titicaca”—*Compiler*.]

The latter are without any doubt aboriginal monuments pertaining to an epoch which preceded the Incal period, as far back as the Dravidian and other aboriginal peoples preceded the Aryans in India. Although the traditions of the Incas maintain that the great lawgiver and teacher of the Peruvians, Manco Capac—the Manu of South America—diffused his knowledge and influence from this centre, yet the statement is unsupported by facts. If the original seat of the Aymara, or “Inca race” was there, as claimed by some, how is it that neither the Incas, nor the Aymaras, who dwell on the shores of the Lake to this day, nor yet the ancient Peruvians, had the slightest knowledge concerning their history? Beyond a vague tradition which tells us of “giants” having built these immense structures in one night, we do not find the faintest clue. And, we have every reason to doubt whether the Incas are of the Aymara race at all. The Incas claim their descent from Manco Capac, the son of the Sun, and the Aymaras claim this legislator as their instructor and the founder of the era of their civilization. Yet, neither the Incas of the Spanish period could prove the one, nor the Aymaras the other. The language of the latter is quite distinct from the *Inichua*—the tongue of the Incas; and they were the only race that refused to give up their language when conquered by the descendants of the Sun, as Dr. Heath tells us.

The ruins afford every evidence of the highest antiquity. Some are built on a pyramidal plan, as most of the American mounds are, and cover several acres; while the monolithic doorways, pillars, and stone-idols, so elaborately carved, are “sculptured *in a style wholly different* from any other remains of art yet found in America.”* D’Orbigny speaks of the ruins in the most enthusiastic manner.

These monuments [he says] consist of a mound raised nearly 100 feet, surrounded with pillars—of temples from 600 to 1,200 feet in length, opening precisely toward the east, and adorned with colossal

angular columns—of porticoes of a single stone, covered with reliefs of skilful execution though of rude design, displaying symbolical representations of the Sun, and the condor his messenger—of basaltic

* [*Op. cit.*, art. on “Tiahuanaco.”—*Compiler.*]

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

318

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

statues loaded with bas-reliefs, in which the design of the carved head is half Egyptian—and lastly, of the interior of a palace formed of enormous blocks of rock completely hewn, whose dimensions are often 21 feet in length, 12 in breadth, and 6 in thickness. In the temples and palaces, the portals are not inclined as among those of the Incas, but perpendicular; and their vast dimensions, and the imposing masses of which they are composed, surpass in beauty and grandeur all that were afterward built by the sovereigns of Cuzco.*

Like the rest of his fellow-explorers, d'Orbigny believes these ruins to have been the work of a race far anterior to the Incas.

Two distinct styles of architecture are found in these relics of Lake Titicaca. Those of the Island of Coati, for instance, bear every feature in common with the ruins of Tiahuanaco; so do the vast blocks of stone elaborately sculptured, some of which, according to the report of the surveyors, in 1846, measure: “3 feet in length by 18 feet in width, and 6 feet in thickness”; while on some of the islands of the Lake Titicaca there are monuments of great extent, “but of true Peruvian type, apparently the remains of temples destroyed on the arrival of the Spaniards.” The famous sanctuary, with the human figure in it, belongs to the former. Its doorway 10 feet high, 13 feet broad, with an opening 6 feet 4 inches, by 3 feet 2 inches, is cut from a single stone. “Its east front has a cornice, in the centre of which is a human figure of strange form, *crowned with rays*, interspersed with serpents with crested heads. On each side of this figure are three rows of square compartments, filled with human and other figures, of apparently symbolic design . . .” Were this temple in India, it would undoubtedly be attributed to *Īiva*; but it is at the antipodes, where neither the foot of a Shaiva nor one of the Naga tribe has ever penetrated to the knowledge of man, though the Mexican Indians have their Nagual, or chief sorcerer and serpent worshipper. “The ruins stand on an eminence, which, from the watermarks around it, seems to have been formerly an island in Lake Titicaca; but the level of the lake is now 135 feet lower, and its shores 12 miles distant. This fact, in

* [*New Amer. Cyclop.*, art. on “American Antiquities.”—*Compiler*.]

conjunction with others, warrants the belief that these remains antedate any others

known in America.”* Hence, all these relics are unanimously ascribed to the same “unknown and mysterious people who preceded the Peruvians, as the Tulhuatecas or Toltecs did the Aztecs. It seems to have been the seat of the highest and most ancient civilization of South America and of a people who have left the most gigantic monuments of their power and skill.” And these monuments are all either *Dracontias*—temples sacred to the Snake, or temples dedicated to the Sun.

Of this same character are the ruined pyramids of Teotihuacan and the monoliths of Palenque and Copán. The former are some eight leagues from the city of Mexico on the plain of Otumla, and considered among the most ancient in the land. The two principal ones are dedicated to the Sun and Moon, respectively. They are built of cut stone, square, with four stories and a level area at the top. The larger, that of the Sun, is 221 feet high, 680 feet square at the base, and covers an area of 11 acres, nearly equal to that of the great pyramid of Cheops. And yet, the pyramid of Cholula, higher than that of Teotihuacan by ten feet according to Humboldt, and having 1,400 feet square at the base, covers an area of 45 acres!

It is interesting to hear what the earliest writers—the historians who saw them during the first conquest—say even of some of the most modern of these buildings, of the great temple of Mexico, among others. It consisted of an immense square area “surrounded by a wall of stone and lime, eight feet thick, with battlements, ornamented with many stone figures *in the form of serpents*,” says one. Cortez shows that 500 houses might be easily placed within its enclosure. It was paved with polished stones, so smooth, that “the horses of the Spaniards could not move over them without slipping,” writes Bernal Díaz del Castillo. In connection with this, we must remember that it was not the Spaniards who conquered the Mexicans, but their *horses*. As there never

* *New American Cyclopaedia*, art. on “Tiahuanaco.” [This applies to all the passages quoted in the above paragraph.—*Compiler*.]

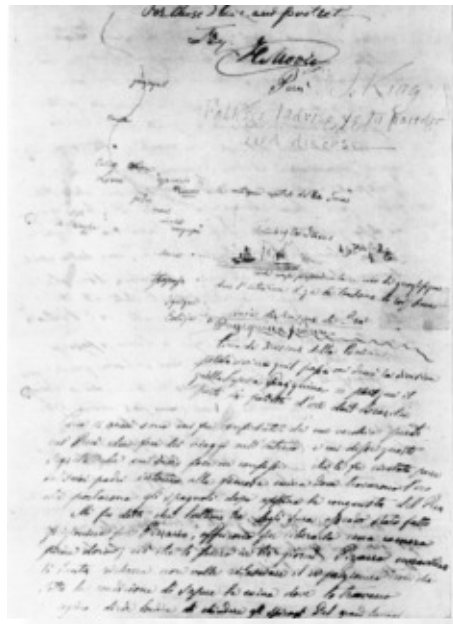
was a horse seen before by this people in America, until the Europeans landed it on the coast, the natives, though excessively brave, “were so awestruck at the sight of horses and the roar of the artillery,” that they took the Spaniards to be of divine origin and sent them human beings as sacrifices. This superstitious panic is sufficient to account for the fact that a handful of men could so easily conquer incalculable thousands of warriors.

According to F. López de Gómara, the four walls of the enclosure of the temple corresponded with the cardinal points. “In the centre of this gigantic area arose the great temple, an immense pyramidal structure of 5 stages, faced with stone, 300 feet square at the base and 120 feet in height, truncated, with a level summit, upon which were situated

two towers, the shrines of the divinities to whom it was consecrated”—Tezcatlipoca and Huitzilopochtli. It was here that the sacrifices were performed, and *the eternal fire maintained*. F. J. Clavijero tells us, that “besides this great pyramid . . . there were forty other similar structures of smaller size, consecrated to separate divinities. One was called *Tezcatalli*, ‘House of the Shining Mirrors,’ . . . sacred to *Tezcatlipoca*, the God of Light, the Soul of the World, the Vivifier, the Spiritual Sun.” The dwellings of priests, who, according to Zarate, amounted to 5,000, were near by, as well as the seminaries and the schools.

“Ponds and fountains, groves and gardens, in which flowers and ‘sweet smelling herbs’ were cultivated for use in certain sacred rites, and for the decoration of altars,” were in abundance; and, so large was the inner yard, that “8,000 or 10,000 persons had sufficient room to dance in it, upon their solemn festivals”—says de Solís. Torquemada estimates the number of such temples in the Mexican empire at 40,000, but Clavijero, speaking of the majestic Teocallis (literally, houses of God) of Mexico, estimates the number higher.

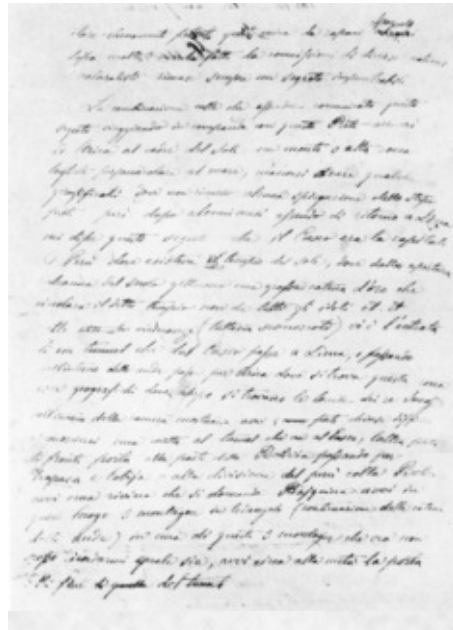
So wonderful are the features of resemblance between the ancient shrines of the Old and the New World that Humboldt remains unequal to express his surprise. “What



FACSIMILE OF A DOCUMENT IN THE ARCHIVES OF THE
THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, ADYAR

(Page One of the Document)

Consult Appendix by the Compiler, pp. 339-43 in this Volume.



FACSIMILE OF A DOCUMENT IN THE ARCHIVES OF THE
THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, ADYAR
(Page Two of the Document)

striking analogies exist between the monuments of the old continents and those of the Toltecs who . . . built several of these colossal structures, truncated pyramids, divided by layers, like the temple of Belus at Babylon! Where did they take the model of these edifices?”—he exclaims.*

The eminent naturalist might have also enquired where the Mexicans got all their *Christian* virtues from, being but poor pagans. The code of the Aztecs, says Prescott “evinces a profound respect for the great principles of morality, and as clear a perception of these principles as is to be found in the most cultivated nations.” Some of these are very curious inasmuch as they show such a similarity to some of the Gospel ethics, “He, who looks too curiously on a woman, commits adultery with his eyes,” says one of them. “Keep peace with all; bear injuries with humility; God, who sees, will avenge you,” declares another. Recognizing but one Supreme Power in Nature, they addressed it as the deity “by whom we live, Omnipresent, that knoweth all thoughts, and giveth all gifts, without whom man is as nothing; invisible, incorporeal . . . of *perfect perfection* and purity, under whose wings we find repose and a sure defence.” And, in naming their children, says Lord Kingsborough, they used a ceremony strongly resembling the Christian rite of baptism, “the lips and bosom of the infant were sprinkled with water, and the Lord was implored to permit the holy drops to *wash away the sin* that was given

to it before the foundation of the world; *so that the child might be born anew.*"† "Their laws were perfect; justice, contentment

* [Quoted passages associated with the names of Bernal Díaz del Castillo, López de Gómara, F. J. Clavijero, Zarate, de Solís and Humboldt, are from the article on "American Antiquities," in the *New American Cyclopaedia* (1873-76). Humboldt's remarks are from his *Researches concerning the Institutions and Monuments of the Ancient Inhabitants of America*, tr. from the French by H. M. Williams, London, 1814.—*Compiler.*]

† [The quoted passages in this paragraph are from Wm. H. Prescott's *History of the Conquest of Mexico*, etc. (chap. III, pp. 19-21), wherein they are quoted from Bernardino de Sahagun's *Historia General de las cosas de Nueva España* (lib. vi, cap. 37), published by Lord Kingsborough, which explains the mention of his name in the text.—*Compiler.*]

and peace reigned in the kingdom of these benighted heathens," when the brigands and the Jesuits of Cortez landed at Tabasco. A century of murders, robbery, and forced conversion, were sufficient to transform this quiet, inoffensive and wise people into what they are now. They have fully benefited by dogmatic Christianity. And he, who ever went to Mexico, knows what that means. The country is full of bloodthirsty Christian fanatics, thieves, rogues, drunkards, debauchees, murderers, and the greatest liars the world has ever produced! Peace and glory to your ashes, O Cortez and Torquemada! In this case at least, will you never be permitted to boast of the enlightenment *your* Christianity has poured out on the poor, and once virtuous heathens!

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 9, June, 1880, pp. 224-227]

The ruins of Central America are no less imposing. Massively built, with walls of a great thickness, they are usually marked by broad stairways, leading to the principal entrance. When composed of several stories, each successive story is usually smaller than that below it, giving the structure the appearance of a pyramid of several stages. The front walls, either made of stone or stuccoed, are covered with elaborately carved, symbolical figures; and the interior divided into corridors and dark chambers, with arched ceilings, the roofs supported by overlapping courses of stones, "constituting a pointed arch, corresponding in type with the earliest monuments of the old world." Within several chambers at Palenque, tablets, covered with sculptures and hieroglyphics of fine design and artistic execution, were discovered by Stephens. In Honduras, at Copán, a whole city—temples, houses and grand monoliths intricately carved—was unearthed in an old forest by Catherwood and Stephens. The sculpture and general style of Copán are unique, and no such style or even anything approaching it has been found anywhere else, except at Quirigua, and in the islands of Lake Nicaragua. No one can

hieroglyphical inscriptions on the altars and monoliths. With the exception of a few works of uncut stone, “to Copán we may safely assign an antiquity higher than to any of the other monuments of Central America with which we are acquainted,” says the *New American Cyclopaedia*. At the period of the Spanish conquest, Copán was already a forgotten ruin, concerning which existed only the vaguest traditions.

No less extraordinary are the remains of the different epochs in Peru. The ruins of the temple of the Sun at Cuzco are yet imposing, notwithstanding that the deprecating hand of the Vandal Spaniard passed heavily over it. If we may believe the narratives of the conquerors themselves, they found it, on their arrival, a kind of a fairy-tale castle. With its enormous circular stone wall completely encompassing the principal temple, chapels and buildings, it is situated in the very heart of the city, and even its remains justly provoke the admiration of the traveller. “Aqueducts opened within this sacred enclosure; and within it were gardens, and walks among *shrubs and flowers of gold and silver*, made in imitation of the productions of nature. It was attended by 4,000 priests.” “The ground,” says La Vega, “for 200 paces around the temple, was considered holy, and no one was allowed to pass within this boundary but with naked feet.” Besides this great temple, there were 300 other inferior temples at Cuzco. Next to the latter in beauty, was the celebrated temple of Pachacamac. Still another great temple of the Sun is mentioned by Humboldt; and, “at the base of the hill of Cannar was formerly a famous shrine of the Sun, consisting of the universal symbol of that luminary, formed by nature upon the face of a great rock.” Roman tells us that “the temples of Peru were built upon high grounds or the tops of hills, and were surrounded by four circular embankments of earth, one within the other.” Other remains seen by myself—especially mounds—are surrounded by two, three, and four circles of stones. Near the town of Cayambe, on the very spot on which A. de Ulloa saw and described an ancient Peruvian temple “perfectly circular in form and open at the top,” there are several

such *cromlechs*. * Quoting from an article in the *Madras Times* of 1876, Mr. J. H. Rivett-Carnac gives, in his *Archaeological Notes*, the following information upon some curious mounds in the neighbourhood of Bangalore:

Near the village there are at least one hundred cromlechs plainly to be seen. These cromlechs are surrounded by circles of stones, some of them with concentric circles three and four deep. One very

remarkable in appearance has four circles of large stones around it, and is called by the natives, 'Pandavara Gudi' or the temples of the Pandas. . . . This is supposed to be the first instance, where the natives popularly imagine a structure of this kind to have been the temple of a by-gone, if not of a mythical, race. Many of these structures have a triple circle, some a double, and a few single circles of stone round them.†

In the 35th degree of latitude, the Arizona Indians in North America have their rude altars to this day, surrounded by precisely such circles, and their sacred spring, discovered by Major Alfred R. Calhoun, F.G.S., of the United States Army Survey Commission, is surrounded with the same symbolical wall of stones, as is found in Stonehenge and elsewhere.

By far the most interesting and full account we have read for a long time upon the Peruvian antiquities is that from the pen of Mr. Heath of Kansas, already mentioned. Condensing the general picture of these remains into the limited space of a few pages in a periodical,‡ he yet manages to present a masterly and vivid picture of the wealth of these remains. More than one speculator has grown rich in a few days through his desecrations of the "huacas." The remains of countless generations of unknown races, who had slept there undisturbed—who knows for how many ages—are now left by the sacrilegious treasure-hunter to crumble

* [Quoted passages up to this point in this new section are from the article on "American Antiquities," in the *New American Cyclopaedia*.—*Compiler*.]

† *Archaeological Notes on Ancient Sculpturings on Rocks in Kumaon, India, similar to those found on Monoliths and Rocks in Europe, with other papers*. By J. H. Rivett-Carnac, Esquire, Bengal Civil Service, C.I.E., F.S.A., M.R.A.S., F.G.S., etc. [Calcutta, 1879].

‡ See *Kansas City Review of Science and Industry*, November, 1878.

into dust under the tropical sun. Mr. Heath's conclusions, more startling, perchance, than his discoveries, are worthy of being recorded. We will repeat in brief his descriptions:—

Take for instance the Jequetepeque valley. In 7° 24' south latitude you will find on recent maps the port of Pacasmayo. Four miles north, separated from it by a barren waste, the river Jequetepeque empties into the sea. . . . Beside the southern shore as it empties into the sea, is an elevated platform one-fourth of a mile square and forty feet high, all of adobes. A wall fifty feet wide connects it with another, a few hundred yards east and south, that is 150 feet high, 200 feet across the top, and 500 at the base, nearly square. This latter was built in sections of room ten feet square at the base, six feet at the top and about eight feet high. All of this same class of mounds—temples, to worship the sun, or fortresses, as they may be—have on the north side an incline for an entrance or means of access. Treasure-seekers have cut into this one about half way, and it is said \$150,000 worth of gold and silver ornaments were found. In the sand, banked up behind the wall and mound, many were buried. . . . Besides these were many ornaments of gold, silver, copper, coral and shell beads and cloths. On the north side of the river, on the top of the bluff, are the extensive ruins of a walled city, two miles wide by six long

Follow the river to the mountains. All along you pass ruin after ruin and huaca after huaca. At Tolon, a town at the base of the mountain [there is another ruined city] Five miles from Tolon, up the river, there is an isolated boulder of granite, four and six feet in its diameters, covered with hieroglyphics. Fourteen miles further, a point of mountain at the junction of two ravines is covered to a height of more

than fifty feet with the same class of hieroglyphics: birds, fishes, snakes, cats, monkeys, men, sun, moon and many odd and now unintelligible forms. The rock on which these are cut is a silicated sandstone, and many of the lines are an eighth of an inch deep. In one large stone there are three holes, twenty to thirty inches deep, six inches in diameter at the orifice and two at the apex.

At Anchi, on the Rimac river, upon the face of a perpendicular wall two hundred feet above the river bed, there are two hieroglyphics, representing an imperfect B and a perfect D. In a crevice below them, near the river, were found buried twenty-five thousand dollars worth of gold and silver. When the Incas learned of the murder of their chief, what did they do with the gold they were bringing for his ransom? Rumour says they buried it. . . . May not these markings at Yonan tell something, since they are on the road and near to the Inca city?*

The above was published in November, 1878. When in

* [Heath, *op. cit.*, pp. 455-56.]

October, 1877, in my work *Isis Unveiled* (Vol. I, pp. 595-98), I gave a legend, which, for circumstances too long to explain, I hold to be perfectly trustworthy, relating to these same buried treasures for the Inca's ransom, a journal more satirical than polite classed it with the tales of Baron Munchausen. The secret was revealed to me by a Peruvian. At Arica, going from Lima, there stands an enormous rock, which tradition points to as the tomb of the Incas. As the last rays of the setting sun strike the face of the rock, one can see curious hieroglyphics inscribed upon it. These characters form one of the landmarks that show how to get at the immense treasures buried in subterranean corridors. The details are given in *Isis*, and I will not repeat them. Strong corroborative evidence is now found in more than one recent scientific work; and the statement may be less pooh-poohed now than it was then.

. . . . Eleven miles beyond Yonan, on a ridge of mountain seven hundred feet above the river, are the walls of a city of 2,000 inhabitants. . . . Six and twelve miles further are extensive walls and terraces. . . .

Leaving the valley at seventy-eight miles from the coast, you zigzag up the mountain side 7,000 feet, then descend 2,000, to arrive at Cajamarca, or Cojamalca of Pizarro's time. . . . In a yard off one of the main streets, and near the center of the city, is still standing the house made famous as the prison of Atahualpa. . . . [pp. 456-57].

It is the house which the Inca "promised to fill with gold as high as he could reach, in exchange for his liberty" in 1532; he did fill it with 17,500,000 dollars' worth of gold, and so kept his promise. But Pizarro, the ancient swineherd of Spain and the worthy acolyte of the priest Hernando de Lugues, murdered him, notwithstanding his pledge of honour.

. . . . Three miles distant, and across the valley, are the hot springs, where the Inca was encamped when Pizarro took possession of Cajamarca. Part of the wall is of unknown make cemented, the cement is harder than the stone itself At Chepén . . . is a mountain with a wall in many places twenty feet high,

the summit being almost entirely artificial. . . .

Fifty miles south of Pacasmayo, between the seaport of Huanchaco

and Truxillo, nine miles distant, are the ruins of "Chan-Chan," the capital city of the Chimu kingdom. . . . The road from the port to the city crosses these ruins, entering by a causeway about four feet from the ground, and leading from one great mass of ruins to another; beneath this is a tunnel. Be they forts, castles, palaces, or burial mounds called "huacas," all bear the name "huaca." Hours of wandering on horseback among these ruins give only a confused idea of them, nor can old explorers there point out what were palaces and what were not. . . . The highest enclosures. . . . must have cost an immense amount of labor. . . .
.*

To give an idea of the wealth found in the country by the Spaniards, we copy the following, taken from the records of the municipality in the city of Truxillo by Mr. Heath. It is a copy of the accounts that are found in the book of Fifths of the Treasury in the years 1577 and 1578, of the treasures found in the "Huaca of Toledo" by one man alone.

FIRST.—In Truxillo, Peru, on the 22nd of July, 1577, Don Garcia Gutierrez de Toledo presented himself at the royal treasury, to give into the royal chest a fifth. He brought a bar of gold nineteen carats ley and weighing two thousand four hundred Spanish dollars, of which the fifth, being seven hundred and eight dollars, together with one and a half per cent. to the chief assayer, were deposited in the royal box.

SECOND.—On the 12th of December he presented himself with five bars of gold, fifteen and nineteen carats ley, weighing eight thousand nine hundred and eighteen dollars.

THIRD.—On the 7th of January, 1578, he came with his fifth of large bars and plates of gold, one hundred and fifteen in number, fifteen to twenty carats ley, weighing one hundred and fifty-three thousand two hundred and eighty dollars.

FOURTH.—On the 8th of March he brought sixteen bars of gold, fourteen to twenty-one carats ley, weighing twenty-one thousand one hundred and eighteen dollars.

FIFTH.—On the 5th of April he brought different ornaments of gold, being little bells of gold and patterns of corn-heads and other things, of fourteen carats ley, weighing six thousand two hundred and seventy two dollars.

SIXTH.—On the 20th of April he brought three small bars of gold, twenty carats ley, weighing four thousand one hundred and seventy dollars.

* [*op. cit.*, pp. 457-58.]

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

328

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

SEVENTH.—On the 12th of July he came with forty-seven bars, fourteen to twenty-one carats ley, weighing seventy-seven thousand, three hundred and twelve dollars.

EIGHTH.—On the same day he came back with another portion of gold and ornaments of cornheads and pieces of effigies of animals, weighing four thousand seven hundred and four dollars.

The sum of these eight bringings amounted to 278,174 gold dollars or Spanish ounces. Multiplied by sixteen gives \$4,450,784 silver dollars. Deducting the royal fifth—\$985,953.75—left \$3,464,830.25 as Toledo's portion.

Even after this great haul, effigies of different animals of gold were found from time to time. Mantles also, adorned with square pieces of gold, as well as robes made with feathers of divers colors, were dug up. There is a tradition that in the huaca of Toledo there were two treasures, known as the great and little fish. The smaller only has been found.

Between Huacho and Supe, the latter being 120 miles north of Callao, near a point called Atahuanqui, there are two enormous mounds, resembling the Campana and San Miguel, of the Huatica valley, soon to be described. About five miles from Patavilca (south and near Supe) is a place called "Paramonga," or the fortress. The ruins of a fortress of great extent are here visible; the walls are of tempered clay, about six feet thick. The principal building stood on an eminence, but the walls were continued to the foot of it, like regular circumvallations; the ascent winding round the hill like a labyrinth, having many angles, which probably served as outworks to defend the place. In this neighbourhood much treasure has been excavated, all of which must have been concealed by the pre-historic Indian, as we have no evidence of the Incas ever having occupied this part of Peru after they had subdued it.

. . . . Just before reaching Ancón, the railroad runs through an immense burying-ground or "huaca." Make a circuit of six to eight miles, and on every side you see skulls, legs, arms, and the whole skeleton of the human body, lying about in the sand. . . .

At Pasamayo, 14 miles further "down north," on the seashore, is another great burying ground. Thousands of skeletons lie about, thrown out by the treasure-seekers. It has more than a half mile of cutting through it for the Ancón & Chankay R.R. It extends up the face of the hill from the seashore to the height of about 800 feet. Whence came these hundreds and thousands of peoples who are buried at Ancón? . . . Time and time again the archaeologist finds himself face to face with such questions, to which he can only shrug his shoulders and say with the natives, "Quién sabe?" Who knows? . . .

A LAND OF MYSTERY

329

Dr. Hutchinson writes, under date of Oct. 30th, 1872, in an article to the Callao and Lima *Gazette*, now the South Pacific *Times*: "I am come to the conclusion that Chankay is a great city of the dead, or has

been an immense usury of Peru; for go where you will, on mountain top or level plain, or by the sea-side, you meet at every turn, skulls and boner, of all descriptions.”*

In the Huatica Valley, which is an extensive ruin, there are seventeen mounds, called “huacas,” although, remarks the writer, “they present more the form of fortresses, residences or castles, than burying-grounds.” A triple wall surrounded the city. These walls are often three yards in thickness and from fifteen to twenty feet high.

To the east of these is the enormous mound called Huaca of Pando; and to the west, with the distance of about half a mile intervening, are the great ruins of fortresses, which natives entitle Huaca of the Bell. La Campana, the Huacas of Pando, consisting of a series of large and small mounds, and extending over a stretch of ground incalculable without being measured, form a colossal accumulation. The principal large ones are three in number; that holding the name of the “Bell” is calculated to be 108 to 110 feet in height. At the western side, looking towards Callao, there is a square plateau At the summit it is 276 to 278 yards, long, and 95 to 96 across. On the top there are eight gradations of declivity, each from one to two yards lower than its neighbor . . . making the total of about 278 yards. For these measurements of the Huatica ruins I am indebted to the notes of J. B. Steere, Professor of Natural History and Curator of the Museum at Ann Arbor, Michigan.

The square plateau first mentioned, at the base, consists of two divisions . . . each measuring a perfect square 47 to 48 yards; the two joining, form the square of 96 yards. Besides this is another square of 47 to 48 yards. On the top, returning again, we find the same symmetry of measurement in the multiples of twelve, nearly all the ruins in this valley being the same, which is a fact for the curious. Was it by accident or design? . . . The mound is a truncated pyramidal form, and is calculated to contain a mass of 14,641,820 cubic feet of material . . . The “Fortress” is a huge structure, 80 feet high, 148 to 150 yards in measurement. Great large square rooms show their outlines on the top, but are filled with earth. Who brought this earth here, and with what object was the filling-up accomplished? The work of obliterating all space in these rooms with loose earth must have been almost as great as the construction of the building itself. . . . Two miles south . . . we find another similar structure . . . more spacious and with a greater number of apartments. . . .

* [Heath, *op. cit.*, pp. 458-60.]

It is nearly 170 yards in length, and 168 in breadth, and 98 feet high. The whole of these ruins . . . were enclosed by high walls of adobones . . . large mud-bricks, some from 1 to 2 yards in thickness, length, and breadth. The huaca of the “Bell” contains about 20,220,840 cubic feet of material, while that of “San Miguel” has 25,650,800. These two buildings were constructed in the same style—having traces of terraces, parapets, and bastions, with a large number of rooms and squares—all now filled up with earth.

About a mile beyond, in the direction of “Mira Flores,” is Ocharan—the largest burial mound in the Huatica valley . . . It has 95 feet of elevation and a width of 55 yards on the summit, and a total length of 428 yards, or 1,284 feet, *another multiple of twelve*. It is enclosed by a double wall 816 yards in length by 700 across, thus enclosing 117 acres. Between Ocharan and the ocean are from 15 to 20 masses of ruins, like those already described. . . .

. . . the Inca temple of the Sun, like the temple of Cholula on the plains of Mexico . . . is a sort of vast terraced pyramid of earth. It is from 200 to 300 feet high, and forms a semi-lunar shape that is beyond a half mile in extent. Its top measures about 10 acres square. Much of the walls are washed over with red paint, probably ochre, and are as fresh and bright as when centuries ago it was first put on . . . In the Cañete valley, opposite the Chinchu Guano Islands, are extensive ruins [described by Squier]. . . . From the

hill called "Hill of Gold," copper and silver pins were taken like those used by ladies to pin their shawls; also tweezers for pulling out the hair of the eyebrows, eyelids and whiskers, as well as silver cups.*

The coast of Peru [says Mr. Heath], extends from Tumbes to the river Loa on the south, a distance of 1,235 miles. Scattered here and there over this whole extent, there are thousands of ruins beside those just mentioned . . . while nearly every hill and spur of the mountains have upon them or about them some relic of the past; and in every ravine, from the coast to the central plateau, there are ruins of walls, fortresses, cities, burial-vaults, and miles and miles of terraces and water-courses. Across the plateau and down the eastern slope of the Andes to the home of the wild Indian, and into the unknown, impenetrable forest, still you find them. . . . In the mountains, however, where storms of rain and snow with terrific thunder and lightning are nearly constant a number of months each year, the ruins are different. Of granitic, porphyritic, lime and silicated sandstone, these massive, colossal, cyclopean structures have resisted the disintegration of time, geological transformations, earthquakes, and the sacrilegious, destructive hand of the warrior and treasure-seeker. The masonry composing these walls, temples, houses, towers,

* [Heath, *op. cit.*, pp. 461-63.]

fortresses, or sepulchres, is uncemented, held in place by the incline of the walls from the perpendicular, and adaptation of each stone to the place destined for it, the stones having from six to many sides, each dressed, and smoothed to fit another or others, with such exactness that the blade of a small penknife cannot be inserted in any of the seams thus formed, whether in the central parts entirely hidden, or on the internal or external surfaces. These stones, selected with no reference to uniformity in shape or size, vary from one-half cubic foot to 1,500 cubic feet solid contents, and if, in the *many, many millions* of stones you could find *one* that would fit in the place of another, it would be purely accidental. In "Triumph Street," in the city of Cuzco, in a part of the wall of the ancient house of the Virgins of the Sun, is a very large stone, known as "the stone of the twelve corners," since it joins with those that surround it, by twelve faces, each having a different angle. Beside these twelve faces it has its external one, and no one knows how many it has on its back that is hidden in the masonry. In the wall of the centre of the Cuzco fortress there are stones 13 feet high, 15 feet long, and 8 feet thick, and all having been quarried miles away. Near this city there is an oblong smooth boulder 18 feet in its longer axis, and 12 in its lesser. On one side are large niches cut out, in which a man can stand, and by swaying his body cause the stone to rock. These niches apparently were made solely for this purpose. One of the most wonderful and extensive of these works in stone, is that called Ollantaytambo, a ruin situated 30 miles north of Cuzco, in a narrow ravine on the bank of the river Urubamba. It consists of a fortress constructed on the top of a sloping, craggy eminence. Extending from it to the plain below, is a stony stairway. At the top of the stairway are six large slabs, 12 feet high, 5 feet wide, and 3 feet thick, side by side, having between them and on top narrow strips of stone about 6 inches wide, framed as it were to the slabs, and all being of dressed stone. At the bottom of the hill, part of which was made by hand, and at the foot of the stairs, a stone wall 10 feet wide and 12 feet high extends some distance into the plain. In it are many niches, all facing the south.

The ruins on the islands in Lake Titicaca, where Inca history begins, have often been described.

At Tiahuanaco, a few miles south of the lake, there are stones in the form of columns, partly dressed, placed in line at certain distances from each other, and having an elevation above the ground of from 18 to 20 feet. In this same line there is a monolithic doorway, now broken, 10 feet high by 13 wide. The space cut out for the door is 7 feet 4 inches high, by 3 feet 2 inches wide. The whole face of the stone above the door is engraved. Another, similar, but smaller, lies on the ground beside it. These stones are of hard porphyry, and differ geologically from the surrounding rock, hence, we infer they must have been brought from elsewhere.

At "Chavin de Huanta," a town in the province of Huari, there are

some ruins worthy of note. The entrance to them is by an alleyway 6 feet wide and 9 feet high, roofed over with sandstone partly dressed, of more than 12 feet in length. On each side there are rooms 12 feet wide, roofed by large pieces of sandstones, 1½ feet thick and from 6 to 9 feet wide. The walls of the rooms are 6 feet thick, and have some loopholes in them, probably for ventilation. In the floor of this passage there is a very narrow entrance to a subterranean passage that passes beneath the river to the other side. From this many huacas, stone drinking-vessels, instruments of copper and silver, and a skeleton of an Indian sitting, were taken. The greater part of these ruins are situated over aqueducts. The bridge to these castles is made of three stones of dressed granite, 24 feet long, 2 feet wide by 1½ thick. Some of the granite stones are covered with hieroglyphics.

At Corralones, 24 miles from Arequipa, there are hieroglyphics engraved on masses of granite, which appear as if painted with chalk. There are figures of men, llamas, circles, parallelograms, letters as an R and an O and even remains of a system of astronomy.

At Huaitará, in the province of Castrovirreina, there is an edifice with the same engravings.

At Nazca, in the province of Ica, there are some wonderful ruins of aqueducts, four to five feet high and 3 feet wide, very straight, double-walled, of unfinished stone, flagged on top.

At Quelap, not far from Chochapayas, there have lately been examined some extensive works. A wall of dressed stone 560 feet wide, 3,660 long, and 150 feet high. The lower part is solid. Another wall above this has 600 feet length, 500 width, and the same elevation of 150 feet. There are niches over both walls, three feet long, one-and-a-half wide and thick, containing the remains of those ancient inhabitants, some naked, others enveloped in shawls of cotton of distinct colours and well embroidered. . . .

Following the entrances of the second and highest wall, there are other sepulchres like small ovens, six feet high and twenty-four in circumference; in their base are flags, upon which some cadavers reposed. On the north side there is, on the perpendicular rocky side of the mountain, a brick wall, having small windows 600 feet from the bottom. No reason for this, nor means of approach, can now be found. The skillful construction of utensils of gold and silver that were found here, the ingenuity and solidity of this gigantic work of dressed stone, made it, also, probably of pre-Incal date. . . . Estimating five hundred ravines in the 1,200 miles of Peru, and ten miles of terraces of fifty tiers to each ravine, which would only be five miles of twenty-five tiers to each side, we have 250,000 miles of stone wall, averaging three to four feet high—enough to encircle this globe ten times. Surprising as these estimates may seem, I am fully convinced that an actual measurement would more than double them, for these ravines vary from 30 to 100 miles in length, and ten miles to each is a low estimate. While at San Mateo, a town in the

valley of the river Rimac . . . where the mountains rise to a height of 1,500 or 2,000 feet above the river bed, I counted two hundred tiers, none of which were less than four and many more than six miles long . . .

Who, then [very pertinently enquires Mr. Heath] were these people, cutting through sixty miles of granite, transporting blocks of hard porphyry, of Baalbec dimensions, miles from the place where quarried, across valleys thousands of feet deep, over mountains, along plains, leaving no trace of how or where they carried them; people [said to be] ignorant of the use of iron, with the feeble llama their only beast of burden; who, after having brought these stones together and dressed them, fitted them into walls with mosaic precision; terracing thousands of miles of mountain side; building hills of adobes and earth, and huge cities; leaving works in clay, stone, copper, silver, gold and embroidery, many of which cannot be

duplicated at the present age; people apparently vying with Dives in riches, Hercules in strength and energy and the ant and bee in industry?

Callao was submerged in 1746 and entirely destroyed. Lima was ruined in 1678—in 1746 only twenty houses out of three thousand were left standing . . . while the ancient cities in the Huatica and Lurín valleys still remain in a comparatively good state of preservation. San Miguel de Piura, founded by Pizarro in 1531, was entirely destroyed in 1855, while the old ruins near by suffered little. Arequipa was thrown down in August, 1868, but the ruins near show no change.*

In engineering, at least, the present may learn from the past. We hope to show that it may in most things else.

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 11, August, 1880, pp. 277-78]

To refer all these cyclopean constructions then to the days of the Incas is, as we have shown before, more inconsistent yet, and seems even a greater fallacy than that too common one of attributing every rock-temple of India to Buddhist excavators. As many authorities show—Dr. Heath among the rest—Incal history only dates back to the eleventh century A.D., and the period, from that time to the Conquest, is utterly insufficient to account for such grandiose

* [Heath, *op. cit.*, pp. 463 67].

and innumerable works; nor do the Spanish historians know much of them. Nor again, must we forget that the temples of heathendom were odious to the narrow bigotry of the Roman Catholic fanatics of those days; and that, whenever the chance offered, they either converted them into Christian churches or razed them to the ground. Another strong objection to the idea lies in the fact that the Incas were destitute of a written language, and that these antique relics of bygone ages are covered with hieroglyphics. “It is granted that the Temple of the Sun, at Cuzco, was of Incal make, but that is the latest of the five styles of architecture visible in the Andes, each probably representing an age of human progress.”*

The hieroglyphics of Peru and Central America have been, are, and will most probably remain for ever as dead a letter to our cryptographers as they were to the Incas. The latter, like the barbarous ancient Chinese and Mexicans, kept their records by means of a quipus (or *knot* in Peruvian)—a cord, several feet long, composed of different coloured threads, from which a multicoloured fringe was suspended; each colour denoting a sensible object, and knots serving as ciphers. “The mysterious science of the quipus,” says Prescott, “supplied the Peruvians with the means of communicating their ideas to one another, and of transmitting them to future generations . . . † Each locality, however, had its own method of interpreting these elaborate records, hence a quipus was

only intelligible in the place where it was kept. "Many quipus have been taken from the graves, in excellent state of preservation in colour and texture," writes Dr. Heath; "but the lips that alone could pronounce the verbal key, have for ever ceased their function, and the relic-seeker has failed to note the exact spot each was found, so that the records which could tell so much we want to know, will remain sealed till all is revealed at the last day,‡ . . . if anything at all is revealed then.

* [Heath, *op. cit.*, p. 467.]

† [*Hist. of the Conquest of Peru*, Chap. IV, p. 792.]

‡ [Heath, *op. cit.*, p. 467.]

But what is certainly as good as a revelation *now*, while our brains are in function, and our mind is acutely alive to some pre-eminently suggestive facts, is the incessant discoveries of archaeology, geology, ethnology, and other sciences. It is the almost irrepressible conviction that man having existed upon earth millions of years—for all we know—the theory of cycles is the only plausible theory to solve the great problems of humanity, the rise and fall of numberless nations and races, and the ethnological differences among the latter. This difference—which, though as marked as the one between a handsome and intellectual European and a digger Indian of Australia, yet makes the ignorant shudder and raise a great outcry at the thought of destroying the imaginary "great gulf between man and brute creation"—might thus be well accounted for. The digger Indian, then in company with many other savage, though to him superior nations, which evidently are dying out to afford room to men and races of a superior kind, would have to be regarded in the same light as so many dying-out specimens of animals—and no more. Who can tell but that the forefathers of this flat-headed savage—forefathers who may have lived and prospered amidst the highest civilization before the glacial period—were in the arts and sciences far beyond those of the present civilization—though it may be in quite another direction? That man has lived in America, at least 50,000 years ago, is now proved scientifically and remains a fact beyond doubt or cavil. In a lecture delivered at Manchester, in June last, by Mr. H. A. All-but, Honorary Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Society, the lecturer stated the following:—

Near New Orleans, in one part of the modern delta, in excavating for gas works, a series of beds, almost wholly made up of vegetable matter, were dug through. In the excavation, at a depth of 16 feet from the upper surface, and beneath four buried forests, one on the top of the other, the labourers discovered some charcoal and the skeleton of a man, the cranium of which was reported to be that of the type of the aboriginal Red Indian race. To this skeleton Dr. Dowler ascribed an antiquity of some 50,000 years.

The irrepressible cycle in the course of time brought

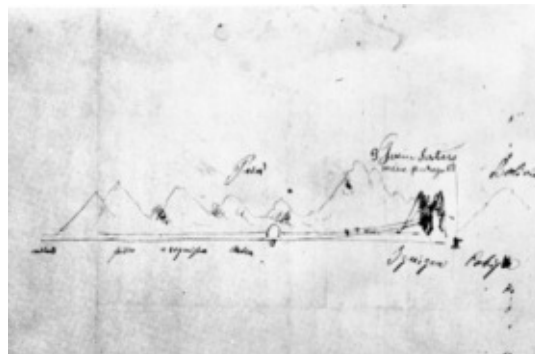
down the descendants of the contemporaries of the late inhabitant of this skeleton, and intellectually as well as physically they have degenerated, as the present elephant has degenerated from his proud and monstrous forefather, the antediluvian *Elivatherium* whose fossil remains are still found in the Himalayas; or, as the lizard has from the plesiosaurus. Why should man be the only specimen upon earth which has never changed in form since the first day of his appearance upon this planet? The fancied superiority of every generation of mankind over the preceding one is not yet so well established as to make it impossible for us to learn some day that, as in everything else, the theory is a two-sided question—inconstant progress on the one side and an as irresistible decadence on the other of the cycle. “Even as regards knowledge and power, the advance which some claim as a characteristic feature of humanity is effected by exceptional individuals who arise in certain races under favourable circumstances only, and is quite compatible with long intervals of immobility, and *even of decline*,” says a modern man of science.* This point is corroborated by what we see in the modern degenerate descendants of the great and powerful races of ancient America—the Peruvians and the Mexicans.

How changed! How fallen from their greatness must have been the Incas when a little band of one hundred and sixty men could penetrate uninjured to their mountain homes, murder their worshipped Icings and thousands of their warriors, and carry away their riches, and that, too, in a country where a few men with stones could resist successfully an army! Who could recognize in the present Inichua and Aymara Indians their noble ancestry?†

Thus writes Dr. Heath, and his conviction that America was once united with Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia, seems as firm as our own. There must exist geological and physical cycles as well as intellectual and spiritual; globes

* *Journal of Science*, Vol. I, 3rd Series, February, 1879, pp. 148-49, articles—“Progress. The Alleged distinction between Man and Brute.”

† [Heath, *op. cit.*, p. 468]



FACSIMILE OF A DOCUMENT IN THE ARCHIVES OF THE
THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, ADYAR
(Page Four of the Document, page Three being blank)

A LAND OF MYSTERY

337

and planets, as well as races and nations, are born to grow, progress, decline and—die. Great nations split, scatter into small tribes, lose all remembrance of their integrity, gradually fall into their primitive state and—disappear, one after the other, from the face of the earth. So do great continents. Ceylon must have formed, once upon a time, part of the Indian continent. So, to all appearances, was Spain once joined to Africa, the narrow channel between Gibraltar and the latter continent having been once upon a time dry land. Gibraltar is full of large apes of the same kind as those which are found in great numbers on the opposite side on the African coast, whereas nowhere in Spain is either a monkey or ape to be found at any place whatever. And the caves of Gibraltar are also full of gigantic human bones, supporting the theory that they belong to an antediluvian race of men. The same Dr. Heath mentions the town of Eten in 7° S. Latitude of America, in which the inhabitants of an unknown tribe of men speak a monosyllabic language that imported Chinese labourers understood from the first day of their arrival. They have their own laws, customs and dress, neither holding nor permitting communication with the outside world. No one can tell whence they came or when; whether it was before or after the Spanish Conquest. They are a living mystery to all who chance to visit them . . .

With such facts before us to puzzle exact science herself, and show our entire ignorance of the past, verily, we recognize no right of any man on earth—whether in geography or ethnology, in exact or abstract sciences to tell his neighbour—“so far shalt thou go, and no further!”

But, recognizing our debt of gratitude to Dr. Heath of Kansas, whose able and interesting paper has furnished us with such a number of facts and suggested such possibilities, we can do no better than quote his concluding reflections.

338

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

Thirteen thousand years ago [he writes] *Vega* or ∞ *Lyrae* was the north polar star. Since then how many changes has she seen in our planet? How many nations and races spring into life, rise to their zenith splendour and then decay; and when we shall have been gone thirteen thousand years, and once more she resumes her post at the north, completing a “Platonic or Great Year,” think you that those who shall fill our places on the earth at that time will be more conversant with our history than we are of those that have passed? Verily might we exclaim in terms almost Psalmistic, “Great God, Creator and Director of the

Universe, what is man that Thou art mindful of him!"

Amen! ought to be the response of such as yet believe in a God who is "the Creator and Director of the Universe."

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

APPENDIX BY THE COMPILER

339

APPENDIX BY THE COMPILER

The passage in *Isis Unveiled* to which H. P. B. refers, in connection with the Incas gold and the mysterious hieroglyphics upon a certain rock, is as follows:

“The ruins which cover both Americas, and are found on many West Indian islands, are all attributed to the submerged Atlanteans. As well as the hierophants of the old world, which in the days of Atlantis was almost connected with the new one by land, the magicians of the new submerged country had a network of subterranean passages running in all directions. In connection with those mysterious catacombs, we will now give a curious story told to us by a Peruvian, long since dead, as we were travelling together in the interior of his country. There must be truth in it; as it was afterward confirmed to us by an Italian gentleman who had seen the place and who, but for lack of means and time, would have verified the tale himself, at least partially. The informant of the Italian was an old priest, who had had the secret divulged to him, at confession, by a Peruvian Indian. We may add, moreover, that the priest was compelled to make the revelation, being at the time completely under the mesmeric influence of the traveller.

“The story concerns the famous treasures of the last of the Incas. The Peruvian asserted that since the well-known and miserable murder of the latter by Pizarro, the secret had been known to all the Indians, except the *Mestizos* who could not be trusted. It runs thus: The Inca was made prisoner, and his wife offered for his liberation a room full of gold, ‘from the floor up to the ceiling, as high up as his conqueror could reach,’ before the sun would set on the third day. She kept her promise, but Pizarro broke his word, according to Spanish practice. Marvelling at the exhibition of such treasures, the conqueror declared that he would not release the prisoner, but would murder him, unless the Queen revealed the place whence the treasure came. He had heard that the Incas had somewhere an inexhaustible mine; a subterranean road or tunnel running many miles underground, where were kept the accumulated riches of the country. The unfortunate Queen begged for delay, and

340

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

went to consult the oracles. During the sacrifice, the chief-priest showed her in the consecrated ‘black mirror’ the unavoidable murder of her husband, whether she delivered the treasures of the crown to Pizarro or not. Then the Queen gave the order to close the entrance, which was a door cut in the rocky wall of a chasm. Under the direction of the priest and magicians, the chasm was accordingly filled to the top with huge masses of rock, and the surface covered over so as to conceal the work. The Inca was murdered by the Spaniards and his unhappy Queen committed suicide. Spanish greed overreached itself and the secret of the buried treasures was locked in the breasts of a few faithful Peruvians.

“Our Peruvian informant added that in consequence of certain indiscretions at various times, persons had been sent by different governments to search for the treasure under the pretext of scientific exploration. They had rummaged the country through, but without realizing their object. So far this tradition is corroborated by the reports of Dr. Tschudi and other historians of Peru. But there are certain additional details which we are not aware have been made public before now.

“Several years after hearing the story, and its corroboration by the Italian gentleman, we again visited

Peru. Going southward from Lima, by water, we reached a point near Arica at sunset, and were struck by the appearance of an enormous rock, nearly perpendicular, which stood in mournful solitude on the shore, apart from the range of the Andes. It was the tomb of the Incas. As the last rays of the setting sun strike the face of the rock, one can make out, with an ordinary opera-glass, some curious hieroglyphics inscribed on the volcanic surface.

“When Cuzco was the capital of Peru, it contained a temple of the sun, famed far and near for its magnificence. It was roofed with thick plates of gold, and the walls were covered with the same precious metal; the eave-troughs were also of solid gold. In the west wall the architects had contrived an aperture in such a way that when the sunbeams reached it, it focused them inside the building. Stretching like a golden chain from one sparkling point to another, they encircled the walls, illuminating the grim idols, and disclosing certain mystic signs at other times invisible. It was only by understanding these hieroglyphics—identical with those which may be seen to this day on the tomb of the Incas—that one could learn the secret of the tunnel and its approaches. Among the latter was one in the neighborhood of Cuzco, now masked beyond discovery. This leads directly into an immense tunnel which runs from Cuzco to Lima, and then, turning southward, extends

APPENDIX BY THE COMPILER

341

into Bolivia. At a certain point it is intersected by a royal tomb. Inside this sepulchral chamber are cunningly arranged two doors; or rather, two enormous slabs which turn upon pivots, and close so tightly as to be only distinguishable from the other portions of the sculptured walls by the secret signs, whose key is in the possession of the faithful custodians. One of these turning slabs covers the southern mouth of the Liman tunnel—the other, the northern one of the Bolivian corridor. The latter, running southward, passes through Tarapaca and Cobija, for Arica is not far away from the little river called Pay’quina,* which is the boundary between Peru and Bolivia.

“Not far from this spot stand three separate peaks which form a curious triangle; they are included in the chain of the Andes. According to tradition the only practicable entrance to the corridor leading northward is in one of these peaks; but without the secret of its landmarks, a regiment of Titans might rend the rocks in vain in the attempt to find it. But even were someone to gain an entrance and find his way as far as the turning slab in the wall of the sepulchre, and attempt to blast it out, the superincumbent rocks are so disposed as to bury the tomb, its treasures, and—as the mysterious Peruvian expressed it to us—’a thousand warriors’ in one common ruin. There is no other access to the Arica chamber but through the door in the mountain near Pay’quina. Along the entire length of the corridor, from Bolivia to Lima and Cuzco, are smaller hiding-places filled with treasures of gold and precious stones, the accumulation of many generations of Incas, the aggregate value of which is incalculable.

“We have in our possession an accurate plan of the tunnel, the sepulchre, and the doors, given to us at the time by the old Peruvian. If we had ever thought of profiting by the secret, it would have required the co-operation of the Peruvian and Bolivian governments on an extensive scale. To say nothing of physical obstacles, no one individual or small party could undertake such an exploration without encountering the army of smugglers and brigands with which the coast is infested; and which, in fact, includes nearly the whole population. The mere task of purifying the mephitic air of the tunnel, which had not been entered for centuries, would also be a serious one. There, however, the treasure lies, and there the tradition says it will lie till the last vestige

* Pay’quina or *Payaquina*, so called because its waves used to drift particles of gold from Brazil. We found a few specks of genuine metal in a handful of sand that we brought back to Europe.

of Spanish rule disappears from the whole of North and South America" (Vol. I, pp. 595-98).

While no "accurate plan of the tunnel, the sepulchre, and the doors" mentioned by H. P. B. has ever been found among her papers, there is nevertheless a curious document in the Archives of The Theosophical Society at Adyar, which it has been thought advisable to include in the present Volume.

This document consists of a folded sheet of foolscap containing drawings and writings on three of its four pages. At the top of the front page appear two separate inscriptions. One of them reads: "For those I love and protect. Try." It is signed by H. Moore. This, in spite of the spelling, could very well be Henry More (1614-1687), the famous English Platonist of the Cambridge school, whose collaboration in the writing of *Isis Unveiled* is described by Col. Olcott (see *Old Diary Leaves*, I, 237-39). It might be tempting to think of this signature as being that of an initiate who signed himself as Robert More on a letter addressed to Col. Olcott by the Brotherhood of Luxor (see *Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom*, Second Series, Letter No. 3), were it not again for the different spelling of the name and for the fact that the initial looks more like a capital H. The other short sentence is in the old-fashioned script-type used by John King and is signed by him, advising "to ponder and discuss."

On the side of these brief sentences and somewhat below them is a drawing of the West Coast of South America, showing a number of coastal and inland towns, as well as the former boundary line between Peru and Bolivia. At the side of the map and below it are explanatory notes and a sketch. Some have thought the notes to be in H. P. B.'s handwriting, but this is hardly so, especially as they are in a rather peculiar and ungrammatical mixture of French and Italian which would be most unlikely in H. P. B.'s case, as she spoke both languages fluently. One short line is in English, and one other in some script which might be Oriental.

The towns and other geographical localities on the map are: Guayaquil, Trujillo, Callao, Lima, Ayacucho, Cuzco ("ancient capital of the Incas"), Pisco, the Island of Chincha, Aucari, Caraveli, Arequipa, Arica; and farther down Tarapaca, Iquique and Cobija. The Payequina (or Pay'quina) river is said to cross the dividing line between Bolivia and Peru, and to carry particles of gold from Brazil. Under the sketch, the explanatory note says that this is a rock cut perpendicularly with hieroglyphics, and in the interior of which is the tomb of the Inca Kings.

The last third of the front page and the whole of the second are

APPENDIX BY THE COMPILER

343

occupied with a text in a peculiar Italian, the approximate translation of which is given below:

"This was confided to me about fifteen years ago by an old priest in Peru who makes journeys into the interior, and who told me this secret, which had been disclosed to him by an Indian at confession, who said it had been revealed to him by his parents. It concerned the famous mine where they found the gold which the Spaniards carried off soon after the conquest of Peru.

"I was told that the last King of the Incas having been taken prisoner by Pizarro, there was offered for his ransom a room full of gold, which they got in three days. Pizarro, astounded by so much treasure, would only release the imprisoned King on condition that they would tell from what mine the treasure came. The Queen gave the order to close the ventilating shafts of the great tunnel, so that the mine should be for ever lost to the rapacious Spaniards. After much search by commissions from various nations and by naturalists, it still remains an impenetrable secret.

"By a strange coincidence it happened that, after this secret had been communicated to me while travelling with the priest, I arrived, as the sun was setting, at Arica; a hill or high rock perpendicular

on the side facing the sea showed that it had on it some hieroglyphics, of which I could get no explanation from the same priest. But some months later, when we were back at Lima, he told me the following secret: that Cuzco was the capital of Peru, where the Temple of the Sun used to be, and from a volcanic aperture in the ground a great gold chain was thrown which encircled the Temple with all its idols, etc., etc.

“In the neighborhood (still undiscovered) is the entrance to a tunnel which extends from Cuzco to Lima, passing through the Andes and past Arica, where the rock bearing the hieroglyphics is, and at the foot of which are to be found the tombs of the Inca kings. Inside the mortuary chambers are said to be two closed doors, difficult to discover; one opens into the tunnel that goes to Cuzco, and the door opposite leads towards Bolivia, passing through Tarapaca and Cobija. On the boundary between Peru and Bolivia there is a river which is called Pay’quina, and in this area there are three hills in a triangle (a continuation of the chain of the Andes). In one of these three hills—I cannot now remember which—about half way up, is the door to the end of the tunnel.”

On the fourth page of the document a range of mountains is shown as seen from the sea, giving the location of various coastal towns and the line of the tunnels mentioned in the text.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

344

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

WHICH FIRST—THE EGG OR THE BIRD?

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 6, March, 1880, pp. 162-163]

I beg to present my warmest thanks to Mr. William Simpson, F.R.G.S., the distinguished artist and antiquary, who extended last year his researches to Peshawar valley and elsewhere, and thereby so enriched the Lahore Museum, for kindly presenting me with a copy of his very valuable paper, *Buddhist Architecture—Jellalabad*, enriched with seven illustrations.* Our thanks are none the less due to Mr. Simpson, that in one point, and a very important one too, it is impossible for either our Society or myself to agree with his conclusions. The feature of Mr. Simpson's interesting and learned paper is, to quote the words of Mr. James Fergusson, F.R.S., *Past Vice-President*, that every "form of art was imported into India, and *nothing ever came out of it*" (the italics are mine). Mr. Simpson builds his hasty conclusions upon the fact that most of the capitals of the pillars and pilasters in the ruins of the valley of the Kabul River, are Corinthian, and "the bases and moulding generally are such as are most unmistakably derived from the far West," and finally that "a number of bell-shaped capitals, surmounted by double animals which look like a reminiscence of the pillars of Persepolis," are also found in the caves of Karli, and other caves of India, as well as in the valley of Peshawar.

I will not limit my protest in this case, to merely point

* [*Buddhist Architecture in the Jellalabad Valley*, by William Simpson. London, 1880; 27 pp., with sketches and plans. In the *Transactions* of the Royal Institute of British Architects, Session 1879-80.—*Compiler*.]

WHICH FIRST—THE EGG OR THE BIRD?

345

to the words of Mr. Fergusson, who cautiously remarks that "the similarity is, however, so remote that it is hardly sufficient to sustain Mr. Simpson's assertion that every form of art was imported into India, and nothing ever came out of it." But I will humbly suggest that in a country like India, whose past history is a total blank, every attempt to decide the age of the monuments, or whether their style was original or borrowed, is now pretty much as open a question as it was a century ago. A new discovery may any day annihilate the theory of the day before. Lack of space forbids me to enter upon the discussion more elaborately. Therefore, I will permit myself only to say that Mr. Simpson's present "assertion" remains as hypothetical as before. Otherwise, we would

have to decide *a priori*, whether India or Greece borrowed from the other in other important cases now pending. Besides “Corinthian pillars” and “double animals,” once so dear to the Persepolitans, we have, here, the solar race of the Hari-Kula (Sun family) whose deeds must have been a copy of, or the model for, the labours and the very name of the Grecian Sun-God Hercules. No less is it a matter for the consideration of philologists and archaeologists which of the two—the Egyptian Sphinx, called by them Hari-Mukh, or Har-M-Kho (the Sun in his resting place) or the lofty Himâlaya peak, also called Harimukh (the mouth of the Sun) in the range to the north of Kashmir, owes its name to the other.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

346

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

CUP-MARK INSCRIPTIONS*

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 6, March, 1880, p. 163]

H. Rivett-Carnac, Esquire, of the Bengal Civil Service, C.I.E., F.S.A., M.R.A.S., F.G.S., etc., has placed us under obligations by sending us copies of his paper, *Archaeological Notes on Ancient Sculpturings on Rocks in Kumaon, India, etc.*, and other recent monographs which embody the latest fruits of his indefatigable antiquarian researches. An eloquent and famous American preacher once said, in an address upon the Fine Arts, that he never could see an Italian image vendor enter a poor man's cabin without feeling that he ought to lift his hat to him as to a real missionary of Art. For, rude and coarse as might be the images he carried, they still embodied at least a rudimentary idea of sculpture, and that lay latent in the mind of the poor man's son. This was a great truth that the preacher uttered, and recalls the old familiar proverb, "Despise not the day of small things." Some of the world's greatest discoveries have resulted from the chance observation of some trifling fact that had previously been passed over with ignorant indifference. Who knows, for instance, what a flood of light may not be thrown upon the history of mankind by a recent discovery announced by Mr. Rivett-Carnac—a discovery hitherto not sufficiently appreciated; certainly not as it ought to be. The description given by Sir James Simpson, Bart., of the cup-like markings on stones and rocks in Scotland, England, and other countries of the West struck him as offering an "extraordinary resemblance"

* [The same subject is discussed in a long footnote in *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 346.—*Compiler*.]

CUP-MARK INSCRIPTIONS

347

to the marks on the trap boulders which encircled the Barrows near Nagpur . . . The identity between the shape and construction of the tumuli, and between the remains found in the tumuli of the two countries had already been noticed, and now here was a third, and still more remarkable point, the discovery on these tumuli of markings which correspond exactly with the markings found in the same class of tumuli in Europe.

He abstained from putting forward any theories founded upon this striking resemblance, but affirmed that the cup-marks formed

another and very extraordinary addition to the mass of evidence which already existed in favour of

the view, that a branch of the nomadic tribes who swept, at an early date, over Europe, penetrated into India also.

There is so much more involved in Mr. Rivett-Carnac's discovery and the theory he propounds than could possibly be discussed in the space that is at our present disposal that we refrain. The world's history is yet to be written, and it rests with scholars like Mr. Rivett-Carnac to furnish the alphabet in which its pages are to be traced. We must first scuttle Noah's Ark and drown those fabulous sons who have served so useful a purpose to the pious ethnographers in search of progenitors for the races of mankind, and then the ground will be cleared for the real historian to build upon. There can be no true archaeology among Christian nations until the last remnant of superstitious reliance upon Biblical chronology and history is swept away. These two have composed a mephitic theological atmosphere in which truth has been asphyxiated.

The cup-marks noticed by Sir James Simpson and Mr. Rivett-Carnac are by the latter described as

holes scooped out on the face of the rock [or monument] . . . They are of different sizes, varying from six inches to an inch and a half in diameter, and in depth from one inch to half an inch, and are generally arranged in perpendicular lines presenting many permutations in the number and size and arrangement of the cups. [p. 2.]

The Agham writing consists of combinations of long and short strokes cut on sandstone. On sandstone it would be easier to cut lines with the grain, so to speak, of the stone. To attempt to make a cup-mark would be to risk splitting the slab. On the other hand to cut a line on hard trap would be difficult, whereas to work an iron instrument round and round 80 as to make a "cup-mark" would

be comparatively easy . . . in the American invention by which a record of the message sent by the Electric Telegraph is made by the instrument itself, the most primitive style of marking, or writing on the paper was necessarily adopted. And letters in the Morse Code are consequently composed of numerous combinations of long and short strokes. [p. 9.]

Mr. Rivett-Carnac's attention is called to the fact that stones inscribed with similar cup-marks are found in the Caucasian steppes, and it may be that by a friendly collaboration among archaeologists in various countries, it will soon be practicable to trace the progress from the East to the West of the conquering nomads whose lithic monuments in the British Isles Sir James Simpson has described, and which, we doubt not, that eminent explorer of the Colorado Canyon, Major Powell, has encountered in the North American Continent. Such a co-operation might be hastened if the assiduous observers now in India would accept the suggestion of Colonel Garrick Mallery of the Ethnographic Bureau of the Smithsonian Institution to make *The Theosophist* the vehicle for the mutual exchange of Indian, European, and American notes of discovery.

The undersigned is also under great personal obligation to Mr. Rivett-Carnac for the present of seven extremely valuable old coins recently found in the Bareilly District. This is, indeed, a rare and well appreciated gift; the more so, as our great Indian archaeologist tells me in his letter of February 9:

They are coins of *Surya* or *Mitra* Dynasty (*vide* Prinsep., Vol. II);

Bhumi Mitra,	}	have been found before, but are <i>rare</i> .
Agni Mitra,		
Phaguni Mitra,	}	are not only <i>new</i> coins, but <i>new names</i> in the lists of Indian kings.
Bhudra Ghosa,		
Bhami Mitra, and		
Suyd or Suzyd Mitra,		

As soon as a description of these coins shall appear in the *Asiatic Society's Journal*, we will give our readers extracts from it. Every true son of the great Aryavarta of old should watch with interest all such new finds, as they are constantly adding material for India's archaic history, and

affirming our right to regard her as the oldest, most venerable, and, at the same time, most interesting relic of the prehistoric days. Meanwhile, I again personally reiterate my best thanks to Mr. Rivett-Carnac.

H. P. BLAVATSKY,
Editor of *The Theosophist*.

Bombay, February 25, 1880.



Collected Writings VOLUME II

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 6, March, 1880, pp. 134,144]

Several most ludicrous printer's mistakes have occurred lately within our experience. The *Deccan Star*, noticing a book written by the Conductor of this magazine, called it "Ices Unveiled"; in printing, last month, the Viceroy's letter to us, the compositor made Mr. Batten say he had submitted three of our *members*, instead of numbers, to His Excellency; and, instead of allowing one of our metaphysical contributors to write about developing the inner or spiritual Ego, compelled the unhappy man to appear anxious to develop the spiritual eggs. Finally, the sober *Oriental Miscellany* of Calcutta, for February, comes pirating to us about the true spiritual philosopher uniting himself to the *Scul* of the Universe! If anything more dearly justifying compositorcide than these can be shown, let us know it by all means.

Another error, not at all ludicrous but very annoying was the conversion of the Hon. George H. M. Batten's official title from Personal Assistant into Personal *Attendant* of His Excellency the Viceroy. We trust that the stupid blunder may be excused.

350

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

That witty and epigrammatic journal, the *Bombay Review*, has favoured us with several friendly notices, for which it merits, and will kindly accept, our best thanks. But one remark upon our February number must not pass without rejoinder. It says "*The Theosophist's* ghost stories we have noted once and forever—they make very uncanny reading." They do, if taken only in one sense; and the less one has of ghost stories in general, judging from that point of view, the better. If they were only meant to feed the morbid fancies of sentimental novel readers, their room might well be thought better than their company. But, since they appear in a magazine professedly devoted to a serious enquiry into questions of science and religion, it is not unreasonable to presume that the editors have a definite purpose to show their connection with one or both of these departments of research. Such, at any rate, is the fact. Before we have done with our readers, it will be made very clear that every story of ghost, goblin, and *bhûta*, admitted into our columns, has the value of an illustration of some one phase of that misconceived but most important science, Psychology. Our friend of the *Bombay Review* is hasty in jumping at the conclusion that he has had his last say about our Phantom Dogs,* Ensouled Violins, and stalking shades of the departed.

The government of Erivan was always known for the wealth of its monuments and

relics of antiquity. And now, a Russian daily paper, *Kavkaz*, announces recent discoveries invaluable to archaeology, in the shape of inscriptions upon solid rocks and isolated stones. They are all in cuneiform characters. The earliest of them having attracted the attention of the eminent archaeologist and Armenian scholar, Professor Norman, with the help of the photograph forwarded to him from *Etchmiadzine* (the oldest Armenian monastery), he first discovered the key to these

* [Reference is here to a story of a "Phantom Dog" contributed by a Russian Captain to the pages of the *Messenger of Odessa*, and translated for *The Theosophist*, possibly by H. P. B. herself, who vouches for the veracity of the author. It was published in Vol. I, December, 1879.—*Compiler*.]

characters, and has proved their historical importance. Besides this, the Professor has demonstrated by his discovery that, previous to the invention of the now existing alphabet, by Mesrob, the Armenians had cuneiform or arrow-headed characters, especially remarkable in that all have a similar form of rectangular triangles; the significance of each character, *i.e.*, of the triangle, depending upon the mutual conjunction and position of these triangular forms.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

THE HISTORY OF A “BOOK”

[*The Pioneer*, Allahabad, March 12, 1880]*

As the indications in the press all point towards a Russian reign of terror, either before or at the death of the Czar—a bird’s-eye view of the constitution of Russian society will enable us to better understand events as they transpire.

Three distinct elements compose what is now known as the Russian aristocracy. These may be broadly said to represent the primitive Slavonian, the primitive Tatar, and the composite Russianized immigrants from other countries, and subjects of conquered states, such as the Baltic provinces. The flower of the *haute noblesse*, those whose hereditary descent places them beyond challenge in the very first rank, are the *Rurikovich*, or descendants of the Grand Duke Rurik and the aforesaid separate principalities of Novgorod, Pskov, etc., which were welded together into the Muscovite empire. Such are the Princes Bariatinsky, Dolgoruky, Shuysky (now extinct, we believe), Shcherbatov, Urussov, Viazemsky, etc.† Moscow has been the centre of the greater

* [This article was published the day before the assassination of Emperor Alexander II, which took place March 1st, according to the so-called “old style” or Julian Calendar current in Russia at the time.—*Compiler*.]

† [Some additional information about these families may be of interest to the student.

The Princes Baryatinsky are descendants of St. Mihail, Prince of Chernigov (ca. 1179-1246), having originated from Prince Alexander

part of this princely class since the days of Catherine the Great; and though, in most cases, ruined in fortune, they are yet as proud and exclusive as the blue-blooded French families of the Quartier St. Germain. The names of some of the highest of these are virtually unknown outside of the limits of the Empire. For dissatisfied with the reforms of Peter and Catherine, and unable to make as fine a figure at the court as those whom they delighted to call *parvenus*, it has been their proud boast that they have never served in any subordinate capacity, and have not been brought in contact with Western Europe and its politics. Living only upon their remembrances, they have made a class apart

Andreyevich Mezetsky, surnamed Baryatinsky, on account of the lands bearing that name, which he owned on the river Kletoma in the uyezd of Meshchevsk (in the present-day Province of Kaluga). One of the later representatives of this Family was Prince Alexander Ivanovich Baryatinsky (1814-79), Field Marshal and Viceroy of the Caucasus, 1856-62.

The Princes Shuysky originated from the Princes of Suzdal’, and descended from Prince Yuriy

Vasilyevich Shuysky in the 14th century. They became extinct in the middle of the 17th century.

The Princes Shcherbatov are related to the Princes of Chernigov, and are descended from the great-grandson of Prince Constantine Yuryevich Obolensky, named Vassiliy Andreyevich Shcherbaty, who lived in the 15th century. Among other well-known men, to this family belonged also the renowned historian, Prince Mihail Mihaylovich Shcherbatov (1733-90), whose work entitled *Russian History from the Earliest Times* (7 Vols. in 15 books) is a vast compendium of heretofore unknown archive material, up to the year 1610.

The Princes Urussov are of Tatar origin and descend from the well-known Yedigüey Mangit, a favorite army leader of Tamerlane, who played a considerable role in the Golden Horde and was later a ruling prince of Nogaisk. In the middle of the 14th and the beginning of the 15th centuries, one of his descendants was Uruss-han, the founder of the Urussov Family. The Princes Yussupov stem also from the main trunk of the Urussov line.

The Princes Vyazemsky descend from Prince Rostislav Mihail Mstislavovich Smolensky (d. 1166), grandson of Vladimir Monomah. The great grandson of the latter, Prince Andrey Vladimirovich (killed in 1224 on the river Kalka), surnamed "Dolgaya Ruka," which means "long hand" (not to be confounded with the Dolgorukov Family), ruled at Vyazma, and was the originator of this princely family.—*Compiler.*]



TRAPEZIUM GATE IN A WALL ON
OLLANTAYTAMBO HILL, PERU

(From Heinrich Ubbelohde-Doering, *The Art of Ancient Peru*,
1952. Courtesy Ernst Wasmuth, Publisher, Tübingen, Germany.)



MACHU PICCHU, PERU—HOUSE OF THE THREE WINDOWS
(From Heinrich Ubbelohde-Doering, *The Art of Ancient Peru*, 1952. Courtesy Ernst Wasmuth, Publisher, Tübingen, Germany.)

and dwell on a sort of high social table-land, whence they look down upon commoner mortals. Many of the old families are extinct, and many of those that remain entirely reduced to genteel poverty.

Rurik as it is well known, was not a Slav by birth, but a *Varago-Rooss*, though his nationality, as well as that of his people who came with him to Russia, has been a matter of scientific dispute for several years between the two well-known professors at St. Petersburg, Kostomaroff and Pogodin—the latter now dead. Implored by the Slavs to come and reign over their country, Rurik is reported to have been addressed by the delegates in these ominous words: “Come with us, great prince, . . . for vast is our motherland; but there is little order in it”—words which their descendants might well repeat with as much, if not more, propriety now as then. Accepting the invitation, Rurik came in A.D. 861 to Novgorod, with his two brothers, and laid the foundation of Russian nationality. The “Rurikovitch,” then, are the descendants of this prince, his two brothers and his son, Igor, the line running through a long succession of princes and chiefs of principalities. The reigning house of Rurik became extinct at the death of Fedor, the son of Ivan the Terrible. After a period of anarchy, the Romanoffs, a family of petty nobles, came into power. But, as this was only in 1613, it was not without reason that the Prince P. Dolgoruky, a modern historian of Catherine II (a book prohibited in Russia), when smarting under the sense of a personal wrong, taunted the present Emperor with the remark:

Alexander II must not forget that it is little more than two centuries since the Romanoffs held the stirrups of the Princes Dolgorouky.

And this, despite the marriage of Mary, Princess Dolgoruky,* with Michael

Romanoff after he became Czar.

* [The first Emperor of the House of Romanov was Michael Fyodorovich (1596-1645). He married in 1624 Princess Maria Vladimirovna Dolgorukova, the daughter of Prince Vladimir Timofeyevich Dolgorukov (d. 1633), who was a “boyar” and a judge. She died four months after the wedding, and may have been poisoned. There was no issue from this marriage.—*Compiler.*]

354

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

The Tatar princely families descend from the Tatar Khans and Magnates of the “Zolotaya Orda” (Golden Horde) and Kazan, who so long held Russia in subjection, but who were made tributary by Ivan III, father of Ivan the Terrible, in 1523-1530. Of the families of this blood which survive, the Princes Dondukov, whose head was formerly Governor-General of Kiev, and more recently served in Bulgaria in a similar capacity, may be mentioned.* These are, more or less, looked down upon by the “Rurikovich,” as well as by old Lithuanian and Polish princely families, who hate the Russian descendants of Rurik, as these hate their Roman Catholic rivals. Then comes in the third element, the old Livonian and Esthonian Barons and Counts, the Courland nobles and *freiherrns*, who boast of descending from the first crusaders and look down upon the Slav aristocracy; and various foreign families invited into the country by successive sovereigns, a western element

* [The Princes Dondukov-Korsakov originated from the Kalmik Han Ho-Urlyuk of the 16th century. His great grandson, Han Ayuk-Taydzhi (1646-1724) brought his Torgutsk Kalmik tribes under Peter the Great, and was a favorite of the latter. The grandson of Ayuk was Han Donduk-Ombo (d. 1741). His widow, Dzhan, from Kabardinia, went to St. Petersburg and was baptized with the name of Vera Dondukova. Her son, Yona Dondukovich, was granted an estate in the Province of Mogilev. His daughter, Vera, married Col. Nikita Ivanovich Korsakov. The latter became Prince Dondukov-Korsakov, by order of Emperor Alexander I (July 15, 1802). Their only daughter, Princess Mary Nikitishna, married Col. Michael Alexandrovich Korsakov, who, by ukaz of Alexander I (Sept. 10, 1820), took the title and name of Prince Dondukov-Korsakov. He was Vice-President of the Academy of Sciences. One of his sons, Prince Alexander Mihaylovich (1820-93) was a close friend of H. P. B. and her family, He was first aide-de-camp to Prince Michael Semyenovitch Vorontzov (1782-1856), viceroy of the Caucasus. In 1869, he became Governor-General of the Provinces of Kiev, Podol’ and Volin’; in 1878, Imperial Russian Commissar in Bulgaria; in 1882-90, he was Director of Civil Authorities in the Caucasus, and in command of the military armed forces of the Caucasian military district. His highest rank was General-of-Cavalry. He was a distinguished administrator and a man of great courage and technical knowledge in his chosen field.

Quite a number of letters written to him by H. P. B. from India may be found in the volume entitled *H. P. B. Speaks*. Vol. II (Adyar Madras: Theos. Publ. House, 1851).—*Compiler.*]

engrafted upon the Russian stock. The names of the latter *immigrés* have been Russianized in some cases beyond recognition; as, for instance, the English Hamiltons, who have now become the “Homutoff”!*

We have not the data which would enable us to give the numerical strength of either of the above classes; but an enumeration, made in the year 1842, showed a total of 551,970 noblemen of hereditary, and 257,346 of personal rank. This comprised all in the empire of different degrees of noble ranks, including the princely families and the under-stratum of nobility. There is an untitled nobility, the descendants of the old Boyars of Russia, often prouder of their family record than those who are known as princes. The Demidoff family, for instance, and the Narishkine, though frequently offered the rank of prince and count, have always haughtily rejected the honour, maintaining that the Czar could make a prince any day, but never a Demidoff or a Narishkin.†

Peter the Great, having abolished the princely privileges of the Boyars, and made the offices of the empire accessible to all, created the *chin*, or a caste of municipal *employés* and government officials, divided into fourteen classes, the first eight of which confer hereditary nobility upon the person holding one of them, and the six latter give but a personal nobility to the incumbent, and do not transmit gentility to the children. Office does not increase the nobility

* [There were at least three noble families of the name of Homutov. One of them, according to tradition, stems from a Thomas Hamilton of Scotland who emigrated to Russia in 1542, with his son Peter.—*Compiler.*]

† [The Demidovs originated from David Antufyev who was a master-smith at the armament factory at Tula. His son, Nikita Demidovich Demidov (1656-1725) was the founder of the great wealth of this family.

The Narishkins descend, according to tradition, from a Crimean Tartar named Narishka, who arrived at Moscow in 1463. Emperor Alexey Mihaylovich Romanov chose for his second wife Natalya Kirillovna Narishkin (1651-94), daughter of Kiril Poluektovich Narishkin; the marriage took place in 1671, and from it was born Peter the Great. This family produced a number of renowned statesmen through the centuries.—*Compiler.*]

of incumbents already noble, but does lift the ignoble into a higher social rank (*chinovnik*, government *employé*, was for years a term of scorn in the mouth of the nobles). It is only since Alexander came to the throne that an old edict was done away with, which deprived of noble rank and reduced to the peasantry any family which, for three successive generations, had not taken service under the Government. Those were called *Odnodvortzi*, and among them some of the oldest families found themselves included in 1845, when the Emperor Nicholas ordered the examination of the titles of nobles. The nice distinctions among the above fourteen classes are as puzzling to a foreigner as the relative precedence of the various buttons of Chinese mandarins, or the

tails of the Pashas.

Besides these conflicting elements of high and low nobility, the direct descendants of the Boyars of old—the Slavonian *peers* in the palmy days of Russia, divided in petty sovereignties, who chose for themselves the prince they wanted to serve and left him at will, who were vassals, not the subjects, had their own military retinue, and without whose approval no grand-ducal “ukase” could be of any avail—and the ennobled *chinovniks*, sons of priests and petty traders, there are yet to be considered 79,000,000 of other people. These may be divided into the millions of liberated serfs (22,000,000), of crown peasants (16,000,000), and of town peasants (about 10,000,000), who inhabit cities, preferring various trades and menial service to agriculture. The rest comprise (1) the *meshtchanis*, or petty bourgeois, one step higher than the peasant; (2) the enormous body of merchants and traders divided into three guilds; (3) the hereditary citizens, who have nothing to do with nobility; (4) the black clergy or the monks and nuns; and the secular clergy, or married priest—a caste apart and hereditary; and (5) the military class.

We will not include in our classification the 3,000,000 of Mohammedans, the 2,000,000 of Jews, the 250,000 Buddhists, the pagan Izors, the Savakots, and the Karels, who seem perfectly well satisfied with the Russian rule,

thoroughly tolerant to their various worships.* These, with the exception of the higher educated Jews and some fanatical Mohammedans, care little as to the hand that rules them. But we will remind the reader of the fact that there are over one hundred different nations and tribes, who speak more than forty different languages, and are scattered over an area of 8,331,884 English square miles;† that the population of all Russia, European and Asiatic, is not above ten to the square mile; that the railroads are very few and easily controlled, and other means of transport scanty. How far it would be possible to effect a complete revolution throughout the Russian Empire, may well be a subject of conjecture. With so little to bind the many nationalities into one movement, it would seem to a foreigner an undertaking so hopeless as to discourage even an Internationalist or a Nihilist. Add to this the unquestionable devotion of the liberated serfs and peasantry to the Czar, in whom they see alike the benefactor of the oppressed, and the vicegerent of God, the head of their Church, and the case seems yet more problematical. At the same time, we must not forget the lessons of history, which has more than once shown us how the very vastness of an empire, and lack of a common unity among its subjects have proved at some supreme crisis the most potent elements of its disruption. The heart of Russia beats at Moscow, though the brain plots at St. Petersburg; and any movement to be successful must carry these two centres.

St. Petersburg is in reality the aristocratic *Parc aux Cerfs*, a place of shameless profligacy and riotous excesses, with so little that is national in it that its very name is German. It is the natural port of entry for all the Continental vices, as well as for the loose ideas about morality, religion and social duty, which are becoming so widely

prevalent. The

* By the last statistics, the Mohammedans have 4,189 mosques and 7,940 *muftis* and *mullahs* in the Empire of Russia; the Buddhists 389 places of worship and 4,400 priests, the Jews 445 synagogues and 4,935 rabbis, etc.

† According to the calculation made in 1856 by G. Schweitzer, Director of the Observatory of Moscow.

358

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

same corrupting influence that Paris has upon France, St. Petersburg has upon Russia. An influential Russian magazine, *Russkaya Ryetch*, gave us only the other day the following picture of St. Petersburg society:

Russian society slumbers [it says] or rather it feels heavy and somnolent. It lazily nods, only now and then opening its lifeless eyes, as might one, who, after a heavy dinner, forced to sit in an unnatural position, cannot resist a lethargic drowsiness, and feels that he must either unbutton his uniform and draw a full breath, or—suffocate. But the dinner is an official one, and his body pinched in a State uniform too tight for him. The man is overcome with an irresistible somnolence; he feels the blood rushing to his head, his legs tremble and his hand mechanically fumbles the buttons of his uniform to get one gasp of breath that would interrupt the unendurable torture. Such is the present condition of our society.

But while it is nodding under its threatened apoplexy, from a surfeit of indigestible food, those carnivorous jackals, who are always ready to eat and drink, and can digest whatever they pick up, do not sleep. The violation of the seventh commandment, intellectually as well as physically, having debased body, mind, and soul, is nestling in the very heart of the public. Adulterers of body, adulterers of thought, adulterers of knowledge and science, adulterers of labour—reign in our midst, are creeping out from every side as the representatives of society and the public, boasting of their brazen hardihood, successful wherever they go, having flung away all shame, cast aside to at least conceal the nakedness of their deeds, even from the eyes of those upon whom they speculate, from whom they squeeze all that can be squeezed, only from such a fool as—man. Government and treasury pilferers; embezzlers of public and private properties; blacklegs and swindlers subsidized by numberless bubble companies, by stock companies and fraudulent enterprises; thimble-riggers and violators of women and children whom they debauch and ruin; contractors, money-lenders, bribed judges and venal counsel, bucket-shop keepers and sharpers of all nationalities, every religion, every social class—this is our modern social force. Like beasts of prey, hunting in packs, this force, gloating over its quarry, satiating itself, noisily crunching its restless, tireless jaws, imposing itself upon everyone, dares to offer itself as the patron of everything—science, literature, arts, and even thought itself. There it is, the kingdom of *this* world, *flesh* of the *flesh*, blood of the blood, made in the image of the *animal* from which the first germ of man evolved.

Such are the social ethics of our contemporary Russia, on Russian testimony. If so, then it must have reached that culminating point from which it must either fall into the

mire of dissolution, like old Rome, or gravitate towards regeneration through all the horrors and chaos of a “Reign of Terror.” The press teems with guarded complaints of “prostration of forces” among its representatives, the chronic signs of fast-impending social dissolution, and the profound apathy into which the whole Russian people seem to have fallen. The only beings full of life and activity, amid this lethargy of satiety, seem to be the omnipresent and ever-invisible Nihilists. Clearly there *must* be a change.

From all this social rottenness, the black fungus of Nihilism has sprung. Its hot-bed has been preparing for years, by the gradual sapping of moral tone and self-respect and the debauchery of the higher class, who always give the impulse to those below them for good or evil. All that lacked was the occasion and the man. Under the passport system of Nicholas, the chances for becoming polluted by Paris life were confined to a mere handful of rich nobles, whom the caprice of the Czar allowed to travel. Even they, the privileged of favour and fortune, had to apply for permission six months in advance, and pay a thousand roubles for their passport, with a heavy fine for each day in excess of the time granted, and the prospect of confiscation of their entire property should the foreign stay exceed three years. But with Alexander everything was changed; the emancipation of the Serfs was followed by numberless reforms—the unmuzzling of the press, trial by jury, equalizing the rights of citizenship, free passports, etc. Though good in themselves, these reforms came with such a rush upon a people unaccustomed to the least of these privileges, as to throw them into a high fever. The patient, escaping from his strait jacket, ran wildly about the streets. Then came the Polish Revolution of 1863, in which a number of Russian students participated. Reaction followed and repressive measures were readopted one by one; but it was too late. The caged animal had tasted liberty, though ever so brief, and thenceforward could not be docile as before. Where there had been but one Russian traveller to Paris, Vienna and Berlin under the old reign, now there were thousands and tens of thousands; just so many more agencies were at work to import

fashionable vice and scientific scepticism. The names of John Stuart Mill, Darwin, and Büchner, were upon the lip of every beardless boy and heedless girl at the universities and colleges. The former were preaching Nihilism, the latter Women’s Rights and Free Love. The one let their hair grow like *muzhiks*, and donned the red national shirt and *kaftan* of the peasantry; the other clipped their hair short and affected blue spectacles. Trade unions, infected with the notions of the International, sprang up like mushrooms; and demagogues ranted to social clubs upon the conflict between labour and capital. The cauldron began to seethe. At last the man came.

The history of Nihilism can be summed up in two words. For their name they are indebted to the great novelist Turgenev, who created Bazaroff, and stamped the type with the name of *Nihilist*. Little did the famous author of *Fathers and Sons* imagine at that time into what national degradation his hero would lead the Russian people

twenty-five years later. Only “Bazaroff”—in whom the novelist painted with satirical fidelity the characteristics of certain “Bohemian” negationists, then just glimmering on the horizon of student life—had little in common, except the name and materialistic tendency, with the masked revolutionists and terrorists of today. Shallow, bilious, and nervous, this *studiosus medicinae* is simply an unquiet spirit of sweeping negation; of that sad, yet scientific scepticism reigning now supreme in the ranks of the highest intellect; a spirit of materialism, sincerely believed in, and as honestly preached; the outcome of long reflections over the rotten remnants of man and frog in the dissecting-room, where the dead *man* suggested to his mind no more than the dead frog. Outside of animal life everything to him is nihil; “a thistle,” growing out of a lump of mud, is all that man can look forward to after death. And thus this type—Bazaroff—was caught up as their highest ideal by the university students. The “Sons” began destroying what the “Fathers” had built . . . And now Turgenyev is forced to taste of the bitter fruits of the tree of his planting. Like Frankenstein, who could not control the mechanical monster that his ingenuity had

constructed out of the putrefactions of the churchyard, he now finds his “type”—which was from the first hateful and terrible to him—grown into the ranting spectre of the Nihilist delirium, the red-handed socialist. The press, at the initiative of the *Moskovskiya Vedomosty*—a centenarian paper—takes up the question and openly accuses the most brilliant literary talent of Russia—one whose sympathies are, and always have been, on the side of the “Fathers,” with having been the first to plant the poisonous weed.

Owing to the peculiar transitional state of Russian society between 1850 and 1860, the name was hailed and adopted and the Nihilists began springing up on every side. They captured the national literature, and their new doctrines were fast disseminated throughout the whole empire. And now *Nihilism* has grown into a power—an *imperium in imperio*. It is no more with Nihilism with which Russia struggles, but with the terrible consequences of the ideas of 1850. *Fathers and Sons* must henceforth occupy a prominent place, not only in literature, as quite above the ordinary level of authorship, but also as the creator of a new page in Russian political history, the end of which no man can foretell.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

362

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

MISSIONARIES MILITANT

[*The Pioneer*, Allahabad, March 22, 1880]

We have *just* read the two dreary columns in *The Pioneer* of March 15th, “The Theosophists in Council,” by Mr. T. G. Scott. The Council of the Society having nothing more to say to the reverend polemic, who, in rejoinder to a brief card, treats the world to two columns of what Coleridge would call “a juggle of sophistry,” I, myself, would ask you to favour me with a brief space.

A few points of Mr. Scott’s most glaring misconceptions (?) about our Society may be noticed. We are said to have declared, at New York, that the Theosophical Society was hostile to the “Christian Church”; while at Mayo Hall, Allahabad, our President affirmed that his Society was not organized to fight “Christianity.” This is assumed to be a contradiction and a “change of base.” Now if there were enough “Christianity” in the “Christian Church” to be spoken of, the gentleman’s point of view might be deemed well taken. But, in my humble opinion, this is not at all the case. Hence—though not at all hostile to “Christianity,” *i.e.*, the ethics alleged to have been preached by Jesus of Nazareth, I, in common with many Theosophists, am very much so to the so-called “Church of Christ.” Collectively, this Church includes three great rival religions and some hundreds of minor sects, for the most part bitterly recriminative, and, mutually, far more hostile to each other than we are to all. To accuse, therefore, the Theosophist—who may dislike the Methodist, Presbyterian, Jesuit, Baptist, or any other alleged “Christian” sect, of bitter hatred of “Christianity” in the abstract—is like accusing one of hating

MISSIONARIES MILITANT

363

light because he opposes the use of either or all of the many new-fangled inventions of kerosene lamps, which, under the pretext of preserving the sight, injure it! The Christianity of Jesus, dragged by its numberless sects around the arena of our century, appears like that car in the Slavonian fable (a version of one by Aesop) to which were harnessed all manner of creeping, swimming, and flying things. Each of these, following its own instinct, attempted to draw the car after its own fashion. Result—between the birds, animals, reptiles, and fishes, the unfortunate vehicle was torn into fragments.

The reverend missionaries are hard to please in this country. When left unnoticed, they complain of the Theosophists ignoring the brave “six hundred”; and when we do

notice them—which, indeed, happens only under compulsion—they begin abusing us in the most un-Christian and often, I am sorry to say, ungentlemanly way. Thus, for instance, we had to call the strong hand of the law to our help in the case of *The Dnyanodaya*—a diminutive and sorry, but quite a fighting, little missionary weekly of Bombay, which called our Society names, and had to apologize in print for it. Now comes *The Bengal Magazine* of January. Its Editor—by-the-by, a Christian reverend, but, nevertheless, very rude Babu—is advised to look out, and consult law, before he charges Colonel Olcott or anyone else with “hocus-pocus tricks” again; as the “gushing Colonel” may prove as little gushing and as active in his case as he was in that of the abusive little *Dnyanodaya*. And now Mr. T. G. Scott calls an article on “Missions in India” (*The Theosophist*, January) a

bold, but exceedingly *ignorant* attempt at making it appear that missions are a failure in India

Ignorant as we new-comers may be about Indian missionary questions, I must remind Mr. Scott that the person whom he stigmatizes with ignorance is a lady who has passed many years in India and has had ample opportunities for observation. Most military or civil *employés* of experience in India whom I have met take the same view of the matter that she does. I cannot imagine why Darwin

and Tyndall should have been selected by Mr. Scott, out of thousands of scientific and educated men now pulling Christianity to pieces, as “noisy characters”; nor why he should cite, in an issue created by modern biblical research, Newton, Kepler, Herschel, or any one else who lived before the recent advances of science in this direction, and in days when, to deny not merely Christianity, but some minor dogma of the state religion was equal to a self-condemnation to an *auto-da-fé*. As for the Christianity of Max Müller, Dr. Carpenter (a prince among materialists), and the late Louis Agassiz, the less said, the better. Might not his long string of high-sounding names have been profitably enlarged by the addition of those of the late Viscount Amberley and Lord Queensborough, of the “church” of Moncure Conway, in which is preached the great Religion of Humanity free from every “religion” and church? “Science is our guide, and truth is the spirit that we worship,” says the noble Lord Queensborough in his letter recently published in *The Statesman*! Mr. Scott assures his readers that “never since the Apostles has it (Christianity) been so vigorous as now,” “the tendency is anything else than to ‘infidelity’ and ‘atheism’.” And Lord Queensborough, in his letter to “E. C. H.,” challenges the latter, and with him the whole world of Christians in these remarkable words:

Call us atheists and infidels if you will; . . . and I maintain, and will maintain, that the time has arrived for us to proclaim ourselves and to claim to be respected, as other religious bodies are; but as we never shall be, unless we stand forward and openly declare what our religion is . . . I am only acting as the mouthpiece of thousands, perhaps millions, with whom I have faith in common . . . Churches of our religion already exist. I will name one in London, *always as full as it can hold on Sundays*—South Place

Chapel, Finsbury, where Mr. Moncure Conway lectures.

Moncure Conway, I will remind Mr. Scott, instead of the *Bible* and Christianity, preaches every Sunday from the *Sacred Anthology*, extracts from the *Vedas*, the Buddhist *Sutras*, the *Koran*, and so on. Many of his parishioners are fellows of the Theosophical Society. And now it is my turn to ask, "How does *this* tally with the utterances of" Mr. Scott, the missionary? Equally ill-timed was Mr. Scott's

quotation from the *New Testament* of the passage: "Jesus said, Other sheep I have, not of this fold." For in the very mouth of Jesus are also put the words: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not *shall be damned*" (*Mark*, xvi, 16).

To this Mr. Scott may, perhaps, repeat what he says in his two-column letter:

The whole question of the nature and extent of future punishment is *a matter of interpretation*.

Exactly. So we, Theosophists and other heathen and "infidels," who live in a century of free thought and in a country of religious freedom, avail ourselves of it.

And now all his points being answered, the reverend gentleman is at liberty to ventilate his ideas and pour his wrath upon the Theosophists wherever he likes. Yet, unless he can get his satisfaction from following the good example of other missionaries, and indulge in monologues of abuse, he can reckon but little upon us to answer him. It takes two for a dialogue; and whether as a Society or as individuals, we decline any further controversy on the subject with one who gives so few facts and so many words.

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**
1880

366

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

THE SILENT BROTHER

BY COUNT E.....A....., F.T.S.

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, Nos. 7 & 8, April and May, 1880,
pp. 166-68 and 200-201]

[The authorship of this remarkable story is uncertain, but it bears a great similarity to other stories written by H. P. B. in collaboration with the Adept known as Hillarion Smerdis, such as, for instance, "The Ensouled Violin," or "An Unsolved Mystery."

The initials E. A. could very easily stand for Endreinek Agardi, a pupil of Master M., and an F.T.S., on the strength of H. P. B.'s own explanation. See in this connection the Compiler's Notes at the end of the story, "An Unsolved Mystery," in Volume I of the present Series.—*Compiler.*]

The strange story I am about to say was given to me by one of its principal heroes. Its authenticity cannot be doubted, however sceptical one may feel as to the details of the narrative—and this for three good reasons: (a) the circumstances are well known at Palermo, and the incidents still remembered by a few of the oldest inhabitants; (b) the shock produced by the dreadful occurrence on the narrator was so violent as to turn his hair—the hair of a young man of 26—as white as snow in one night, and make him a raving lunatic for the next six months; (c) there is an official record of the death-bed confession of the criminal, and it can be found in the family chronicles of the Prince di R.....V.....For myself at least, no doubt remains as to the veracity of the story.

Glaüerbach was a passionate lover of the occult sciences. For a time, his only object was to become a pupil of the famous Cagliostro, then living at Paris, where he attracted universal attention; but the mysterious Count from the first refused to have anything to do with him. Why he

THE SILENT BROTHER

367

declined to accept as pupil a young man of a good family and very intelligent, was a secret which Glaüerbach—the narrator of the tale—could never penetrate. Suffice it to say that all he could prevail upon the "Grand Copt" to do for him, was to teach him in a certain degree how to learn the secret thoughts of the persons he associated with, by making them speak such thoughts audibly without knowing that their lips were uttering any sound. And even this comparatively easy magnetic phase of occult science he could not master practically.

In those days, Cagliostro and his mysterious powers were on all tongues. Paris was in

a state of high fever about him. At Court, in society, in the Parliament, in the Academy, they spoke but of Cagliostro. The most extraordinary stories were told of him, and the more they were extraordinary the more willingly people believed them. They said that Cagliostro had shown pictures of future events in his magic mirrors to some of the most illustrious statesmen of France, and that these events had all come to pass. The king and the royal family had been of the number of those who were allowed to peer into the unknown. The "magician" had evoked the shades of Cleopatra and Julius Caesar, of Mohammed and Nero. Ghengis Khan and Charles the Fifth had held a conversazione with the minister of the police; and an outwardly pious, but secretly sceptical Christian Archbishop having shown a desire to have his doubts cleared, one of the gods was summoned—but did not come, for he had never existed in flesh. Marmontel having expressed the desire to meet Belisarius, he, upon seeing the great warrior emerging from the ground, fell senseless.* Young, daring and passionate Gläuerbach, feeling that Cagliostro would never share with him more than a few crumbs of his great learning, turned in another direction, and at last found an unfrocked abbot, who for a consideration took upon himself

* [Reference is here to Jean Franvois Mannontel (1723.99), French writer, historiographer of France and secretary to the Academy. He published in 1767 a romance, *Bélisaire*, which incurred the censure of the Sorbonne and the archbishop of Pads for a chapter on religious toleration.—*Compiler*.]

to teach him all he knew. In a few months (?) he had learned the weird secrets of black and white magic, *i.e.*, the art of cleverly bamboozling fools. He also visited Mesmer and his clairvoyants, whose number had become very large at that period. The ill-fated French society of 1785 felt its doom approaching; it suffered from spleen and greedily seized upon anything that brought it a change in its killing satiety and lethargic monotony. It had become so sceptical that, at last, from believing in nothing, it ended by believing anything. Gläuerbach, under the experienced direction of his abbot, began practicing upon human credulity. But he had not been more than eight months at Paris, when the police paternally advised him to go abroad—for his health. There was no appeal from such advice. However convenient the capital of France for old hands at charlatanry, it is less so for beginners. He left Paris and went, via Marseilles, to Palermo.

In that city the intelligent pupil of the abbot got acquainted with, and contracted a friendship with Marquis Hector, youngest son of the Prince R.....V....., one of the most wealthy and noble families of Sicily. Three years earlier, a great calamity had befallen that house. Hector's eldest brother, Duke Alfonso, had disappeared without leaving any clue; and the old prince, half-killed with despair, had left the world for the retirement of his magnificent villa in the suburbs of Palermo, where he led the life of a recluse.

The young Marquis was dying with *ennui*. Not knowing what better to do with

himself, under the directions of Gläuerbach he began studying magic, or at least, that which passed under that name with the clever German. The professor and pupil became inseparable.

As Hector was the Prince's second son, he had, during the life of his elder brother, no choice left him, but to join either the army or the church. All the wealth of the family passed into the hands of the Duke Alfonso R..... V....., who was betrothed, moreover, to Bianca Alfieri, a rich orphan, left, at the age of ten, heiress to an immense fortune. This marriage united the wealth of both the houses



ZIGZAG WALLS AT SACSAYHUAMAN, NEAR CUZCO, PERU
(From Heinrich Ubbelohde-Doering, *The Art of Ancient Peru*,
1952. Courtesy Ernst Wasmuth, Publisher, Tübingen, Germany.)



MONOLITHS ON OLLANTAYTAMBO HILL, PERU
(From Heinrich Ubbelohde-Doering, *The Art of Ancient Peru*,
1952. Courtesy Ernst Wasmuth, Publisher, Tübingen, Germany.)

of R.....V.....and Alfieri, and it had all been settled when both Alfonso and Bianca were mere children, without even a thought as to whether they would ever come to like each other. Fate, however, decided it should be so, and the young people formed a mutual and passionate attachment.

As Alfonso was too young to be married, he was sent travelling, and remained absent for over four years. Upon his return, preparations were being made for the celebration of the nuptials, which the old Prince had decided should form one of the future epopees of Sicily. They were planned upon the most magnificent scale. The wealthiest and noblest of the land had assembled two months beforehand and were being royally entertained in the family mansion, which occupied a whole square of the old city, as all were more or less related to either the R.....V.....or the Alfieri families in the second, fourth, twentieth or sixtieth degree. A host of hungry poets and *improvisatori* had arrived, uninvited, to sing, according to the local custom of those days, the beauty and virtues of the newly-married couple. Livorno sent a ship-load of sonnets, and Rome the Pope's blessing. Crowds of people curious to witness the procession had come to Palermo from afar; and whole regiments of the light-fingered gentry prepared to practice their profession at the first opportunity.

The marriage ceremony had been fixed for a Wednesday. On Tuesday the bridegroom disappeared without leaving the slightest trace. The police of the whole land was set afoot. Uselessly, alas! Alfonso had for several days been going from town to Monte Cavalli—a lovely villa of his—to superintend in person the preparations for the reception of his lovely bride, with whom he was to pass his honey-moon in that charming village. On Tuesday evening he had repaired there alone and on horseback as usual, to return home early on the following morning. About ten in the evening two *contadini* had met and saluted him. That was the last any one saw of the young Duke.

Later, it was ascertained that on that night a pirate vessel had been cruising in the waters of Palermo; that the

corsairs had been ashore, and carried away several Sicilian women. In the latter part of the last century, Sicilian ladies were considered as very valuable goods: there was a large demand for the commodity in the markets of Smyrna, Constantinople, and the Barbary Coast; the rich pashas paying for them enormous sums. Besides pretty Sicilian women, the pirates used to smuggle away rich people for the sake of the ransom. The poor men, when caught, shared the fate of the working-cattle, and fed on flogging. Everyone at Palermo firmly believed that young Alfonso had been carried away by the pirates; and it was far from being improbable. The High Admiral of the Sicilian navy immediately

dispatched after the pirates four swift vessels, renowned above all others for their speed. The old Prince promised mountains of gold to him who would give him back his son and heir. The little squadron being ready, it spread its sails and disappeared on the horizon. On one of the vessels was Hector R..... V.....

At nightfall, the watchers on the deck had as yet seen nothing. Then the breeze freshened, and about midnight it was blowing a hurricane. One of the vessels returned to port immediately, the two others were driven away before the gale and were never heard of more, and the one, on which was young Hector, returned two days after, dismantled and a wreck, to Trapani.

The night before, the watchers, in one of the beacon towers along the shore, saw a brig far off, which, without mast, sails or flag, was being furiously carried along on the crest of the angry sea. They concluded it must be the pirates' brig. It went down in full sight, and the report spread that every soul on board, to the very last man, had perished.

Notwithstanding all this, emissaries were sent by the old Prince in every direction—to Algiers, Tunis, Morocco, Tripoli, and Constantinople. But they found nothing; and when Gläuerbach arrived at Palermo, three years had passed since the event.

The Prince, though having lost a son, did not relish the idea of losing the wealth of the Alfieris in the bargain. He concluded to marry Bianca to his second son, Hector. But

the fair Bianca wept, and would not be consoled. She refused point-blank, and declared she would remain faithful to her Alfonso.

Hector behaved like a true knight. "Why make poor Bianca still more miserable, by worrying her with prayers? Perhaps my brother is yet alive"—he said. "How could I, then, in view of such an uncertainty, deprive Alfonso, in case he should return, of his best treasure, and the one dearer to him than life itself!"

Touched with the exhibition of such noble feelings, Bianca began to relax her indifference for her Alfonso's brother. The old man did not lose all hopes. Besides, Bianca was a woman; and with women in Sicily, as elsewhere, the absent are always in the wrong. She finally promised, if she should ever have a positive assurance of Alfonso's death, to marry his brother, or—no one. Such was the state of affairs when Gläuerbach—he who boasted of the power of raising the shadows of the dead—appeared at the princely and now mournful and deserted country villa of the R..... V..... He had not been there a fortnight before he captivated the affections and admirations of everyone. The mysterious and the occult, and especially dealings with a world unknown, the "silent land," have a charm for everyone in general and for the afflicted especially. The old Prince took courage one day and asked the crafty German to solve their cruel doubts. Was Alfonso dead or alive? That *was* the question. Taking a few minutes to reflect, Gläuerbach answered in this wise:—"Prince, what you ask me to do for you is very important . . . Yes, it is quite true. If your unfortunate son is no more, I may be enabled to call forth his shadow; but will not the shock be too violent for you?"

Will your son and your pupil—the charming Countess Bianca—consent to it?”

“Anything rather than cruel uncertainty,” the old Prince answered. And so the evocation was decided upon, to take place a week from that day. When Bianca heard of it, she fainted. Recalled to her senses by an abundance of restoratives, curiosity got the better of her scruples. She was a daughter of Eve, as women all are. Hector began by setting

himself with all his might against what he regarded as a sacrilege. He did not wish to trouble the rest of the dear departed; he at first said, if his beloved brother was really dead, he preferred not to know it. But at last his growing love for Bianca and the desire to satisfy his father prevailed, and he too consented.

The week demanded by Gläuerbach for preparation and purification, seemed a century to the impatience of all three. Had it been a day longer, they must have all gone mad. Meanwhile, the necromancer had not been losing his time. Suspecting that the demand in this direction would come one day, he had from the first quietly gathered the minutest particulars about the deceased Alfonso, and most carefully studied his life-size portrait which hung in the old Prince’s bedroom. This was enough for his purpose. To add to the solemnity, he had enjoined upon the family a strict fast and prayers, day and night, during the whole week. At last the longed-for hour arrived, and the Prince, accompanied by his son and Bianca, entered the necromancer’s apartment. Gläuerbach was pale and solemn, but composed. Bianca trembled from head to foot and kept her bottle of aromatic salts in constant use. The Prince and Hector looked like two criminals led to execution. The large room was lighted by only a single lamp, and even this dim light was suddenly extinguished. Amid the thick darkness, the lugubrious voice of the conjuror was heard to pronounce a short cabalistic formula in Latin, and finally, to command the shadow of Alfonso to appear—if it was, indeed, in the land of the shadows.

Suddenly the darkness of the furthest recess in the room became illuminated with a feeble bluish light, which, by slow degrees, brought before the sight of the audience a large magic mirror, which seemed to be covered with a thick mist. In its turn, this mist was gradually dissipated, and finally, the prostrate form of a man appeared to the eyes of those present. It was Alfonso! His body had on the identical dress he wore on the evening of his disappearance; heavy chains clasped his hands, and he lay dead on the sea-shore. Water dripped from his long hair and blood-

stained and torn clothes; then a huge wave crept on and, engulfing him, all suddenly

disappeared.

A dead silence had reigned during the whole progress of this fearful vision. The persons present trembling violently tried to keep their breath; then all relapsed into darkness, and Bianca, uttering a feeble moan, fell senseless into the arms of her guardian.

The shock had proved too much. The young girl had a brain fever which held her between life and death for weeks. The Prince felt little better; and Hector never left his room for a fortnight. No more doubts—Alfonso was dead, he was drowned. The walls of the palace were hung with black cloth, strewn all over with silver tears. For three days, the bells of many churches at Palermo tolled for the unfortunate victim of the pirates and the sea. The inside of the great cathedral was also draped from floor to dome in black velvet. Two thousand and five-hundred gigantic tapers flickered around the catafalque; and Cardinal Ottoboni, assisted by five bishops, daily performed the service for the dead for six long weeks. Four thousand ducats were distributed in charity to the poor at the portal of the cathedral, and Gläuerbach, clad in a sable mantle like one of the family, represented its absent members, during the funeral obsequies. His eyes were red, and when he covered them with his scented pocket-handkerchief, those near him heard his convulsive sobs. Never had a sacrilegious comedy been better performed.

Soon after, a magnificent monument of pure Carrara marble, sculptured with two allegorical figures, was raised in Alfonso's memory in St. Rosalia's church. On the sarcophagus grandiloquent inscriptions in Greek and Latin were cut by order of the old Prince.

Three months later, the news spread that Bianca was wedded to Hector. Gläuerbach, who had meanwhile gone to travel all over Italy, returned to Monte Cavalli on the eve of the marriage. He exhibited his wonderful necromantic powers elsewhere, and had the "holy" Inquisition upon his heels. He felt full security only in the bosom of the family which adored and looked upon him as a demi-god

On the following morn, the numerous guests proceeded to the chapel, which was resplendent with gold and silver and decorated as for a royal wedding. How happy looked the bridegroom! How lovely the bride! The old Prince wept for joy, and Gläuerbach had the honor of being Hector's best man.

In the garden were spread enormous banquet tables at which were entertained the vassals of both the families. The feasts of Gargantua were less rich than such a festival. Fifty fountains spouted wine instead of water; but towards sunset, no one could drink any more, for unfortunately—for some people—human thirst is not infinite. Roasted pheasants and partridges were thrown by the dozens to the neighboring dogs, which they too left untouched, for even they were gorged to the throat.

Suddenly, among the gay and showy crowd, there appeared a new guest, who attracted general attention. It was a man, thin as a skeleton, very tall, and clad in the dress of the penitent monks or "Silent Brothers," as they are popularly called. This dress

consists of a long, flowing, gray, woollen garment, girded with a rope at the two ends of which hang human bones, and a pointed hood which entirely covers the face, except two holes for the eyes. Among many orders of penitent monks in Italy—the black, gray, red, and white penitents—none inspire such an instinctive terror as these. Besides, no one has the right to address a penitent brother, while his hood is pulled down over his face; the penitent has not only the full right but the obligation to remain unknown to all.

Thus, this mysterious brother, who so unexpectedly appeared at the wedding feast, was addressed by none, though he seemed to follow the newly-married couple, as if he were their shadow. Both Hector and Bianca shuddered every time they turned to look at him.

The sun was setting, and the old Prince, accompanied by his children, was for the last time going the round of the banquet tables in the gardens. Stopping at one of these, he took a goblet of wine and exclaimed: “My friends, let us drink to the health of Hector and his wife Bianca!”

THE SILENT BROTHER

375

But, at this very moment, someone seized his arm and stopped it. It was the gray-frocked “Silent Brother.” Quietly emerging from the crowd, he had approached the table and also taken up a goblet.

“And is there no one, old man, besides Hector and Bianca whose health thou couldst propose?”—he asked in deep, guttural tones—“Where is thy son Alfonso?”

“Knowest thou not he is dead?”—sadly answered the Prince.

“Yes! . . . dead—dead!” echoed the penitent. “But were he only to hear again the voice he heard at the moment of his cruel death, methinks he might respond . . . aye . . . from his very grave . . . Old man, summon here thy son Hector! . . .”

“Good God! What do you . . . what *can* you mean!” he more easily imagined than described. In one moment—exclaimed the Prince, pallid with unnameable terror.

Bianca was ready to faint. Hector, more livid than his father, was hardly standing on his legs, and would have fallen, had not Gläuerbach supported him.

“To the memory of Alfonso!” slowly pronounced the same lugubrious voice.—“Let everyone repeat the words after me! Hector, Duke of R..... V..... . . . I invite you to pronounce them! . . .”

Hector made a violent effort and, wiping his trembling lips, tried to open them. But his tongue cleaved to the roof of his mouth and he failed to utter a sound. Every eye was riveted upon the young man. He was pallid as death and his mouth foamed. At last, after a superhuman struggle with his weakness, he stammered out, “To the memory of Alfonso! . . .”

“*The voice of my mur-de-rer!* . . .,” ejaculated the penitent in a deep but distinct tone.

With these words, throwing back his hood, he tore open his robe, and before the sight of the horrified guests there appeared the *dead* form of Alfonso, with four deep gaping wounds on his breast, from which trickled four streams of blood!

The cries of terror and the fright of the spectators can

the garden became empty; the whole crowd upsetting the tables and flying as if for life . . . But, more strange than all, was the fact that it was Gläuerbach who, notwithstanding his intimate acquaintance with the dead, was the most panic-stricken. Upon seeing a real ghost, the necromancer, who had raised the dead at will, hearing him talk as would a living being, fell senseless upon a bed of flowers, and was picked up, late that night, a stark lunatic, which he remained for months.

It was only half a year later that he learned what had taken place after the terrific arraignment. After uttering it, the penitent disappeared from the eyes of all, and Hector was carried into his room in violent convulsions, where, an hour later, after summoning his confessor to his bedside, he made him write down his deposition, and after signing it, drank, before he could be stopped, the poisonous contents of a hollow seal-ring, and expired almost immediately. The old Prince followed him to the grave a fortnight later, leaving all his fortune to Bianca. But the unfortunate girl, whose early life had been doomed to two such tragedies, sought refuge in a convent, and her immense wealth passed into the hands of the Jesuits. Guided by a dream, she had selected a distant and unfrequented corner in the large garden of Monte Cavalli, as the site for a magnificent chapel, which she had erected as an expiatory monument of the fearful crime which put an end to the ancient family of the Princes of R..... V..... While digging the foundations, the workmen discovered an old dry well, and in it, the skeleton of Alfonso, with four stabs in his half-decayed breast, and the wedding ring of Bianca upon his finger.

Such a scene as the one on the wedding-day, is sufficient to shake the most hardened scepticist. Upon recovering, Gläuerbach left Italy forever, and returned to Vienna, where none of his friends was at first able to recognize the young man of hardly twenty-six in his old decrepit form with his hair as white as snow. He renounced the evocation of spirits and charlatanry forever, but became from that time a firm believer in the survival of the human soul

and in its occult powers. He died in 1841, an honest and reformed man, scarcely opening his mouth upon this weird history. It was but during the last years of his life that a certain person, who won his full confidence through a service he was enabled to render him, learned from him the details of the mock vision and the real tragedy of the family of the R..... V.....

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**
1880

NOTE TO “RADIANT MATTER”

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 7, April, 1880, p. 174]

[In this article, Camille Flammarion comments on Wm. Crooke’s discoveries in Physics. He says: “Spiritism feels too grateful to the great scientist William Crookes to let anything to his greater glory remain unnoticed. Suffice, then, that he is the author of the admirable Researches on *Radiant Matter*, . . . to make it our duty to our readers to welcome the discoveries of the great chemist who did not shrink from the study of *spiritist* Phenomena.” H. P. B. remarks on this:]

The twenty millions of Western believers in the modern phenomena and those who attribute them to the agency of departed spirits or souls (*bhûtas*) are divided into two great sects—the Spiritualists and the Spiritists. The latter are “Re-incarnationists,” or believers in the successive reincarnations or transmigrations of the human soul.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

378

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

THE STATE OF CHRISTIANITY

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 7, April, 1880, p. 181]

The entire space in a monthly magazine as large as this might be filled with extracts from the journals of Europe and America showing the misbehaviour of Christian clergymen and influential lay representatives of the Christian religion. Our purpose in alluding to the fact is neither to gratify the prejudices of “Heathen,” nor strengthen the scepticism of “Infidels”—ourselves included in either class. In what little has been said, and the more that is to appear in these columns, we are merely performing a plain and imperative duty to the great Eastern public into which we have become incorporated. Experience now supplements the information previously derived from reading, and we see the missionary emissaries of Christendom withholding the truth, and by specious stories labouring to entice our people to desert their noble Aryan faiths and become converts. If this would make them better, wiser, and happier; if the new religion were more conducive to public or private good; the chapters of Western history showed that the lofty ethical code arbitrarily ascribed to Jesus had elevated the nations professing it; if in Great Britain, Russia, France Spain, Germany, Italy, the United States of America, or any other “Christian” country, there were fewer crimes, and those of a more venial character, than in lands where—

“The *Heathen*, in his blindness,
Bows down to wood and stone;”

—then we might at least hold our peace. But it is exactly the reverse in nearly every one of these particulars. From

THE STATE OF CHRISTIANITY

379

one end of Christendom to the other there prevails neither real peace, brotherhood, contentment, firm religious faith, nor a preponderating tone of morality in official or private life. The press bristles with the proofs that Christianity has no right to be considered as an active purificatory force. More may be added. The gradual liberation of thought by the progress of scientific research has undermined the very foundations of the Christian religion, and the edifice, erected during eighteen centuries with so much difficulty and at such appalling sacrifices of human life and national morality, is tottering like a tree that sways to its fall. The picture of social morals that one finds in the journals of every Christian country would so shock the Hindu mind, that it would be no wonder if a general rising should drive out of the country, between two days, every missionary,

bishop, priest, deacon, or lay teacher calling himself a Christian. For, bad as India may have become in these degenerate days, and forgotten as may be the pure religion of the *Veda*, there is not a community throughout the Peninsula, which would not be able to show among Natives a better average of morality, of sincere religious fervour, and of security for life than either of the communities from which these proselyters come. Last month, an editorial of that powerful American newspaper, the *New York Sun*, transferred to these pages, showed us that despite the large worldly advantages offered, there was a marked and significant decrease in the proportion of young collegians who were preparing for the priestly calling. This month we reprint the following brief but pointed remarks of *Puck*, a satirical weekly journal of New York, which were called forth by the most recent clerical scandal:—

OUR SPIRITUAL GUARDIANS

What is the matter with all the ministers of the Gospel? The example set by Plymouth Church's great preacher has not merely been followed by smaller fry, but often improved on and varied, according to the taste and fancy of the holy individual.

It is not a pleasant picture for the conscientious Christian who believes in going to church regularly and listening to the word of God as expounded by the clerical gentlemen who may happen to have the floor of the pulpit.

We scarcely know where to begin—the list of these eccentric pastors is such an appalling one.

The special weaknesses of the Rev. H. W. B. are pretty well understood; he has, however, found humble imitators in the Rev. Mr. Hafermann, of the Hoboken Lutheran Evangelical Church who kisses his cook for “pure” Christian motives, and for her spiritual welfare, and the Rev. Mr. Trumbrower, pastor of the Porter Methodist Episcopal Church, also in Hoboken, who is getting himself talked about for his osculatory practices with one Mrs. Boh, a member of his flock, and a married woman, by the way.

But while Hoboken, with its Hafermann and Trumbrower, may eventually prove a worthy and formidable rival to Brooklyn and its notorious pastors, it is not going to carry off all the honours in clerical misdoings. Connecticut, represented by the Rev. Mr. Hayden, will not permit it. It goes in for something a trifle stronger than mere kissing. It goes for higher game—betrayal and murder; true, not proven according to the opinion of an intelligent jury, but unpleasantly probable.

New York has of late been a little behindhand in crooked clergymen, although, as becomes a patriotic citizen, the Reverend Mr. Cowley will not allow it to be left altogether out in the cold.

The story of the saintly Mr. Cowley's executive ability in his management of the Shepherd's Fold, and dieting its little inmates, is already familiar to everybody, and we fondly hope that Mr. Cowley will soon become familiar with the interior of a cell in some respectable jail.

There are many more of these saintly sinners, who have distinguished themselves in a greater or lesser degree, but we forebear mentioning their names. The subject is not an inviting one, but yet it must not be shirked; on the contrary, it must be vigorously handled, for the protection of our wives, our daughters, our children, and for everything that is dear to us in our domestic life.

These men—these pastors—to whom practically the care of our families is confided, are constantly disgracing themselves.

It is not a question of the misfortune of any one denomination, disgraced by these unworthy guardians. Protestant, Catholic, Atheist, and Jew are alike interested in the exposure and punishment of the public teacher who betrays his trust and misuses his privileges.

The above editorial is accompanied by one of the cleverest cartoons we have ever seen. In sarcasm and disdain it matches the most famous caricatures of Gilray or Hogarth.

Catholic and Protestant clergymen are depicted in their proven characters of voluptuaries, peculators, and sensationalists; each picture being inscribed with proper names, extracted from the records of the law-courts. No wonder that decent young graduates should prefer any other profession than one which is so rapidly falling into disrepute. Who can be surprised at the growing scepticism throughout Christendom? We are approaching the crisis of the Western religion, and none but a bold and enthusiastic apologist dares deny that its doom is sealed. Without the revival of Aryan philosophy, for which we are labouring, the West will tend towards the grossest materialism; but with the opening of that long-sealed fountain of spiritual refreshment, we may hope that there will arise, upon the ruins of the bad new faith, the superstructure of the good old one, for the salvation of a world given over to vice and folly.

A few weeks ago, an audience of nearly 4,000 persons of the better class gathered at Chicago, to listen to a defense of the memory of Thomas Paine by that splendid American orator, Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll. Paine was one of the purest, wisest, and bravest apostles of Free Thought that the Anglo-Saxon race has produced. He wrote *The Age of Reason*—a book which, if the missionaries were governed by the spirit of fair-play, would be on the shelf of every mission library in India, so that their “Heathen” pupils might read both sides of the Christian question. For this crime, the noble author was persecuted in the most malicious way by Christians. His name was made the synonym of all that is vile and malevolent. His enemies, not satisfied with lying about him while alive, desecrated his grave, and we have ourselves seen his monument at New Rochelle, New York, bespattered with dung and battered with sticks and stones. But time heals all injustice, and now, seventy years after Thomas Paine’s death, his memory is vindicated. He died almost solitary and alone, deserted by friends, and his services to American liberty all forgotten. But now, thousands and hundreds of thousands of the most intelligent and influential ladies and gentlemen of America have cheered to the echo Colonel Ingersoll’s glowing periods.

In the address above alluded to, for a *verbatim* report of which we are indebted to the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, the Spiritualist organ to which an allusion was made by us last month, occur the following passages:—

[Here follows a lengthy extract from Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll's address.]

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

FOOTNOTE TO “KALIYA MARDANA”

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 7, April, 1880, p. 184]

[In this article, the author, Rao Bahadur Dadoba Pandurang, gives the account from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavata* of how Krishna overcame the fury of the great Hydra, named Káliyá, and attempts an interpretation of this myth. He says in closing:

“Krishna . . . permits Káliyá when completely overpowered . . . to change his quarters somewhere else, in the wide ocean, never to annoy and disturb the peace and happiness of his own people . . . ; showing thereby, that God only protects them from evil who devote themselves to Him, and not the wide world abroad, which is astray and alienated from Him.” H. P. B. remarks on this:]

Or again, does not the permission granted to the serpent to betake himself to the fathomless depths of the sea, indicate that, though we may purge our individual natures of evil, it can never be extirpated but must still linger in the whole expanse of the *Kosmos*, as the opposing power to active goodness which maintains the equilibrium in Nature—in short, the equal balancing of the scales, the perfect harmony of discords?

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

A PERSONAL STATEMENT

383

“A PERSONAL STATEMENT OF RELIGIOUS BELIEF”

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 7, April, 1880, pp. 189-190]

A Personal Statement of Religious Belief is the title of a pamphlet now just appearing at Bombay. It is an unexpected, and very unusual piece of literature; and the subject is treated in a way to startle the whole of the Protestant Church, call out an inward chuckle of satisfaction from the Jesuits, and provoke extreme dissatisfaction among the Conservative, church-going Anglo-Indian officials. Yet it is an honest and sincere profession of faith. Simple and dignified, without one word of recrimination against those who will be the first to throw stones at him, entirely heedless of possible consequences, the author—a District Judge, we believe—Mr. G. C. Whitworth, comes out bravely and without ostentation, to tell the truth to the world about himself. He has “come to the conclusion that it is better that every man’s opinions, whether right or wrong, should be known”; and feeling that he “will never reach that state of straightforwardness and simplicity of conversation and conduct” after which he is striving, he does not wish to remain any longer “in a false position,” and hence renounces Christianity publicly and in print.

All honour to the man who is brave and honest in this century of sham beliefs and shameful hypocrisy!—who, regardless of all dangers—and such an act entails more than one—throws off the mask of false pretence that stifles him, with the sole motive of doing what he deems his duty to himself and those who know him.

384

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

Mr. Whitworth not only tells us what he believes no more in, but also makes a statement of the personal belief that has superseded the Christianity he now repudiates.

Before he was as certain as he is now of what his duty in this question was, he used to wonder what orthodox churchmen would advise him to do.

I have heard [he says] of such a thing as, stamping out, or trying to stamp out, unbelief from the mind. I suppose the process is to set before yourself the idea that it would be a good thing if you could believe, and then to determine to act on all occasions as though you did, until at length it comes to seem to be a matter of course that you do believe. Now such a course of conduct seems to me to be wrong. I cannot see how a man is justified in trying to settle by resolution what he will believe, and in stifling instead of fairly examining doubts which may arise as to his past belief. Nor does anyone recommend this course to persons of a different creed to his own . . . And though [he says further on] I would not willingly suggest doubt to the mind of any person happily free from it, and worthily occupied in this world, I can in no degree concur in the opinion that it is necessary to keep up artificial religions for the sake of the unenlightened masses.

“Government by illusion” is an expression I have lately heard. I cannot but think that the bare truth is better. More particularly if you think that a God of infinite power created and governs the world, does it seem unreasonable to suppose that He means those of His creatures that are comparatively wise to invent erroneous notions about Him for their ignorant fellows to believe. We have been so long accustomed to associate such things as worship, prayer, sacraments, and holy offices with religion, that some men seem to fear that, if all these were got rid of, nothing would remain. That is not my experience. It should be remembered that all immoral and dangerous persons are either already without religion—in which case they could lose none if the doctrine of government by illusion were given up—or else that the religion they have has been useless to them [pp. 4-5.]

After that Mr. Whitworth states his present religious belief and says:—

I believe that it is every man’s duty to do what he can to make the world better and happier. That is the whole of my creed. I aim at no precision of language. Many other formulas would do as well. So to live that the world may be better for my having lived in it is the one most familiar to my thoughts. The meaning is plain, and there is nothing new in it . . .

To me it seems absurd to attempt to devise a creed, or even to take, with any fixed resolution of keeping it, a ready-made one. What

A PERSONAL STATEMENT

385

a man finds in the actual experience of his life to be good, that is what he must believe . . . [p. 7.]

Now, before I attempt to explain how I find the simple creed I have enunciated better than all the dogmas I once believed, I will refer to certain points on which (though they do not belong to my religion) I shall no doubt be expected, in such a publication as this, to express distinct opinions.

Such a question is, Do you believe in God? Now I wish to be perfectly frank, but it is beyond my power to answer this question clearly. I certainly did until within a few years believe in God, but then I had a particular conception of him—namely, the being known as God the Father in the Church of England. Now, I am sure we are not warranted in holding that conception and I have formed no other distinct conception of God. I cannot say I believe in God when the word conveys no distinct meaning to me; I cannot say I do not believe in Him when my thoughts seem sometimes to require the use of the name. Perhaps that impression is due only to old habit. We hear it said that the existence of God is proved by the manifest design of the universe. But what sort of God? Surely one of finite, not of infinite power. The world is very wonderful; but how can we call it a perfect work? There are some terrible things in it. Perhaps it will be perfect, but time cannot be necessary to infinite power. I heard a preacher once expatiate on God’s power and love as shown in the structure of an animal. He took the mole as an example, and explained how its every part was perfectly adapted to the peculiar manner of its life. But what if a ploughman kills the mole? Carefully provided as all its properties were, they have all failed. Then the preacher spoke of the wonderful providence by which some plants are made to purify pestilential air. But we in India know that other plants by their natural decay poison instead of purifying the air. So, what do such examples prove?

I am not dismayed or distressed at such puzzles, or because I cannot say whether or not I believe in God . . . The world teaches us plainly that there are countless things which I cannot know . . .

My attempt to answer the above question is sufficient to show that I do not believe in the divinity of Christ, or of any other supposed incarnation of God. I add that it is between twelve and fifteen years since I had any such belief [pp. 8-10.]

As to a future life, the author neither affirms belief nor disbelief. He *hopes* we may live after death but he personally feels *no conviction* of it.

My religion then [he goes on to say] it may perhaps be said by those who find comfort in any of the recognized religions of the day, leaves we without any God, without prayer or worship of any kind, leaves me a weak mortal struggling alone with the difficulties of this

life . . . Well, if I hear such things said of my religion, I shall bear it patiently . . . While I am writing this in the saloon of the *Venetia*, this 23rd of November, I can hear the passengers at service, overhead, singing—

“Leave, ah leave me not alone,
Still support and strengthen me.”

If some of them are less alone than I, it should not make me discontented, for I know that I am better with my religion than I, the same person, was with theirs. But, notwithstanding . . . those objections which many persons will make, I do deliberately put forward this religion of mine as something better for humanity than any other . . . I believe that most, or at least very many, men of business, working men, are as I am . . . If, as a fact, men do not already hold the creed that I do, I do not expect that by anything I can say they will come to do so. But there are two things which I can still hope I hope that those of my readers who really believe no more than I do, but who in a half-hearted way cling to dogmas, which indeed to them are dead and ineffective, will examine and see what they really do believe and what they do not, distinguishing between those articles of belief which they give effect to in their lives and those they hold merely for want of energy to throw away. And I hope that those who find their actual belief to be less than or different from what their neighbours have been led to suppose it to be, will ask themselves the question whether they ought not in some way or other to remove the misapprehension and make their lives speak truly to all who behold them. [pp. 11-12.]

But there are two classes of persons to whom I can hardly hope to make intelligible the step I am taking in publishing this statement. The first class is the clergy and all persons engaged in teaching or propagating any religion; the second, all idle persons. These two very different classes seem to me to be less likely than other persons to discover that the religions they observe are false, if they are false. Rather are they likely, as I conceive, to find them, whatever they are, to be sufficient and satisfactory. In the case of the first, because religion is the business of their lives; and in the case of idle persons, because what they have of religion is better than the rest of their lives . . . A man's life and his religion should be one and the same thing. That which is not a part of what his life ought to be, ought not to be a part of his religion. And it seems to me quite intelligible that a man whose business is religious teaching should make his life and religion one and the same, though much of the religion be false, without ever finding that test of true and untrue. If a man's duty is to explain or teach a certain doctrine, he may find it very difficult to make people believe or understand it; but he will not be in a position to say, well, this doctrine may be true or false, but it has nothing to do with my life. It has to do with his life. [pp. 12-13.]

The author, explaining how his creed is a better religion for the world at large than any other, says:—

In the first place, this religion seems to me to have the property of being constantly present in a way which other religions are usually not. I do not think it is sufficient to devote an hour, or two hours, or twelve hours a day to religion. I think the whole day should be so devoted. But, in order for that to be, religion must consist of daily life, and there must be no distinction of spiritual and temporal, of religious and secular, of Sunday and week-day, or of priest and people. The fact that one day is to be kept holy, means that others are distinctly recognized as being something less than holy; and the fact that a holier and purer manner of life and conversation is expected in one particular class of men, means that such high attainment, though practicable, is not expected of the bulk of mankind. Of course all men require time, apart from their proper business, for patient meditation and reflection on the tendency of their lives; all men require the advice of others of different experience to themselves; all men should have time for the fun and the pleasure that life affords. But why should some of these things be called religious, and others non-religious or secular? Is the thing good or bad? is the question that my religion asks; and it asks it equally whether the thing be an act of charity or a game of tennis. If religion and daily life are not one and the same, it will happen that the first is sometimes made to give place to the second. If a church catches fire at the time of public worship, the priest and the people must run out. Their religious service is interrupted but they obey the dictate of a truer religion which bids them save their lives. That which need never be interrupted is the true religion—namely, always to do what is best to be done. [pp. 14-15.]

I next claim for my religion that as a fact it has created in me a greater love of the human race than I had when a Christian. When I thought there was virtue in prayer and religious services, and that my first duty was to save my own soul, my sense of the duty of rendering service to men, and my sense of pleasure at the thought of particular services done to particular persons, whether friends or strangers, were certainly less than they are now. If it be said that the difference in me is due not to the change of religion but only to the improved perception and knowledge that years bring, I can only reply that the two causes seem to me to be identical. My religion I have neither invented nor selected: it is what my life has taught me.

This religion has again this advantage, that it allows you no rest or permanent happiness except with a sense of duty done. It knows nothing of idle “drawing near to God.” [p. 15.]

You must not speak of “leaving with meekness your sins to your Saviour.” Your sins are your own, and you cannot leave them to anyone. The best you can do is to outweigh them with good, but get

rid of them you cannot. There is no absolution. Think of that when you are disposed to do a bad deed again. If you do it, it will remain forever. The balance of good, if even you get a balance of good, will be finally less by reason of that bad debt. [p. 16.]

We verily believe that, though Mr. Whitworth gives no name to his deity, and simplifies his religion, so as to make it appear to be hardly a religion at all, yet he is a truer religionist than any church-going dogmatist. His religion recognizes and worships but the latent divinity indwelling in himself. Like Elijah, he sought for the Lord in the strong wind—but *the Lord was not in the wind*; nor was he in the *earthquake*, nor yet in the *fire*. But he found Him in the “still small voice”—the voice of his own CONSCIENCE, the true tabernacle of man. The author without belonging to our Society is yet a true-born Theosophist—a God-seeker.

And yet the Rev. T. G. Scott, assailing us in a long letter to *The Pioneer*, says Christianity never had such *sweetness, sympathy, life, and power*, as now!

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

COCK-AND-BULL

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 7, April, 1880, p. 191]

Some months ago, *The Theosophist* was taken to task by certain Christian Roman Catholic friends, for crediting “supernatural” cock-and-bull “inventions” about spirits and mediums, as told in spiritual organs, while never quoting one such fact from the “far more trustworthy Catholic organs.” Whereupon, as the policy of our paper is one of strict impartiality, we yielded to the demand of one who was both an esteemed friend and a subscriber, and promised to ransack the Roman Catholic papers sent us for trustworthy, demoniacal or ghostly literature. We did so, and fell upon Marshal MacMahon’s strange adventure with the devil in Algiers. (See *The Theosophist* for December, 1879.)

COCK-AND-BULL

389

We were assured by the same friend that Marshal MacMahon being alive, and, moreover, a very pious Catholic, and the paper which printed the Story being itself a highly respected, trustworthy organ of the American Roman Catholic bishops, it was *impossible* to doubt its veracity. It was “absurdly incongruous” in us to think for one moment, that side by side with the “best authenticated miracles of our Lady of Lourdes,” and other places as noteworthy, the *Catholic Mirror* (of Baltimore, U.S.A.) would publish, at the risk of its literary and Christian reputation, a flim-flam fabrication, a *canard*. So we copied the adventure, word for word, as we found it in the *Mirror* of Sept. 13, 1879, prefacing it with this remark of equivocal confidence in its exactness, as everyone can see: “We admit it the more willingly since, had any such story originated with either the Theosophists or the Spiritualists, it would have been straight way ridiculed and set down as a cock-and-bull fable. But circumstances alter the case—with the Catholics; none, however sceptical at heart, will dare laugh (above his breath) at a story of supernatural ‘miracles’ worked by the Madonna and her Saints, or by Satan and his imps . . . Only Spiritualists and Theosophists . . . deserve to be called ‘lunatics’ for believing in phenomena produced by *natural* causes.”

The Marshal’s alleged adventure was reprinted in the London *Spiritualist*. Let the editor of that paper now speak:—

We recently asked that the truth of some alleged supernatural experiences of Marshal MacMahon, which had been quoted by *The Theosophist* (Bombay) from a Roman Catholic newspaper, should be inquired into by some of our readers. The following letter from Miss Douglas is the result:

“Dear Mr. Harrison,—I sent my sister, Mrs. Douglas Bayley, now in Paris, the No. of *The Spiritualist*

in which appeared the marvellous adventure of Marshal MacMahon, said to have been related by himself, begging her to inquire if there was any degree of truth in it.

“She writes that there is none. Being well acquainted with the Marshal’s *aide-de-camp*, the Baron de Langsdorff, she spoke to him on the subject; he said he could not believe there was any truth in the story, or he would have heard of it; however, he took *The Spiritualist*

390

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

containing it to the Marshal, who declared there was not the slightest foundation for it. Very truly yours,
J. H. DOUGLAS.”

We thank Miss Douglas and Mr. Harrison for the trouble they have taken, and hope the lesson, which the case teaches, may not be lost upon those who stand up so stoutly for the *infallibility* of the Roman Catholic Church. For, it would appear, they indulge in “cock-and-bull stories,” as much as other mortals do, while pretending to a greater trustworthiness.

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**

1880

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 7, April, 1880, pp. 169, 174]

It is a rather singular fact, which hitherto seems to have escaped the notice alike of Ireland's friends and foes, and to have been left to the acute observation of Puck, to discover that many—if not all—of the sources of that country's distress and troubles may be indexed under the letter P. Thus we have Poverty, Pigs, and Potatoes; Priests and Popery; Protestants, Peelers, and Population; Potheen, Politics, and Pugnacity; Patriotism, Parnell and St. Patrick, and finally Pat himself. Even to America their fatal P. follows the sons of Erin, but there turns up as the initial of the genial and laughter-loving—*Puck*.

A most interesting and instructive letter has been addressed to the Society by a respectable physician in England, in which advice is asked for the treatment of a gentleman who, since attending some Spiritualistic "circles" to witness the strange phenomenon of "Materialization," has been obsessed by an evil influence or "bad spirit," despite his efforts to throw it off. The case is so important that it will be specially described in next month's *Theosophist*.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

COMPILER'S NOTE

391

COMPILER'S NOTE

[To this period belongs chronologically H. P. B.'s English translation of the Russian work of Col. Nikolay Ivanovich Grodelcoff, entitled in the original Russian *Cherez Afganistan* (Through Afghânistan), which she contributed to the columns of *The Pioneer* of Allâhâbâd, at the request of its Editor, A. P. Sinnett, as has been definitely stated by him.*

This translation appeared serially under the title of "The Travels of Colonel Grodekoff," and ran from April 8 through July 9, 1880. It was unsigned.

Grodekoff, then a Colonel, later a Lieutenant-General of the Russian Imperial Army, was born at Elizavetgrad in 1843. He graduated from the Nicholas Academy of the General Staff and served on the General Staff in the Caucasus and in Turkestan. He took part in five expeditions in Hiva and Turkmenia, and was decorated with the medal of St. George, 4th degree, for the capture of Geok-Tepe. In 1883 he was Military Governor of the Sir-Darya District. It was in 1878 that Grodekoff made a very interesting journey from Samarkand through Mazir-i-Sherif, Meymene, Herat and Meshed, into Astrabad, which he described in his work mentioned above, and which was published in 1880.†

Grodekoff wrote two other works: *Hivinskiy pohod 1873 goda* (The Hiva Expedition of 1873) which was published in 1883 (2nd, enl. ed., St. Petersburg: V. S. Balashev, 1888. 343 pp.), and *Voyna v Turkmenii* (The War in Turkmenia) which appeared in four volumes in 1883-84 (St. Petersburg: V. S. Balashev).

Grodekoff also wrote on military, political and geographical subjects in several Russian periodicals.—*Compiler.*]

* *Vide* his pamphlet, *The "Occult World Phenomena" and the Society for Psychical Research*. London: George Redway, 1886.

† *Cherez Afganistan*. Putyeviye zapiski Generalnago Shtaba polkovnika N. I. Grodekova (Through Afghânistan. Travel Diaries of Colonel of General Staff, N. I. Grodekoff). It was published by the *Novoye Vremya* Publishers in St. Petersburg, and is a work of some 130 pages. The same year an English translation of it by C. Marvin (London: W. H. Allen & Co., pp. xx, 224) was published under the title of *Colonel Grodekoff's Ride from Samarkand to Herat*, etc.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

392

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

JOURNALIST VERSUS MISSIONARY

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 8, May, 1880, p. 202]

Some weeks ago, the *Times of India*, in a moment of rancorous spite towards the *Invalide Russe*,* which it had caught, *mirabile dictu!*, in a political fib, denounced the Russian nation as “all born liars.” The insult was, no doubt, more than Russia—Gortchakoff,† Nihilists, and *Gendarmes* included—could bear. The *Times* having “set a mark” upon the Northern Cain, henceforth every Russian ought to feel himself like one branded and estimate death, nay, even the unpleasantness of being blown up by the Nihilists, as less terrible than such a public blowing up by the *Times of India*. One thing may, however, assuage their woe, and offer a kind of consolation, and this is that they have been most unexpectedly thrown into a most saintly company of “liars.”

* [*Russkiy Invalid* (Russian Invalid), a daily Newspaper published at St. Petersburg, Russia, from 1813 to 1917. It was founded by P. P. Pezarovius, and its proceeds were earmarked for helping invalid-soldiers, widows and orphans. It was one of the most influential papers in pre-revolutionary Russia.—*Compiler*.]

† [Reference is to Prince Alexander Mihailovich Gortchakoff (or Gorchakoff), famous Russian statesman (1798-1883). On leaving the Lyceum at Tsarskoye Selo, he entered the foreign office under Count Nesselrode. When the German confederation was re-established in 1850, he was appointed Russian minister to the Diet and formed close ties of friendship with Bismarck. Alexander II appointed him minister of foreign affairs to replace Nesselrode, after the Crimean War. He then became Chancellor and was, for a time, the most powerful minister in Europe. At the Congress of Berlin in 1878, the aged Chancellor held nominally the post of first plenipotentiary, but left to Count Shuvaloff the odium for the concessions which Russia had to make to Great Britain and Austria.—*Compiler*.]

JOURNALIST VERSUS MISSIONARY

393

This is what the world-famous Archibald Forbes writes of the Christian missionaries, in his letter to the *Scotsman*:—

I regard missionary enterprise as simply a gross impertinence; and, did I chance to be a straightforward and self-respecting heathen, I would kick the interloping missionary who should come canting around me, seeking to pervert me from the faith of my fathers.

Not content with the expressed desire of “kicking” the holy payees, Mr. Forbes seeks to prove—and justice forces us to admit, with no mean success—the position of the

missionary as “inherently false and illogical,” and clinches his argument with the rather irreverent remark—“my experience of missionaries is, that they are mostly LIARS.”

In a letter to *The Pioneer*, intended to pulverize the Theosophical Society and its General Council, the Rev. Mr. Scott, bitterly recriminating against Mrs. A. Gordon’s article —“Missions in India”—published in the January number of *The Theosophist*, spoke of it as “an ignorant attempt at making it appear that missions are a failure.” We wait with interest to learn what the reverend polemic will have to say now. Prone as they are to fly into the Theosophists’ faces for every quiet and polite remark in their organ, what will they answer to this bitter denunciation by the “light of newspaper correspondents,” as some journalists call their fiery *confrère*, who has encountered the missionary in every land? And to think that this Armstrong shell should have been fired from that heavy gun, the *Scotsman*, which is mounted in the very citadel of the bluest Presbyterianism!

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

394

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

FOOTNOTE TO “PUZZLES FOR THE PHILOLOGISTS”

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 8, May, 1880, p. 207]

[The author, Mr. Gracias, discusses the problem of the great emigrations of people from their primeval seats in the table-land of Central Asia, and, in closing, says that “the exact period of these emigrations . . . is not ascertainable; but if we may accept the Biblical statement, the period would seem distinctly to refer to that immediately following the Noachian deluge, which by Scriptural chronologists is said to have occurred about 2,343 years before the Christian era; and the separation of three sons of Noah with their children and families would appear to explain the several emigrations in question, viz., that Cham went to Africa, and Japhet to Europe, Sem remaining at home in Asia.” H. P. B. remarks:]

The able young writer acts prudently in prefacing his Biblical reference with the conjunction “if.” That there never was nor could have been a “universal deluge” in 2,343 B.C. is proved beyond any doubt or cavil by geology. Baron Bunsen in *Egypt’s Place in Universal History* allows a *partial* deluge more than 10,000 years B.C. “Cham” or Ham is now shown by anthropology to have had nothing to do with the Egyptian race, the skulls of whose mummies have been proved Indo-Caucasian and whose high civilization antedated the Noachian deluge as the waters of the Red Sea antedate the Suez Canal.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

A CASE OF OBSESSION

395

A CASE OF OBSESSION

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I No. 8, May, 1880, pp. 207-208]

The particulars of the case of “obsession,” alluded to in the April number of this magazine, are given in the following letter from a respectable English medical man who is in attendance upon the victim:—

I take the liberty of addressing you in the cause of humanity, with the intention of exciting your sympathies and obtaining all the aid in your power to afford, in a case of “control.” You will understand that the gentleman is being *made a medium* against his wish, through having attended a few *séances* for the purpose of witnessing “materialization.”

Ever since he has been more or less subject to a series of persecutions by the “controlling” spirit and, in spite of every effort of his to throw off the influence, he has been made to suffer most shamefully and painfully in very many ways and under most trying and aggravating circumstances, especially by his thoughts being forced into forbidden channels without external causes being present—the bodily functions overruled, even being caused to bite his tongue and cheeks severely whilst eating, etc., and subjected to every species of petty annoyances which will serve as a means for the “control” (unknown) to sustain and establish the connection. The details are in their most painful features not such as I can write to you; but if there be any means known to you whereby the influence can be diverted, and it is thought necessary to be more particular in my description of this case, I will send you all the information I possess.

So little is known in India of the latest and most startling phase of Western mediumistic phenomena—“materialization”—that a few words of explanation are needed to make this case understood. Briefly, then, for several years, in the presence of certain mediums in America and Europe, there have been seen, often under good test conditions, apparitions of the dead, which in every respect seem like living human

396

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

beings. They walk about, write messages to present and absent friends, speak audibly in the languages familiar to them in life, even though the medium may be unacquainted with them, and are dressed in the garb they wore when alive. Many cases of fraudulent personation of the dead have been detected, pretended mediums have sometimes gone on for years deceiving the credulous, and real ones, whose psychical powers have been apparently proved beyond doubt, have been caught playing tricks in some evil hour when they have yielded to either the love of money or notoriety. Still, making every allowance for all these, there is a residuum of veritable cases of the materialization, or the making visible, tangible, and audible of portrait-figures of dead people. These

wonderful phenomena have been variously regarded by investigators. Most Spiritualists have looked upon them as the most precious proofs of the soul-survival; while Theosophists, acquainted with the views of the ancient Theurgists, and the still more ancient Aryan philosophers, have viewed them as at best misleading deceptions of the senses, fraught with danger to the physical and moral natures of both medium and spectator—if the latter chanced to be susceptible to certain psychical influences. These students of Occultism have noticed that the mediums for materializations have too often been ruined in health by the drain upon their systems, and wrecked in morals. They have over and over again warned the Spiritualistic public that mediumship was a most dangerous gift, one only to be tolerated under great precautions. And for this they have received much abuse and few thanks. Still one's duty must be done at every cost, and the case now before us affords a valuable text for one more bit of friendly counsel.

We need not stop to discuss the question whether the so-called materialized forms above described are or are not those of the deceased they look like. That may be held in reserve until the bottom facts of Oriental psychical science are better understood. Nor need we argue as to whether there has ever been an authentic materialization. The London experiences of Mr. William Crookes, F.R.S., and the American ones of Colonel Olcott, both so widely known

and of so convincing a character, give us a sufficient basis of fact to argue upon. We assume the reality of materializations, and shall take the instance cited by the English physician as a subject for diagnosis.

The patient then is described as having been "controlled" since attending "circles" where there were materializations, and as having become the bond-slave of some evil powers which force him to say and do painful and even disgusting things, despite his resistance. Why is this? How can a man be compelled to so act against his will? What is Obsession? Three brief questions these are, but most difficult to explain to an uninitiated public. The laws of Obsession can only be well understood by him who has sounded the depths of Indian philosophy. The only clue to the secret, which the West possesses, is contained in that most beneficent science, Magnetism or Mesmerism. That does teach the existence of a vital fluid within and about the human being; the fact of different human polarities; and the possibility of one person projecting this fluid or force at will, to and upon another person differently polarized. Baron Reichenbach's theory of Odyle or Odic force shows us the existence of this same fluid in the mineral and vegetable as well as the animal kingdoms. To complete the chain of evidence, Buchanan's discovery of the psychometrical faculty in man enables us to prove, by the help of this faculty, that a subtle influence is exerted by people upon the houses and even the localities they live in, the paper they write upon, the clothing they wear, the portion of the Universal Ether (the Aryan Akâśa) they exist in—and that this is a permanent influence, perceptible

even at the most distant epochs from the time when the individual lived and exerted this influence. In one word, we may say that the discoveries of Western science corroborate most fully the hints thrown out by Greek sages and the more defined theories of certain Indian philosophers.

Indians and Buddhists believe alike that thought and deed are both material, that they survive, that the evil desires and the good ones of a man environ him in a world of his own making, that these desires and thoughts take on shapes

that become real to him after death, and that *Moksha*, in the one case, and *Nirvana*, in the other, cannot be attained until the disembodied soul has passed quite through this shadow-world of the haunting thoughts, and become divested of the last spot of its earthly taint. The progress of Western discovery in this direction has been and must ever be very gradual. From the phenomena of gross to those of more sublimated matter, and thence on towards the mysteries of spirit is the hard road made necessary by the precepts of Aristotle. Western Science first ascertained that our outgoing breath is charged with carbonic acid and, in excess, becomes fatal to human life; then, that certain dangerous diseases are passed from person to person in the sporules thrown off into the air from the sick body; then, that man projects upon everybody and everything he encounters a magnetic *aura*, peculiar to himself; and finally, the physical disturbance set up in the Ether in the process of thought-evolution is now postulated. Another step in advance will be to realize the magical creative power of the human mind, and the fact that moral taint is just as transmissible as physical. The “influence” of bad companions will then be understood to imply a degrading personal magnetism, more subtle than the impressions conveyed to the eye or the ear by the sights and sounds of a vicious company. The latter may be repelled by resolutely avoiding to see or hear what is bad; but the former enwraps the sensitive and penetrates his very being if he but stop where the moral poison is floating in the air. Gregory’s *Animal Magnetism*, Reichenbach’s *Researches*, and Denton’s *The Soul of Things* will make much of this plain to the Western inquirer, though neither of those authors traces the connection of his favourite branch of science with the parent-stock—Indian Psychology.

Keeping the present case in view, we see a man highly susceptible to magnetic impressions, ignorant of the nature of the “materializations” and, therefore, unable to protect himself against bad influences, brought in contact with promiscuous circles where the impressionable medium has long been the unwitting nucleus of evil magnetisms, his

system saturated with the emanations of the surviving thoughts and desires of those who are living and those who are dead. The reader is referred to an interesting paper by Judge Gadgil of Baroda (see our December number) on “Hindu Ideas about Communion with the Dead,” for a plain exposition of this question of earth-tied souls, or *Pisachas*. “It is considered,” says that writer, “that in this state the soul being deprived of the means of enjoyment [of sensual pleasures] through its own physical body, is perpetually tormented by hunger, appetite and other bodily desires, and can have only vicarious enjoyment by entering into the living physical bodies of others, or by absorbing the subtlest essences of libations and oblations offered for their own sake.” What is there to surprise us in the fact that a negatively polarized man, a man of a susceptible temperament, being suddenly brought into a current of foul emanations from some vicious person, perhaps still living or perhaps dead, absorbs the insidious poison as rapidly as quicklime does moisture, until he is saturated with it? Thus, a susceptible body will absorb the virus of smallpox, or cholera, or typhus, and we need only recall this to draw the analogy which Occult Science affirms to be warranted.

Near the Earth’s surface there hangs over us—to use a convenient simile—a steamy moral fog, composed of the undispersed exhalations of human vice and passion. This fog penetrates the sensitive to the very soul’s core; his psychic self absorbs it as the sponge does water or as fresh milk effluvia. It benumbs his moral sense, spurs his baser instincts into activity, overpowers his good resolutions. As the fumes of a wine-vault make the brain reel, or as the choke-damp stifles one’s breath in a mine, so this heavy cloud of immoral influences carries away the sensitive beyond the limits of self-control, and he becomes “obsessed.” like our English patient.

What remedy is there to suggest? Does not our very diagnosis indicate that? The sensitive must have his sensitiveness destroyed; the negative polarity must be changed to a positive; he must become active instead of passive. He can be helped by a magnetiser who understands the nature

of obsession, and who is morally pure and physically healthy; it must be a powerful magnetiser, a man of commanding will-force. But the fight for freedom will, after all, have to be fought by the patient himself. His will-power must be aroused. He must expel the poison from his system. Inch by inch he must win back the lost ground. He must realize that it is a question of life or death, salvation or ruin, and strive for victory, like one who makes a last and heroic effort to save his life. His diet must be of the simplest, he must neither eat animal food, nor touch any stimulant, nor put himself in any company where there is the smallest chance for unclean thoughts to be provoked. He should be alone as little as possible, but his companions should be carefully chosen. He should take exercise and be much in the open air; use wood-fire, instead of coals. Every indication that the bad influence was still working within him should be taken as a challenge to control his thoughts and compel them to dwell upon pure, elevating,

spiritual things, at every hazard and with a determination to suffer anything rather than give way. If this man can have such a spirit infused into him, and his physician can secure the benevolent help of a strong, healthy magnetiser, of pure character, he may be saved. A case almost exactly like this one, except that the patient was a lady, came under our notice in America; the same advice as the above was given and followed, and the obsessing “devil” was driven out and has been kept out ever since.



H. P. BLAVATSKY IN 1880
(From the Archives, The Theosophical Society, Adyar.)



ANÂGÂRIKA DHARMAPÂLA
(1864-1933)
Renowned Buddhist Reformer and Teacher, whose actual name was D. H. Hewavitarne. Founder of the Mahâ Bodhi Society in 1891. Became dedicated to the cause of Buddhism as a result of meeting H. P. B. in 1880.

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**
1880

MR. WHITWORTH'S GAUNTLET

401

MR. WHITWORTH'S GAUNTLET

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 8, May, 1880, p. 214]

To such as do not know the reluctance of the Christian church and its bullies to attack a strong and manly foe (except by innuendo), the silence in which Mr. G. C. Whitworth's *Personal Statement of Religious Belief* has been received, must seem strange. This brave pamphlet deserves the thoughtful attention of not only every Christian, but every man of any faith who cares for the approval of conscience. It is a clarion call to honest speech and useful living. Most unfortunately, our extended notice of the work (see p. 189 of *The Theosophist* for April) was so cramped in between the article on "Cremation in America" and the crowded matter in the last page, that it may have escaped the notice of many; which the printer's aggravating omission of its title from the Table of Contents makes more probable still. If any have passed it over, let them read it and take its lesson to heart.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

402

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

MADAME BLAVATSKY AND HER OPINIONS

[*The Ceylon Observer*, May 31, 1880]*

Mme. H. P. Blavatsky, who “professes to be a Buddhist,” and who—thinks the *Observer*—had better explain the *outrageous* deception of professing to have *willed* one glove of a pair, from Bombay to London, presents her compliments to the Editor of the *Ceylon Observer* who professes to be a Christian. At the same time she begs to remind the pious gentleman that the benignant English law deals impartial justice alike to Heathen and Christian; especially now that public opinion has so changed that rank atheists like Bradlaugh are chosen to Parliament. She therefore suggests that her critic of the *Observer* should moderate his fiery gush lest he find himself in the unpleasant predicament of being made defendant in an action for defamation of character. Such expressions as “outrageous deception” when applied to a private individual, a lady who is neither a medium by profession, nor a juggler, and can therefore have no object in “deceiving” the public, are insults for which British law provides a remedy.

Since the forty learned bishops and clergy of Protestant England who have just completed their work of revising the Old Testament (edited by the Queen’s Chaplain) degraded the latter from its prior eminence to the simple character of a Jewish National Record (see article “Speaker’s Commentary” in the January number of *Quarterly Review*), pious gush becomes quite an anachronism, and can find room but in such far away places as Ceylon.

* [This article has been transcribed from H. P. B.’s *Scrapbook*, Vol. X, Pt. II, p. 362 (formerly Vol. V, p. 172), by courtesy of The Theosophical Society, Adyar.—*Compiler*.]

MADAME BLAVATSKY AND HER OPINIONS

403

No doubt that the propagation of such a religion (as Buddhism) “shows equal impertinence and stupidity” in the eyes of bigoted Christians. But the Buddhists and Theosophists may return the compliment, and find it equally impertinent and stupid on the part of the Christians, in this century of enlightenment and scientific research, to come and preach a religion claimed to be founded on “miracles” and blind faith to Buddhists, who have their own, to say the least, as noble a code of ethics and far stricter principles than the Christians.

The ignorant may perhaps ascribe to Mme. Blavatsky “the power of working miracles”; but “miracles” we, Theosophists, leave to fools and believers in a personal god. We reject with the contempt of admirers of science everything “supernatural.” It is also to be regretted that the Right Honorable Lord Lindsay,* F.R.S., and President of the Royal Astronomical Society of London, who has had the great misfortune to fall under the ban of the influential and world-famed *Ceylon Observer*, should thus have had all his prospects in life blighted, and his “once honoured name” pronounced with prudent compassion by the pious Colombo Editor for having joined the Theosophical Society. But the fact of His Lordship’s being in the good company of a number of English and other European aristocrats and men of science and high Indian officials—Generals, Colonels, Deputy Collectors, Magistrates, English Editors (many of them with their wives), who have also joined our Society, may afford some little consolation to the unhappy nobleman.

The “Occult Sciences” based on a knowledge of the natural forces in the universe may be “of the devil” *only* in the opinion of the *Ceylon Observer*, and a few well-meaning but ignorant *padris*; and if “the devil is not an idiot” we may perhaps account for the fact, by inferring that this much maligned, mysterious gentleman in black has generously ceded his full share of idiocy to some Editors, who

* [See the Bio-Bibliographical Index for information.—*Compiler*.]

despite the conclusions of the 19th century still believe in this interesting though grim Christian myth.

H. P. BLAVATSKY,

Corresponding Secretary, Theosophical Society.

PANADURE,

May 29th, 1880.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

A PEOPLE'S MONTHLY

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 9, June, 1880, p. 229]

The tone of our private correspondence encourages us to think that our magazine is satisfying the wants of the Indian public, and that it may lay some claim at least to be called the Asiatic People's Magazine. Our contributions have been as varied in literary merit as the writers have differed in race and creed. Some have reflected the hopes and aspirations of undergraduates, while others, by ripe Eastern scholars, have won the admiring praise of the greatest authorities of European science. The subjects have been infinitely various, it having been the aim of the Editors to fulfil the promises of the *Prospectus* and make a free platform, from which the advocates of all the old religions might bespeak the attention of a patient public. It appears that our plan was a good one. Despite the ominous warnings of timid friends, the failure of many previous literary ventures, the prejudice arrayed against us, the malicious obstructiveness of the enemies of Theosophy, the unprofitably cheap rate of subscription, and every other obstacle, our magazine is a financial success; owing no man a *pice* and paying its way. The table of subscribers' post-offices, copied last month from our mailing-registers, shows that it is a regular visitor at some hundreds of towns and cities situated in the four quarters of the globe. This means that our advocacy of the study of ancient lore has a world-wide

405

A PEOPLE'S MONTHLY

evidence, and that in the remotest countries people are being taught to revere the wisdom of India.

The most gratifying fact in connection with our journalistic enterprise is that our subscribers are of every sect and caste, and not preponderatingly of any particular one. Most of those who write to us say that the magazine has been recommended by friends, and many, of every rank and every degree of education, express their gratification with what has appeared in these pages.

What precedes will prepare the reader to understand that if, now and then, place has been given to articles of somewhat inferior calibre, the fact must be attributed to design rather than to accident. Not that it would not have been more agreeable to print none but essays of a higher quality; that goes without saying. But we are publishing our magazine for the general public, not alone for the literary critics or antiquarians, and so we always welcome the representatives of popular thought to say their say in the best way they can. To whom shall we look for the revival of Aryan wisdom, the resuscitation of Aryan

nationality, the beginning of a reformation of modern abuses? Not to the middle-aged or the old, for their tendency is towards conservatism and reaction. Much as such persons may intellectually revere the sages of old, it is worse than useless to look to them to set an example of putting away prejudices, customs and notions which those very sages would have abhorred and many of which they actually denounced. The hope of the century is in the young, the ardent, the susceptible, the energetic, who are just stepping upon the stage. It is worth more to fire the heart of one such lad than to rekindle among the ashes of their elders' hopes the flickering semblance of a flame. So let us give the young men a chance to explore old records, question and counsel with their parents and teachers, and then publish the results to the great public. They may not always say very profound things, nor use the most elegant phrases, but at least they are sincere and, if encouraged, will be stimulated to study more, take further counsel, and try to write better next time. And their example will be followed by others.

Most Western men who have attempted to teach the Eastern reading public seem to have the idea that what pleases and satisfies their own countrymen, will equally please and satisfy the Orientals. There could be no greater mistake. The Eastern and Western minds are as unlike as day and night. What pleases the one is not at all likely to meet the requirements of the other, for their respective developments are the result of totally dissimilar environments. The true teachers for the East are Asiatic men, and one of these fledgling Native undergraduates will have a keener sense of Indian intellectual wants than most of our learned professors. The now-confessed total failure of the Cambridge mission to convert the high-class Natives is an example in point. We have more men of the kind they were fishing after in our Bombay Branch alone than were ever converted to Christianity since missions were first established in India. The object of our Society will be completely realized when the hundreds of young men who are reading our magazine and becoming imbued with the theosophical spirit, shall be labouring, with patriotic, religious zeal, in the several localities, for the revival of ancient wisdom and their general study of the records of that far-gone era when their ancestors boasted with sparkling eyes that they were Aryas.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

THE CHRISTIAN ART OF WAR

407

THE CHRISTIAN ART OF WAR

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 9, June, 1880, p. 230]

Will some reverend preacher, devoted to the work of propagating Christianity among the “poor Heathens,” generously read at his next Bible-class, Sunday-school, or open-air meeting the following extract from a great London journal, as a practical illustration of how a Christian army wages war upon naked savages: it will make a deep impression. Says the Cape Town correspondent of the *Daily News*:—

Sad accounts are being brought to light of the atrocities committed by our allies the Amaswazi in the Secocoeni expedition. They are reported to have spared neither man, woman, nor child in their course; and the dreadful particulars are enough to freeze one’s blood. These things will possibly never come to light. Had they been done under any other flag, they would have called down a world of just indignation; but the name of civilization is supposed to throw a cloak over such atrocities. It is a deep stain on our national honour that, in order to avenge a doubtful quarrel with a man who at least seemed to be capable of understanding the rudiments of civilization, we let loose upon him 10,000 of the greatest barbarians in South Africa and, according to more than one report, absolutely stamped out his clan. Nothing can justify the employment of the Amaswazi in the Secocoeni campaign—certainly not success or cheapness, which seem to be the great merits of the operation. It is enough to make one despair of Christianity to think that in the nineteenth century its professors are able to justify such deeds, and to take credit for adopting towards the natives of this continent the same measures by which the Spaniards of the sixteenth century converted the Indians of the Spanish Main. Slavery may be a bad thing, but between that and extermination there is mighty little to choose and the employment of such ruffians as the Amaswazi means extermination, or it means nothing. That such deeds should take place at all, is sad enough. That they should take place under the British flag is enough to make every right-minded Englishman demand a searching inquiry, and to

408

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

insist that no official verbiage shall gloss over deeds which, if committed by Boers or colonists, would be subjected to a storm of righteous indignation. The following telegram has been received this morning by the *Volksblad*, a Dutch organ, which certainly cannot be accused of undue philanthropy:—“Fearful atrocities by Swazis at Secocoeni’s come to light. *Volkterm* mentions few, such as cutting off women’s breasts, burning infants, cutting throats, and flaying children of five and six years.” It is enough to add that these deeds were said to be done by our allies, or rather by our auxiliaries under the British flag.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

THE NUMBER SEVEN

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 9, June, 1880, pp. 232-233]

A deep significance was attached to numbers in hoary antiquity. There was not a people with anything like philosophy, but gave great prominence to numbers in their application to religious observances, the establishment of festival days, symbols, dogmas, and even the geographical distribution of empires. The mysterious numerical system of Pythagoras was nothing novel when it appeared far earlier than 600 years B.C. The occult meaning of figures and their combinations entered into the meditations of the sages of every people; and the day is not far off when, compelled by the eternal cyclic rotation of events, our now sceptical unbelieving West will have to admit that in that regular periodicity of ever-recurring events there is something more than a mere blind chance. Already our Western *savants* begin to notice it. Of late, they have pricked up their ears and begun speculating upon cycles, numbers and all that which, but a few years ago, they had relegated to oblivion in the old closets of memory, never to be unlocked but for the purpose of grinning at the uncouth and idiotic superstitions of our *unscientific* forefathers.

THE NUMBER SEVEN

409

As one of such novelties, the old, and matter-of-fact German journal *Die Gegenwart* has a serious and learned article upon “the significance of the number seven” introduced to the readers as a “Culture-historical Essay.” After quoting from it a few extracts, we will have something to add to it perhaps. The author says:

The number *seven* was considered sacred not only by all the cultured nations of antiquity and the East, but was held in the greatest reverence even by the later nations of the West. The astronomical origin of this number is established beyond any doubt. Man, feeling himself time out of mind dependent upon the heavenly powers, ever and everywhere made earth subject to heaven. The largest and brightest of the luminaries thus became in his sight the most important and highest of powers; such were the planets which the whole antiquity numbered as *seven*. In course of time these were transformed into *seven* deities. The Egyptians had *seven* original and higher gods; the Phoenicians *seven* kabiris; the Persians, *seven* sacred horses of Mithra; the Parsees, *seven* angels opposed by *seven* demons, and *seven* celestial abodes paralleled by *seven* lower regions. To represent the more clearly this idea in its concrete form, the *seven* gods were often represented as one *seven-headed* deity. The whole heaven was subjected to the *seven* planets; hence, in nearly all the religious systems we find *seven* heavens.

The belief in the *sapta lokas* of the Brahmanical religion has remained faithful to the archaic philosophy; and — who knows? — but the idea itself was originated in

Aryavarta, this cradle of all philosophies and mother of all subsequent religions! If the Egyptian dogma of the *metempsychosis* or the transmigration of soul taught that there were *seven* states of purification and progressive perfection, it is also true that the Buddhists took from the Aryans of India, not from Egypt, their idea of *seven* stages of progressive development of the disembodied soul, allegorized by the *seven* stories and umbrellas, gradually diminishing towards the top on their pagodas.

In the mysterious worship of Mithra there were “*seven* gates,” *seven* altars, *seven* mysteries. The priests of many Oriental nations were subdivided into *seven* degrees; *seven* steps led to the altars and in the temples burnt candles in *seven*-branched candlesticks. Several of the Masonic Lodges have to this day *seven* and *fourteen* steps.

The *seven* planetary spheres served as a model for state divisions and organizations. China was divided into *seven* provinces; ancient Persia into *seven* satrapies. According to the Arabian legend *seven* angels cool the sun with ice and snow, lest it should burn the earth to cinders; and *seven thousand* angels wind up and set the sun in motion every morning. The two oldest rivers of the East—the Ganges and the Nile—had each *seven* mouths. The East had in antiquity *seven* principal rivers (the Nile, the Tigris, the Euphrates, the Oxus, the Jaxartes, the Arax, and the Indus); *seven* famous treasures; *seven* cities full of gold; *seven* marvels of the world, etc. Equally did the number *seven* play a prominent part in the architecture of temples and palaces. The famous pagoda of Churingham is surrounded by *seven* square walls, painted in *seven* different colours, and in the middle of each wall is a *seven*-storied pyramid; just as in the antediluvian days the temple of Borsippa, now the Birs-Nimrud, had *seven* stages, symbolical of the *seven* concentric circles of the *seven* spheres, each built of tiles and metals to correspond with the colour of the ruling planet of the sphere typified.

These are all “remnants of paganism” we are told—traces “of the superstitions of old, which, like the owls and bats in a dark subterranean [cave], flew away to return no more before the glorious light of Christianity”—a statement but too easy of refutation. If the author of the article in question has collected hundreds of instances to show that not only the Christians of old but even the modern Christians have preserved the number *seven*, and as sacredly as it ever was before, there might be found in reality *thousands*. To begin with the astronomical and religious calculation of old of the pagan Romans, who divided the week into *seven* days, and held the *seventh* day as the most sacred, the *Sol* or *Sun*-day of Jupiter, and to which all the Christian nations—especially the Protestants—make *puja* to this day. If, perchance, we are answered that it is not from the pagan Romans but from the monotheistic Jews that we have it, then why is not the Saturday or the real “Sabbath” kept instead of the Sunday, or *Sol’s* day?

If in *the Râmâyana* seven yards are mentioned in the residences of the Indian kings; and seven gates generally led to the famous temples and cities of old, then why should the Frieslanders have in the tenth century of the Christian era strictly adhered to the number *seven* in dividing their provinces, and insisted upon paying *seven* “pfennigs” of contribution? The Holy Roman and Christian Empire had *seven Kurfürsts* or Electors. The Hungarians emigrated under the leadership of *seven* dukes and founded *seven* towns, now called *Semigradye* (now Transylvania) . If pagan Rome was built on *seven* hills, Constantinople had *seven* names Byzantium, Antonia, New Rome, the town of Constantine, The Separator of the World’s Parts, The Treasure of Islam, Stamboul—and was also called the city on the *seven* Hills, and the city of *seven* Towers as an adjunct to others. With the Mussulmans “it was besieged *seven* times and taken after *seven* weeks by the *seventh* of the Osman Sultans.” In the ideas of the Eastern peoples, the *seven* planetary spheres are represented by the *seven* rings worn by the women on *seven* parts of the body—the head, the neck, the hands the feet, in the ears, in the nose, around the waist—and these *seven* rings or circles are presented to this time by the Eastern suitors to their brides; the beauty of the woman consisting in the Persian songs of *seven* charms.

The *seven* planets ever remaining at an equal distance from each other, and rotating in the same path, hence, the idea suggested by this motion, of the eternal harmony of the universe. In this connection the number *seven* became especially sacred with them, and ever preserved its importance with the astrologers. The Pythagoreans considered the figure *seven* as the image and model of the divine order and harmony in nature. It was the number containing twice the sacred number *three* or the “triad,” to which the “one” or the divine *monad* was added: $3 + 1 + 3$. As the harmony of nature sounds on the key-board of space, between the *seven* planets, so the harmony of audible sound takes place on a smaller plan within the musical scale of the ever-recurring *seven* tones. Hence, *seven* pipes in the syrinx of the god Pan (or Nature), their gradually diminishing

proportion of shape representing the distance between the planets and between the latter and the earth—and, the *seven*-stringed lyre of Apollo. Consisting of a union between the number *three* (the symbol of the divine triad with all and every people, Christian as well as pagans) and of *four* (the symbol of the cosmic forces or elements), the number *seven* points out symbolically to the union of the Deity with the universe; this Pythagorean idea was applied by the Christians especially during the Middle Ages—who largely used the number *seven* in the symbolism of their sacred architecture. So, for instance, the famous Cathedral of Cologne and the Dominican Church at Regensburg display this number in the smallest architectural details.

No less an importance has this mystical number in the world of intellect and philosophy. Greece had *seven* sages, the Christian Middle Ages *seven* free arts (grammar, rhetoric, dialectics, arithmetic, geometry, music, astronomy). The (Mohammedan) Sheikh-ul-Islam calls in for every important meeting *seven* “ulemas.” In the Middle Ages an oath had to be taken before *seven* witnesses, and the one to whom it was administered was sprinkled *seven* times with blood. The processions around the temples went *seven* times, and the devotees had to kneel *seven* times before uttering a vow. The Mohammedan pilgrims turn around Kaaba *seven* times, at their arrival. The sacred vessels were made of gold and silver purified *seven* times. The localities of the old German tribunals were designated by *seven* trees, under which were placed *seven* “Schoffers” (judges) who required *seven* witnesses. The criminal was threatened with a seven-fold punishment, and a *seven*-fold purification was required as a *seven*-fold reward was promised to the virtuous. Everyone knows the great importance placed in the West on the *seventh* son of a *seventh* son. All the mythic personages are generally endowed with *seven* sons. In Germany, the king and now the emperor cannot refuse to stand as god-father to a *seventh* son, if he be even a beggar. In the East in making up for a quarrel or signing a treaty

of peace, the rulers exchange either *seven* or forty-nine (7×7) presents.

To attempt to cite all the things included in this mystical number would require a library. We will close by quoting but a few more from the region of the demoniacal. According to authorities in those matters—the Christian clergy of old—a contract with the devil had to contain *seven* paragraphs, was concluded for *seven* years and signed by the contractor *seven* times; all the magical drinks prepared with the help of the enemy of man consisted of *seven* herbs; that lottery ticket wins, which is drawn out by a *seven*-year-old child. Legendary wars lasted *seven* years, *seven* months and *seven* days; and the combatant heroes number *seven*, *seventy*, *seven hundred*, *seven thousand*, and *seventy thousand*. The princesses in the fairy tales remained *seven* years under a spell, and the boots of the famous cat—the Marquis de Carabas—were *seven-leagued*. The ancients divided the human frame into *seven* parts; the head, the chest, the stomach, two hands and two feet; and man’s life was divided into *seven* periods. A baby begins teething in the *seventh* month; a child begins to sit after fourteen months (2×7); begins to walk after *twenty-one* months (3×7); to speak after *twenty-eight* months (4×7); leaves off sucking after *thirty-five* (5×7); at *fourteen* years (2×7) he begins to finally form himself; at *twenty-one* (3×7) he ceases growing. The average height of a man, before mankind degenerated, was *seven* feet; hence the old Western laws ordering the garden walls to be *seven* feet high. The education of the boys began with the Spartans and the old Persians at the age of *seven*. And in the Christian religions—with the Roman Catholics and the Greeks—the child is not held responsible for any crime till he is *seven*, and it is the proper age for him to go to confession.

If the Hindus will think of their Manu and recall what the old *Ṛ*astras contain, beyond doubt they will find the origin of all this symbolism. Nowhere did the number *seven* play so prominent a part as with the old Aryas in India. We have but to think of the *seven* sages—the *Sapta-Rishis*;

the *Sapta-Lokas* — the *seven* worlds; the *Sapta-Puras* — the *seven* holy cities; the *Sapta-Dvipas* — the *seven* holy islands; the *Sapta-Samudras* — the *seven* holy seas; the *Sapta-Parvatas* — the *seven* holy mountains; the *Sapta-Aranyas* — the *seven* deserts; the *Sapta-Vrikshas* — the *seven* sacred trees; and so on, to see the probability of the hypothesis. The Aryas *never* borrowed anything, nor did the Brahmans, who were too proud and exclusive for that. Whence, then, the mystery and sacredness of the number *seven*.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 9, June, 1880, pp. 217, 222]

The editorial notice of the proposed visit of our Theosophical Delegation to the island of Ceylon, which is transferred to our columns from those of the *Pioneer*, will be read with pleasure and interest by every Fellow of our Society, Western and Eastern. Its tone is so kind, frank and honourable, that we are all placed under lasting obligations to the Editor. It will be taken as a most encouraging fact that within a single twelve month the objects of our visit to India have become so apparent, despite the strenuous efforts that interested opponents have made to place us in a false position. A year ago, the Government was spending large sums to track our steps; now the case is somewhat different!

In J. G. Lemaistre's *Travels* we read that over the gate of a church of La Chartreuse, near Milan, is the following inscription: "*Marie Virgini, matri, filie, sponse Dei*," which

THE FIRST WAR-TRUMPET BLAST

415

in English is: "*To the Virgin Mary, the Mother, the Daughter, the Wife of God.*" This adds another to "the mysteries of Godliness," for, according to this, Jesus was his own father and the son of his own daughter.*

[From H. P. B.'s *Scrapbook*, Vol. X, Part II, p. 357]

[In connection with a cutting from *The Ceylon Observer* of May 22, 1880, H.P.B. draws in pen and ink a large bold heading: THE CEYLON MISSION OF MAY-JULY 1880; refers to *The Pioneer's* Preliminary Announcement three pages back, and writes:

THE FIRST WAR-TRUMPET BLAST.

[In connection with an article in *The Ceylon Observer* of June 23, 1880, which spoke of Col. Olcott being "caught tripping" on two occasions, in replying to questions, H. P. B. was particularly incensed by the following expressions: "This did not at all please Madame Blavatsky, who spoke her mind rather freely"; and: "The Theosophical Society is not likely to make such progress in Ceylon as its 'president-founders' desire." H. P. B. writes on page 374 of the same *Scrapbook*:]

A *lie* and pious falsification from beginning to end. See H. P. Blavatsky's article on the following page.

[This refers to her article "The Theosophists at Maligawa."]

* [This inscription, preserved in its original orthography, which uses no diphthongs, may be found in Letter XII, Vol. I, page 241, of J. G. Lemaistre's *Travels after the Peace of Amiens, through Parts of France, Switzerland, Italy, and Germany*, London, 1806, in 3 Vols. —*Compiler*.]

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

416

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

THE THEOSOPHISTS AT MALIGAWA

[*The Ceylon Times*, June 30, 1880.] *

Sir,—May I hope to be allowed the same number of lines in the columns of your valuable paper, for the refutation of a mis-statement—misled no doubt by an untruthful correspondent—you have devoted to the affirmation of the same? The paragraph published in your issue of June 22, under the title of “The Theosophists at Maligawa,” must have been originally intended for the columns of the *Observer*, where experience has warned us to expect neither decency nor impartiality, and we are surprised at nothing. But to find in a respectable paper like the *Times* an odiously malicious reflection upon myself [is] quite another affair. I appeal to you as a gentleman to remove the wrong impression made by it upon the public mind.

Colonel Olcott lost nothing at the Dalada Maligawa, neither “rosette” nor anything else. In the surging crowd a hand suddenly snatched from the breast of Mr. Padshah, one of the Parsee gentlemen accompanying us, the silver and gold badge of the Theosophical Society. It was so quick that he could not distinguish the hand, and as the object was worth not above a few rupees, his first thought shared subsequently by all of us was that it was an act of pure malice. This suspicion was in a measure warranted by the disgraceful behaviour of the native Christian party on the preceding evening at the Town Hall, where Colonel Olcott lectured to an audience which we believed was to have been composed only of gentlemen. (Parenthetically I will now notice one of the twenty-three fibs of the *Observer*.)

* [Transcribed from H. P. B.’s *Scrapbook*, Vol. IV, P. 100, by courtesy of The Theosophical Society, Adyar.—*Compiler*.]



TUKARAM TATYA
Outstanding Writer and Publisher of Theosophical
Literature; Organizer of The Theosophical
Society Publication Fund, Bombay



H. S. OLCOTT AND BUDDHIST PRIESTS AT MÂLIGÂKANDA TEMPLE,
COLOMBO
+ the High Priest H. Sumangala.
(From *The Theosophist*, Vol. LIII, August, 1932)

Not only was the lecturer on that occasion not asked why he had “for the last hour been abusing Christianity,” but—as the printed lecture will show—he had not even so much as mentioned either Christianity or Christians. Nevertheless, at the close of the evening’s proceedings a clique of these obstreperous zealots made such a row, and hissed so, that

the indignation of even the European Christian gentlemen present, including a high official, was provoked, and they came forward and apologized to us.) So, when I heard the episode of the badge, I most certainly regarded it as an insult offered by either some native Christian convert or Burgher, and I said so. But I neither addressed myself to the Dewa Nilame nor were we near the relic. I had the arm of Mr. Wimbridge and was leaving the temple by the main entrance when we met the European Manager of the European Kandy Club, and told him the story. There were some young Englishmen standing by; but to say that I even indirectly indicated either of them as the culprit, is simply falsehood. Should they read these lines, I appeal to their sense of honour and justice to corroborate me.

The fact is, that from the moment we set foot on the Island of Ceylon—six weeks ago—we have been preached against by the Missionaries and attacked by their organs, with the *Observer* at their head. They have shrunk from neither calumny, falsehood, slander, nor vile innuendo; not once has either of these journals given a truthful account of what we have done or said. And so, as regards the Maligawa story, in the concluding words of the *Times*' paragraph which I so emphatically protest against—"the motive is not difficult to guess."

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Galle, June 25.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

418

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

THE THEORY OF CYCLES

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 10, July, 1880, pp. 242-244]

It is now some time since this theory, which was first propounded in the oldest religion of the world, Vedaism, then taught by various Greek philosophers, and afterwards defended by the Theosophists of the Middle Ages, but which came to be flatly denied by the *wise men* of the West, like everything else, in this world of negation, has been gradually coming into prominence again. This once, contrary to the rule, it is the men of science themselves who take it up. Statistics of events of the most varied nature are fast being collected and collated with the seriousness demanded by important scientific questions. Statistics of wars and of the periods (or cycles) of the appearance of great men—at least those as have been recognized as such by their contemporaries and irrespective of later opinions; statistics of the periods of development and progress at large commercial centres; of the rise and fall of arts and sciences of cataclysms, such as earthquakes, epidemics; periods of extraordinary cold and heat; cycles of revolutions, and of the rise and fall of empires, etc.; all these are subjected in turn to the analysis of the minutest mathematical calculations. Finally, even the occult significance of numbers in names of persons and names of cities, in events, and like matters, receives unwonted attention. If, on the one hand, a great portion of the educated public is running into atheism and scepticism, on the other hand, we find an evident current of mysticism forcing its way into science. It is the sign of an irrepressible need in humanity to assure itself that there is a Power Paramount over matter; an occult and mysterious law which governs the world, and which we

THE THEORY OF CYCLES

419

should rather study and closely watch, trying to adapt ourselves to it, than blindly deny, and break our heads against the rock of destiny. More than one thoughtful mind, while studying the fortunes and reverses of nations and great empires, has been deeply struck by one identical feature in their history, namely, the inevitable recurrence of similar historical events reaching in turn every one of them, and after the same lapse of time. This analogy is found between the events to be substantially the same on the whole, though there may be more or less difference as to the outward form of details. Thus, the belief of the ancients in their astrologers, soothsayers, and prophets might have been warranted by the verification of many of their most important predictions, without these prognostications of future events implying of necessity anything very miraculous in

themselves. The soothsayers and augurs having occupied in days of the old civilizations the very same position now occupied by our historians, astronomers, and meteorologists, there was nothing more wonderful in the fact of the former predicting the downfall of an empire or the loss of a battle, than in the latter predicting the return of a comet, a change of temperature, or, perhaps, the final conquest of Afghanistan. The necessity for both these classes being acute observers apart, there was the study of certain sciences to be pursued *then* as well as they are *now*. The science of today will have become an “ancient” science a thousand years hence. Free and open, scientific study now is to all, whereas it was then confined but to the few. Yet, whether ancient or modern, both may be called exact sciences; for, if the astronomer of today draws his observations from mathematical calculations, the astrologer of old also based his prognostications upon no less acute and mathematically correct observations of the ever-recurring cycles. And, because the secret of this science is now being lost, does that give any warrant to say that it never existed, or that, to believe in it, one must be ready to swallow “magic,” “miracles,” and the like stuff? “If, in view of the eminence to which modern science has reached, the claim to prophesy future events must be regarded as either a child’s play or

a deliberate deception,” says a writer in the *Novoye Vremya*, the best daily paper of literature and politics of St. Petersburg, “then we can point at science which, in its turn, has now taken up and placed on record the question, in its relation to past events, whether there is or is not in the constant repetition of events a certain periodicity; in other words, whether these events recur after a fixed and determined period of years with every nation; and if a periodicity there be, whether this periodicity is due to blind chance or depends on the same natural laws, on which are more or less dependent many of the phenomena of human life.” Undoubtedly the latter. And the writer has the best mathematical proof of it in the timely appearance of such works as that of Dr. E. Zasse, under review, and of a few others. Several learned works, treating upon this mystical subject, have appeared of late, and of some of these works and calculation, we will now treat; the more readily as they are in most cases from the pens of men of eminent learning. Having already in the June number of *The Theosophist* noticed an article by Dr. Blochvitz, “On the Significance of the Number Seven,” with every nation and people—a learned paper which appeared lately in the German journal *Die Gegenwart*—we will now summarize the opinions of the press in general, on a more suggestive work by a well-known German scientist, E. Zasse, with certain reflections of our own. It has just appeared in the *Prussian Journal of Statistics*, and powerfully corroborates the ancient theory of Cycles. These periods which bring around ever-recurring events, begin from the infinitesimally small—say of ten years—rotation and reach to cycles which require 250, 500 700, and 1000 years, to effect their revolution around themselves, and within one another. All are contained within the *Mahâ-Yuga*, the “Great Age” or Cycle of the Manu calculation, which itself revolves between two eternities—the “Pralayas” or

Nights of Brahmâ. As, in the objective world of matter, or the system of effects, the minor constellations and planets gravitate each and all around the sun, so in the world of the subjective, or the system of causes, these innumerable cycles all gravitate

between that which the finite intellect of the ordinary mortal regards as eternity, and the still finite, but more profound, intuition of the sage and philosopher views as but an eternity within THE ETERNITY. “As above, so it is below, runs the old Hermetic maxim. As an experiment in this direction, Dr. Zasse selected the statistical investigations of all the wars, the occurrence of which has been recorded in history, as a subject which lends itself more easily to scientific verification than any other. To illustrate his subject in the simplest and most easily comprehensible way, Dr. Zasse represents the periods of war and the periods of peace in the shape of small and large wave-lines running over the area of the old world. The idea is not a new one, for the image was used for similar illustrations by more than one ancient and mediaeval mystic, whether in words or picture—by Henry Khunrath, for example. But it serves well its purpose and gives us the facts we now want. Before he treats, however, of the cycles of wars, the author brings in the record of the rise and fall of the world’s great empires, and shows the degree of activity they have played in the Universal History. He points out the fact that if we divide the map of the Old World into five parts—into Eastern, Central and Western Asia, Eastern and Western Europe, and Egypt—then we will easily perceive that every 250 years, an enormous wave passes over these areas, bringing into each in its turn the events it has brought to the one next preceding. This wave we may call “the historical wave” of the 250 years’ cycle. The reader will please follow this mystical number of years.

The first of these waves began in China, 2,000 years B.C.—the “golden age” of this Empire, the age of philosophy; of discoveries and reforms.

In 1750 B.C., the Mongolians of Central Asia established a powerful empire. In 1500, Egypt rises from its temporary degradation and carries its sway over many parts of Europe and Asia; and about 1250, the historical wave reaches and crosses over to Eastern Europe, filling it with the spirit of the Argonautic expedition, and dies out in 1000 B.C. at the siege of Troy.

A second historical wave appears about that time in Central Asia.

The Scythians leave her steppes, and inundate towards the year 750 B.C. the adjoining countries, directing themselves towards the South and West; about the year 500 in Western Asia begins an epoch of

splendour for ancient Persia; and the wave moves on to the east of Europe, where about 250 B.C. Greece reaches her highest state of culture and civilization—and further on to the West, where, at the birth of Christ, the Roman Empire finds itself at its apogee of power and greatness.

Again, at this period we find the rising of a third historical wave at the far East. After prolonged revolutions, about this time, China forms once more a powerful empire, and its arts, sciences, and commerce flourish again. Then 250 years later, we find the Huns appearing from the depths of Central Asia; in the year 500 A.D. a new and powerful Persian kingdom is formed; in 750—in Eastern Europe—the Byzantine empire; and, in the year 1,000—on its Western side springs up the second Roman Power, the Empire of the Papacy, which soon reaches an extraordinary development of wealth and brilliancy.

At the same time, the *fourth* wave approaches from the Orient. China is again flourishing; in 1250, the Mongolian wave from Central Asia has overflowed and covered an enormous area of land, including with it Russia. About 1500, in Western Asia, the Ottoman Empire rises in all its might and conquers the Balkan peninsula; but at the same time in Eastern Europe, Russia throws off the Tatar yoke, and about 1750, during the reign of Empress Catherine, rises to an unexpected grandeur and covers itself with glory. The wave ceaselessly moves further on to the West, and beginning with the middle of the past century, Europe is living over an epoch of revolutions and reforms, and, according to the author, “if it is permissible to prophesize, then, about the year 2,000 Western Europe will have lived one of those periods of culture and progress so rare in history.” The Russian press, taking the cue believes that “towards those days the Eastern Question will be finally settled, the national dissensions of the European peoples will come to an end, and the dawn of the new millennium will witness

the abolishment of armies and an alliance between all the European empires.” The signs of regeneration are also fast multiplying in Japan and China, as if pointing to the approach of a new historical wave at the extreme East.

If from the cycle of two-and-a-half-century duration, we descend to those which leave their impress every century, and grouping together the events of ancient history, will mark the development and rise of empires, then we will assure ourselves that, beginning from the year 700 B.C., the centennial wave pushes forward, bringing into prominence the following nations—each in its turn—the Assyrians, the Medes, the Babylonians, the Persians, the Greeks, the Macedonians, the Carthaginians, the Romans, and the Germanians.

The striking periodicity of the wars in Europe is also noticed by Dr. E. Zasse. Beginning with 1700 A.D., every ten years have been signalized by either a war or a revolution. The periods of the strengthening and weakening of the warlike excitement of the European nations represent a wave strikingly regular in its periodicity, flowing incessantly, as if propelled onward by some invisible fixed law. This same mysterious law seems at the same time to make these events coincide with [the] astronomical wave

or cycle, which, at every new revolution, is accompanied by the very marked appearance of spots in the sun. The periods, when the European powers have shown the most destructive energy, are marked by a cycle of 50 years' duration. It would be too long and tedious to enumerate them from the beginning of History. We may, therefore, limit our study to the cycle beginning with the year 1712, when *all* the European nations were fighting at the same time—the Northern, and the Turkish Wars, and the war for the throne of Spain. About 1761, the “Seven Years' War”; in 1810 the wars of Napoleon I. Towards 1861, the wave has a little deflected from its regular course, but, as if to compensate for it, or, propelled, perhaps, with unusual force, the years directly preceding, as well as those which followed it, left in history the records of the most fierce and bloody war—the Crimean War—in the former period, and the American Rebellion in

the latter one. The periodicity in the wars between Russia and Turkey appears peculiarly striking and represents a very characteristic wave. At first the intervals between the cycles, returning upon themselves, are of thirty years' duration—1710, 1740, 1770; then these intervals diminish, and we have a cycle of twenty years—1790, 1810, 1829-30; then the intervals widen again—1853 and 1878. But, if we take note of the whole duration of the in-flowing tide of the warlike cycle, then we will have at the centre of it—from 1768 to 1812—three wars of seven years' duration each, and, at both ends, wars of two years.

Finally, the author comes to the conclusion that, in view of facts, it becomes thoroughly impossible to deny the presence of a regular periodicity in the excitement of both mental and physical forces in the nations of the world. He proves that in the history of all the peoples and empires of the Old World, the cycles marking the millenniums, the centennials as well as the minor ones of 50 and 10 years' duration, are the most important, inasmuch as neither of them has ever yet failed to bring in its rear some more or less marked event in the history of the nation swept over by these historical waves.

The history of India is one which, of all histories, is the most vague and least satisfactory. Yet, were its consecutive great events noted down, and its annals well searched, the law of cycles would be found to have asserted itself here as plainly as in every other country in respect of its wars, famines, political exigencies, and other matters.

In France, a meteorologist of Paris went to the trouble of compiling the statistics of the coldest seasons, and discovered, at the same time, that those years, which had the figure 9 in them, had been marked by the severest winters. His figures run thus: in 859 A.D., the northern part of the Adriatic Sea was frozen and was covered for three months with ice. In 1179, in the most moderate zones, the earth was covered with several feet of snow. In 1209, in France, the depth of snow and the bitter cold caused such a scarcity of

fodder that most of the cattle perished in that

country. In 1249, the Baltic Sea, between Russia, Norway, and Sweden, remained frozen for many months and communication was held by sleighs. In 1339, there was such a terrific winter in England, that vast numbers of people died of starvation and exposure. In 1409, the River Danube was frozen from its sources to its mouth in the Black Sea. In 1469, all the vineyards and orchards perished in consequence of the frost. In 1609, in France, Switzerland, and Upper Italy, people had to thaw their bread and provisions before they could use them. In 1639, the harbour of Marseilles was covered with ice to a great distance. In 1659, all the rivers in Italy were frozen. In 1699, the winter in France and Italy proved the severest and longest of all. The prices for articles of food were so much raised that half of the population died of starvation. In 1709, the winter was no less terrible. The ground was frozen in France, Italy, and Switzerland, to the depth of several feet, and the sea, south as well as north, was covered with one compact and thick crust of ice, many feet deep, and for a considerable space of miles, in the usually open sea. Masses of wild beasts, driven out by the cold from their dens in the forest, sought refuge in villages and even cities; and the birds fell dead to the ground by hundreds. In 1729, 1749, and 1769 (cycles of 20-years' duration), all the rivers and streams were icebound all over France for many weeks, and all the fruit trees perished. In 1789, France was again visited by a very severe winter. In Paris, the thermometer stood at 19 degrees of frost. But the severest of all winters proved that of 1829. For fifty-four consecutive days, all the roads in France were covered with snow several feet deep, and all the rivers were frozen. Famine and misery reached their climax in the country in that year. In 1839, there was again in France a most terrific and trying cold season. And now the winter of 1879 has asserted its statistical rights and proved true to the fatal influence of the figure 9. The meteorologists of other countries are invited to follow suit and make their investigations likewise, for the subject is certainly one of the most fascinating as well as instructive kind.

Enough has been shown, however, to prove that neither

the ideas of Pythagoras on the mysterious influence of numbers, nor the theories of ancient world-religions and philosophies are as shallow and meaningless as some too forward free-thinkers would have had the world to believe.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

OUR SECOND YEAR

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 11, August, 1880, pp. 261-262]

Like all other pleasant things, our first year's relations with *The Theosophist's* subscribers are about to terminate. The present is the eleventh number, that has been issued under the contract, and the September one will be the twelfth and last. Thus every engagement assumed by the proprietors of the magazine has been honourably and literally fulfilled. It would seem as though they were entitled to the acknowledgement of this much even from those croakers who prophesied the total, probably speedy, collapse of the enterprise, both before and after the first number appeared.

The case of *The Theosophist* calls for a word or two of particular comment. Even in any large city of Europe or America, it is a very rare thing for a periodical of this stamp to survive the natural indifference or hostility of the public for a whole year. Out of scores of attempts made within our own recollection, the successes are so few as to be scarcely worth mentioning. As a rule their term of existence has been in exact ratio with the lump sum their projectors have been ready to spend upon them. In India the prospect was far worse; for the people are poor, cut up into innumerable castes, not accustomed to take in periodicals, and certainly *not* to patronize those put forth by foreigners. Besides, and especially, the custom has always been to give two, three, and even more years' credit to subscribers, and

every Indian publication advertises its respective cash and credit terms of subscription. All this we knew, and both Anglo-Indian and Native journalists of the largest experience warned us to anticipate failure; under no circumstances, they thought, would it be possible for us to make succeed among so apathetic a people so strange a magazine, even though we should give unlimited credit. But as our object was not profit, and as the Society badly needed such an organ, we decided to make the venture. A sum large enough to pay the entire cost of the magazine for one year was set aside, and the first number appeared promptly on the day announced—October 1st, 1879. Believing that the credit system was absolutely pernicious, and having seen the universal adoption in America of the plan of cash payment in advance and its unmixed advantages, we announced that the latter would be the rule of this office. The results are already known to our readers: in the fourth month the magazine reached, and before the half year was gone, passed that ticklish point where income and expenses balance each other, and its success was an assured fact. Many subscribers have been so anxious to have us succeed that they have sent us their money to pay for the magazine two years in advance, and

others have told us we may count upon their patronage as long as they may live. It goes without saying that the projectors of *The Theosophist* have been inexpressibly delighted with the affectionate response to their appeal to the Asiatic people for support in an attempt to snatch from the dust of oblivion the treasures of Aryan wisdom. What heart that was not made of stone could be untouched by so much devotion as has been shown us and our sacred cause of human brotherhood? And it is our pride and joy to realize that all these friends have clustered around us, even when we were under the heavy burden of the suspicions of the Indian Government, because they have believed us to be sincere and true, the friends and brothers of the ardent sons of Asia. If our first year began in uncertainty, it doses all bright and full of promise. Where our magazine had one well-wisher then, now it has twenty, and by the beginning of the third year

will have fifty. It has become a necessity to hundreds of young Aryan patriots, who love to know what their ancestors were, so that they may at least dream of emulating them. It has won a place in the regard of even Anglo-Indians, of which class many in influential positions take it. Its merits as an Oriental magazine have been acknowledged by a number of the first Orientalists of Europe, who have been by it introduced for the first time to some of the most learned of Asiatic priests, *pandits* and *Shastris*. In another place, in this number, will be found a few of the kind words that have been said to and about us, at this and the other side of the world. As to our present standing with the Government of India, the letter from the ex-Viceroy, Lord Lytton, and the leading article of *The Pioneer* (printed respectively in the February and June numbers), as well as the appeal from the Director of Agriculture, N.-W.P. for help, which appeared in June, make all plain. In short, the Theosophical Society, and its organ, *The Theosophist*, are now so firmly established that—entirely apart from the splendid results of the mission to Ceylon, treated elsewhere in a separate article—every lover of truth may well rejoice.

Were we inclined to boasting we might hold out very attractive inducements to subscribers for the second volume. We prefer to let our past performance stand as guarantee of what we will do in the future. We have engaged so many valuable articles by the best writers of Asia, Europe, and America that we have no hesitancy in promising that *The Theosophist* of 1880-81 will be still more interesting and instructive than it has been for 1879-80. Naturally, the Ceylon voyage, and the taking into the Theosophical Society of every Buddhist priest in the Island of any reputation for ability or learning, will lead to such a complete exposition of Buddhism in these columns, by the men best qualified to speak, as must arrest universal attention. No Oriental magazine in the world could ever point to such an array of learned contributors as *The Theosophist* may already pride itself upon.

There will be no change in the terms of subscription, as we wish to make it possible for even the poorest clerk to

take the magazine. Our friends must not forget that the American plan embraces two features, viz., the subscription-money must be in the manager's hands before any copy is sent; and *the journal is discontinued at the expiration of the term subscribed for*. These two rules are invariable, and they have been announced on the first page in every issue, as may be seen upon referring to the Publisher's notices. The September number is, therefore, the last that will be sent to our present subscribers, except to such as have paid for a further term. And as it takes time both to remit money and to open a new set of books, we advise all who wish to receive the November number at the usual time, to forward their subscriptions at once. We must again request that all cheques, hundis, money-orders, registered letters, and other remittances on account of the magazine may be made to the order of “the Proprietors of *The Theosophist*,” and to no one else.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

“SPIRIT” PRANKS INTRA CAUCASUS

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No 11, August, 1880, p. 271]

[The following is an introductory note by H. P. B. to a letter dealing with spiritualistic manifestations:]

Verily . . . Truth is often stranger than fiction!

Some three months ago, the Yankee-Irish editor of a unimportant, third-class Anglo-Indian paper, in a fit, apparently of *delirium tremens*, with abuse and low slander, called us a “Spiritualist.” The epithet was thrown into our teeth under the evident impression that, in the eyes of the sceptical public, at least, it would overwhelm us. The mark was missed that time. If, to believe in the reality of numberless phenomena, produced for long years under our own eyes, in almost every country, and under the most satisfactory test conditions, precluding all possibility of trickery,

constitutes one a “Spiritualist,” then in company with a host of the most eminent men of learning, we plead guilty. But if, on the other hand, we take Webster’s definition that a Spiritualist is “one who believes in direct intercourse with departed spirits, through the agency of persons called *mediums*,” then it was a stupid blunder that the editor committed. Whether rightly or wrongly, we do not attribute the phenomena we believe in to the agency of “spirits” that are the souls of the departed. This is not the occasion to expound our personal theory. For, to begin, there are but few Spiritualists who are unacquainted with it; and our present object being to draw the attention of every sensible person to just such phenomena as the orthodox Spiritualists attribute to spirits, it matters little to whatever cause we personally may attribute them. Earnest and indomitable searchers after truth, and wanting only the TRUTH, none of us, Theosophists, claim infallibility or set ourselves to dogmatizing. We are no sectarians, and most of us, if not all are honestly open to conviction. Let anyone prove to us an alleged fact to be really one, and we are willing to accept it as a dogma any day. Having said so much, we may add, with the permission of the person vouchsafing for the strange phenomena hereinafter described, that the writer is our own sister, Madame V. P. de Zhelihovsky, of Tiflis (Russian Caucasus), one of the most truthful women we have ever known, and a great sceptic upon such matters for long years. But the weird experience being her own, and all the facts but one having happened under her very eyes, she did not hesitate to state them. She is a Spiritualist. Had they been stated to us by any other person, we would, to say the least, have accepted them with the greatest hesitancy, and ten to one

would have “killed” the letter. As it is, we publish it in full.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

“A LAND OF MYSTERY”

431

NOTES ON “A LAND OF MYSTERY”

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 11, August, 1880, pp. 278-279]

To the Editor of *The Theosophist*:—I have read with much pleasure your excellent article on “A Land of Mystery.” In it you show a spirit of inquiry and love of truth which are truly commendable in you and cannot fail to command the approbation and praise of all unbiased readers. But there are certain points in it, in which I cannot but join issue with you. In order to account for the most striking resemblances that existed in the manners, customs, social habits and traditions of the primitive peoples of the two worlds, you have recourse to the old Platonic theory of a land-connection between them. But the recent researches in the *Novemyra** have once for all exploded that theory. They prove that, with the exception of the severance of Australia from Asia, there never was a submersion of land on so gigantic a scale as to produce an Atlantic or a Pacific Ocean, that, ever since their formation, the seas have never changed their ancient basins on any very large scale. Professor Geikie, in his physical geography, holds that the continents have always occupied the positions they do now, except that, for a few miles, their coasts have sometimes advanced into and receded from the sea.

You would not have fallen into any error, had you accepted M. de Quatrefages’ theory of migrations by sea. The plains of Central Asia are accepted by all monogenists as the centre of appearance of the human race. From this place successive waves of emigrants radiated to the utmost verge of the world. It is no wonder that the ancient Chinese, Hindus, Egyptians, Peruvians, and Mexicans—men who once inhabited the same place—should show the strong resemblances in certain points of their life. The proximity of the two continents at Behring Straits enabled immigrants to pass from Asia to America. A little to the south is the current of Tassen, the Kouro-sivo or black stream of the Japanese, which opens a great route for Asiatic

* [It is not certain what particular journal or newspaper is meant here. The nearest name to this spelling would be *Novy Mir* (New World), but no such magazine was in existence then. The other possibility is that the St. Petersburg daily *Novoye Vremya* is meant.—*Compiler*.]

navigators. The Chinese have been a maritime nation from remote antiquity and it is not impossible that their barges might have been like those of the Portuguese navigator P. A. Cabral, in modern times, driven by accident to the coast of America. But, leaving all questions of possibilities and accidents aside, we know that the Chinese had discovered the magnetic needle even so early as B.C. 2,000. With its aid and

that of the current of Tassen, they had no very considerable difficulty to cross to America. They established, as M. F. Paz Soldan informs us in his *Geografía del Perú*, a little colony there; and Buddhist missionaries “towards the close of the fifth century sent religious missions to carry to Fou-Sang (America) the doctrines of Buddha.” This will no doubt be unpleasant to many European readers. They are averse to crediting a statement that takes the honour of the discovery of America from them and assigns it to what they are graciously pleased to call “a semi-barbarous Asiatic nation.” Nevertheless, it is an unquestionable truth. Chapter XVIII of *The Human Species*, by A. de Quatrefages will be an interesting reading to any one who may be eager to know something of the Chinese discovery of America, but the space at his command being small, he gives a very meagre account of it in his book. I earnestly hope you will complete your interesting article by adverting to this and giving as full particulars of all that is known about it. The shedding of light on a point which has hitherto been involved in mysterious darkness, will not be unworthy of the pen of one, the be-all and end-all of whose life is the search of truth and, when found, to abide by it. be it at whatever cost it may be.

AMRITA LAL BISVAS

Calcutta, 11th July.

Scant leisure this month prevents our making any detailed answer to the objections to the Atlantean hypothesis intelligently put forth by our subscriber. But let us see whether—even though based upon “recent researches” which “have once for all exploded that theory”—they are as formidable as at first sight they may appear.

Without entering into the subject too deeply, we may limit ourselves to but one brief remark. More than one scientific question, which at one time has seemingly been put at rest forever, has exploded at a subsequent one over the heads of theorists who had forgotten the danger of trying to elevate a simple theory into an infallible dogma. We have not questioned the assertion that “there never was a submersion of land on so gigantic a scale as to produce an

Atlantic or a Pacific Ocean,” for we never pretended to suggest new theories for the formation of oceans. The latter may have been where they now are since the time of their first appearance, and yet whole continents been broken into fragments partially engulfed, and left innumerable islands, as seems the case with the submerged Atlantis. What we meant was that, at some pre-historic time and long after the globe teemed with civilized nations, Asia, America, and perhaps Europe were parts of one vast continental formation, whether united by such narrow strips of land as evidently once existed where now is Behring Strait (which connects the North Pacific and Arctic Oceans and has a depth of hardly more than twenty to twenty-five fathoms), or by larger stretches of land. Nor shall we fight the monogenists who claim Central Asia as the *one* cradle place of humanity—but leave the task to the polygenists who are able to do it far more successfully than ourselves. But, in any case, before we can accept the theory of monogenesis, its advocates must offer us some *unanswerable* hypothesis to account for the observed differences in human types better than that of “divarication caused by difference of climate, habits, and *religious culture*.” Mr. de Quatrefages may remain, as

ever, indisputably a most distinguished naturalist—physician, chemist, and zoologist—yet we fail to understand why we should accept his theories in preference to all others. Mr. Amrita Lal Bisvas evidently refers to a narrative of some scientific travels along the shores of the Atlantic and the Mediterranean, by this eminent Frenchman, entitled *Souvenirs d'un Naturaliste*. He seems to regard Mr. de Quatrefages in the light of an infallible Pope upon all scientific questions: we do not, though he was a member of the French Academy and a professor of ethnology. His theory about the migrations by sea, may be offset by about an hundred others which directly oppose it. It is just because we have devoted our whole life to the research of truth—for which complimentary admission we thank our critic—that we *never accept on faith any authority* upon any question whatsoever; nor, pursuing, as we do, TRUTH and progress through a full and fearless enquiry,

untrammelled by any consideration, would we advise any of our friends to do otherwise.

Having said so much, we may now give a few of our reasons for believing in the alleged “fable” of the submerged Atlantis—though we explained ourselves at length upon the subject in *Isis Unveiled* (Vol. I, pp. 590, *et seq.*).

1. We have as evidence the most ancient traditions of various and widely-separated peoples—legends in India, in ancient Greece, Madagascar, Sumatra, Java, and all the principal isles of Polynesia, as well as those of both Americas. Among savages, as in the traditions of the richest literature in the world—the Sanskrit literature of India—there is an agreement in saying that, ages ago, there existed in the Pacific Ocean, a large continent which, by a geological upheaval, was engulfed by the sea. And it is our firm belief—held, of course, subject to correction—that most, if not all of the islands from the Malayan Archipelago to Polynesia, are fragments of that once immense submerged continent. Both Malacca and Polynesia, which lie at the two extremities of the Ocean and which, since the memory of man, never had nor could have any intercourse with, or even a knowledge of each other, have yet a tradition, common to all the islands and islets, that their respective countries extended far, far out into the sea; that there were in the world but two immense continents, one inhabited by yellow, the other by dark men; and that the ocean, by command of the gods and to punish them for their incessant quarrelling, swallowed them up.

2. Notwithstanding the geographical fact that New Zealand, and Sandwich, and Easter Islands, are at a distance, from each other, of between 800 and 1,000 leagues; and that, according to every testimony, neither these nor any other intermediate islands, for instance, the Marquesan, Society, Fijian, Tahitian, Samoan, and other islands, could, since they became islands, ignorant as their people were of the compass, have communicated with each other before the arrival of Europeans; yet, they, one and all, maintain that their respective countries extended far toward the West, on the Asian side. Moreover, with very small

differences, they all speak dialects evidently of the same language and understand each other with little difficulty; have the same religious beliefs and superstitions; and pretty much the same customs. And as few of the Polynesian islands were discovered earlier than a century ago, and the Pacific Ocean itself was unknown to Europe until the days of Columbus, and these islanders have never ceased repeating the same old traditions since the Europeans first set foot on their shores, it seems to us a logical inference that our theory is nearer to the truth than any other. Chance would have to change its name and meaning, were all this due but to chance alone.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

[THE BEWITCHED MIRROR]

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 11, August, 1880, p. 284]

[In *The Theosophist* of June, 1880, p. 230, there appeared an account of an experiment made by A. Tzeretelef. He had heard that “to stand alone at midnight before a mirror, with two lighted candles in one’s hands, and to repeat three times loudly and slowly one’s own name,” was a most terrifying experience. He proceeded to do exactly as he had been told. After twice calling his name, meanwhile gazing firmly at his reflection in the mirror, he became suddenly filled with terror upon realizing that his reflection had disappeared, while all the other objects were faithfully reflected. He tried desperately to utter his name for the third time, but failed. After that, he knew no more until next morning when he became conscious that he was in his own bed with a servant standing at his side.

The same experiment was tried by Babu Asu Tosh Mitra, who proceeded exactly according to the same method, but without results. He repeated the experiment on three subsequent nights, but in vain. He expresses his wish to know if anyone else has tried it and thinks that “it might be that the effects described happen only with certain persons.”

To this H. P. B. remarks:]

The experimental plan, followed in this instance by the Babu, is the only one by which it may be discovered how

much truth there is in the time-honoured legends, traditions, and superstitious observances of modern nations. If his and his friend’s tests prove nothing else, they certainly show that not everyone, who invokes himself in a mirror at midnight by the light of two candles, will, of necessity, be appalled by ghostly apparitions. But his own common sense has probably suggested what is no doubt the fact of the case, viz., that the phenomena described by Prince Tzeretelef, in our June number, are observable only by persons of a peculiar temperament. This is certainly the rule in every other department of psychic phenomena. As regards the “Bewitched Mirror” tale, we printed it as an illustration of one of the oldest of Slavic beliefs, leaving it to the reader to put [it to] the test or not as pleases him best.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

SOBS, SODS AND POSIES

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 11, August, 1880, p. 284]

A few weeks ago, one George Nairns, a British sailor, brutally murdered at Calcutta a poor police sepoy who was quietly standing on his beat, and with whom he had never spoken or even exchanged a word before. The miscreant knocked down his victim, and then cut his throat with a knife which he had brought ashore purposely to kill some one with. He was tried and convicted, but recommended to mercy by the jury. But the Court, reprimanding the jurors for a recommendation so utterly uncalled for under the circumstances, gave sentence; and the Government of India, upon being appealed to, very sensibly and justly affirmed the decision of the Court. Well, this red-handed murderer was hung, the other day, and his body interred at the Scotch Burial Ground, Calcutta. The *Indian Daily News* says:

There were present at the cemetery, some time before the funeral *cortège* arrived, about fifty ladies and gentlemen. On the arrival of

SOBS, SODS AND POSIES

437

the hearse, the coffin, which bore the inscription of "George Nairns, executed July 23rd, 1880, aged 29 years," was covered by an Union Jack, and was shouldered by six of Nairns' shipmates, and carried to the foot of the grave. The Rev. Mr. Gillan officiated, and in the first instance read out those portions of scripture which Nairns was most fond of hearing read to him after his condemnation. He then referred in general to the terms of the statement made by Nairns on the scaffold, and more particularly addressing the sailors present, he warned them to take example from the fate which had befallen Nairns, and earnestly advised them to avoid the low Native liquor shops. The usual prayers were then offered up. On the coffin being lowered into the grave, many a sod was thrown in pityingly, and many a merciful womanly hand flung in a bunch of flowers, and many a head was turned aside to wipe away a tear for the shameful end of a young man whose career had promised much better things. At the conclusion, the Rev. Mr. Godwin, assisted by several ladies who were present, sang the hymn, *Safe in the Arms of Jesus*.

Who would not be a murderer of sepoys, after that! Fifty gushing ladies and gentleman; the Union Jack to enwrap one's coffin; consoling texts read from the Bible, his favourites *after his condemnation* (cheap country liquor was his specialty before); sods thrown "pityingly" in—for good luck, doubtless, as slippers are thrown at weddings; sweet nosegays; and pearly tears raining down fair cheeks—what more could any respectable assassin demand? What, indeed, but to know that, like poor Rip Van Winkle's drink, this murder should not count against him? And even this comfort was not withheld by the Church; for, to top off all, the winsome Reverend Godwin and his fair slobberers launched out with *Safe in the Arms of Jesus*. Happy George! It is to be

regretted, however, that our Calcutta contemporary omitted one important fact, without knowing which the reader cannot fully appreciate the beauties of the Christian Atonement. *In whose arms, let us ask, is the murdered sepoy "safe"?*

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**
1880

438

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO “RAHATSHIP”

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 11, August, 1880, p. 289]

[A series of extracts on Rahatship, gleaned from various Buddhist Scriptures, is introduced by H. P. B. with the following remarks:]

It highly gratified our Delegates to Ceylon to find that not only every educated priest and layman, but the uneducated people of that Island also, knew the possibility of man's acquiring the exalted psychical powers of adeptship, and the fact that they had often been acquired. At Bentota we were taken to a temple where a community of 500 of these *Rahats*, or adepts, had formerly resided. Nay, we even met those who had quite recently encountered such holy men; and a certain eminent priest, who joined our Society, was shortly after permitted to see and exchange some of our signs of recognition with one. It is true that, as in India and Egypt, there is a prevalent idea that the term for the manifestation of the highest grades of *rahatship* (*Rahat* or *Arahat* is the Pali equivalent of the Sanskrit *Rishi*—one who has developed his psychical powers to their fullest extent) has expired, but this comes from a mistaken notion that Buddha himself had limited the period of such development to one millennium after his death. To set this matter at rest we here give a translation by Mr. Frederic Dias, Pandit of the Galle Theosophical Society, of passages which may be regarded as absolutely authoritative. They were kindly collected for us by the chief assistant priest of the Paramananda Vihara, at Galle.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

THE THEOSOPHISTS IN CEYLON

439

COMMENT ON “THE THEOSOPHISTS IN CEYLON”

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 11, August, 1880, p. 292]

[To a correspondent's account in the Allahabad *Pioneer*, of July 31, 1880, of H. P. B.'s and Col. Olcott's visit to Ceylon, H. P. B. appends the following note:]

The Pioneer's correspondent appears to have entirely overlooked one of the most important events of our Ceylon visits. On the 4th of July the Convention of Buddhist priests elsewhere alluded to by us, met at Galle, and listened to an address from Colonel Olcott upon the necessity of reviving Pali literature, and the special duty that rested upon them as its sole custodians. Thereupon they unanimously adopted a resolution to permanently organize as an Ecclesiastical Council under the auspices of the Theosophical Society, and every priest present, not previously initiated, applied for and was duly received into our Parent Society. This Convention was entirely composed of picked men—of such as were recognized to be leaders in their respective sects; hence by this one meeting the Society enormously increased its strength and prestige in all Buddhistic countries.

The profound agitation, caused in Ceylon society by the visit of our Delegates, may be gauged by a single fact:—While we were there, three Christians of Galle were made insane by brooding over our arguments against the sufficiency of the basis of their religion. Poor things! their belief was evidently founded upon faith rather than logic.

On the 10th of July we went by invitation to Welitara, a village between Galle and Colombo, to organize our seventh, and last, Buddhistic branch. As an illustration of the

440

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

thoughtful kindness shown us everywhere, we may mention that, though we were only to spend a few hours of daylight at Welitara, we found ready a large bungalow completely furnished, every article of furniture in which had been specially sent down from Colombo by the millionaire Mudalayar Mr. Sampson Rajapaksa. At this village, are the temples of two eminent priests, the Revs. Wimelasara and Dhammalankara, of the Amrapura sect. Besides founding the Welitara Theosophical Society—with Mr. Baltasar M. Weerasinghe, Interpreter Mudelyar, as President,—we admitted thirty priests of the two viharas above mentioned. Thus was gathered into the Parent Society the last of the cliques, or schools among the Buddhist priests, and the last obstacle to a practical

exposition of Buddhism before the world, removed.

The permanent organization of the Galle Branch, on the evening of July 11, was the last important business transacted. On the morning of the 13th—the *fifty-seventh* day since we put foot upon Ceylon soil—we embarked on the B.I.Co.'s steamship *Chanda* for Bombay, which we reached on the 24th after a stormy buffeting of eleven days by the S. W. monsoon. Again the Number Seven asserted itself, the 24th of July being the *seventy-seventh* day since we sailed from Bombay for Ceylon! In fact, the part which the Number Seven played in every essential detail of this Ceylon visit, is so striking and mysterious that we reserve the facts for a separate article.

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**
1880

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

441

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 11, August, 1880, p. 279]

“A MISSIONARY WHIP.”—Mr. Andrew Chermiside, a recent traveller in Central Africa, has placed in the hands of Dr. Cameron, M.P., a whip, with which he states that the missionaries, at a mission station, established near Lake Nyassa, are in the habit of flogging their refractory converts. The whip consists of several very thick thongs, and is a more formidable weapon of punishment than the navy cat which was exhibited at the House of Commons last year. The subject is, we hear, likely to undergo official investigation.—*Daily News*.

What heathen could resist such persuasive arguments?

[*Ibid.*, p. 283]

The voyage from Bombay to Point de Galle during the dry months, by one of the fine steamers of the British India S. N. Co., touching at all the Coast ports, is charming. With an agreeable captain, good company, and reasonable immunity from sea-sickness, it is so like a yachting excursion that one is sorry when the journey is ended. Such, at any rate, was our case. To come back in the S. W. monsoon, as we did, is quite another affair.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

442

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

CLOSING NOTE TO “ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE IONIAN THEOSOPHICAL BRANCH AT CORFU”

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 12, September, 1880, p. 298]

[The President of the Ionian Theosophical Branch, Signor Pasquale Menelao, D.L., having delivered an inaugural address, upon presenting the Charter of Constitution to the Fellows. H. P. B. made the following comments:]

The inaugural addresses of the respective presiding officers of the Ionian and Bombay Branches of the Theosophical Society, which appear side by side in the present number so well illustrate its policy of mutual tolerance and confraternity, that we bespeak for each a careful reading. Here we see the Italian thinker moved by the same lofty aspirations for individual perfection and the happiness and enlightenment of mankind, as the Parsi thinker of Bombay. And though the one conceives of the First Cause, or Deity, quite differently from the other, whose ancestors from time immemorial have worshipped the Sun as a visible type of Ormazd, yet a common religious feeling moves the heart of each, and a common instinct makes him see the way upward towards the truth brighter and clearer by the light of Theosophy. Ours is not an atheistical society, though it does contain atheists; nor is it a Christian one, even though our brother Dr. Wyld, President of the British Theosophical Society, would have us accept Jesus as the most divine personage that ever appeared among men. Our Fellows are of the most varied opinions and each has a right to claim respect for his ideas as he is bound to respect those of his brothers. We have presidents who are severally

FOOTNOTE TO "NANGA BÂBÂ OF GWALIOR"

443

Christian, Deist, Buddhist, Hindu, and Atheist; none dogmatizers, none claiming to be wiser or more infallible than the other, yet each taking the other by the hand, calling him brother, and helping him and being helped in the divine quest after knowledge. Nor are all, or even a large minority, students of occult sciences, for rarely is the true mystic born. Few, alas! have they ever been, who so yearned after the discovery of Nature's secrets as to be willing to pursue that hard and unselfish course of study: and our own century can show fewer than any of its predecessors. As to the secrets of the Theosophical Society, when we mention the masonic-like signs of recognition, and the privacy secured for the handful who do make their experiments in psychological science, all has been said. The Parent Society is, in one word, a Republic of Conscience, a

brotherhood of men in search of the Absolute Truth. As was sufficiently explained in our opening October number, every one of us professes to be ready to help the other whatever the branch of science or religion to which his personal predilections may lead him.



***Collected Writings* VOLUME II**
1880

FOOTNOTE TO “NANGA BÂBÂ OF GWALIOR”

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 12, September, 1880, p. 304]

[In this valuable narrative, the author, “M. B. V.,” gives an instance of the appearance of the *Mayâvi-Rûpa*, but not being able to understand the rationale of the phenomenon, asks in closing: “What was the person or form that appeared. . . . By what name may we call this wonderful phenomenon?” To this H.P.B. answers:]

By the name *Kama-Rupa* or *Mayâvi-Rupa*. An Aryan ought not to need ask that. We know of a case in Europe, related to us by the gentleman himself, where a man was in a trance or semi-trance state for thirty-six hours—one day and two nights. During this interval he appeared—or seemed to appear—at College as usual and continued a lecture

he had begun the previous day; taking up the thread exactly where it had been dropped. The gentleman would not believe his pupils’ assurances of this fact until they showed him the note-books in which as customary, they had preserved memoranda of the College lectures to which they listened. Who can tell whether the teacher, who lectured while the gentleman was unconscious, was his physical body, animated by another intelligence, or his *Mayâvi-Rupa*, or “double,” acting independently of the consciousness of his physical brain? And this very gentleman, to whom this number will be sent, will, we promise, be mightily interested in the guard-mounting story of Sobha Singh.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

RUSSIAN SUPERSTITIONS

[*The Theosophist*. Vol. I, No. 12, September, 1880, pp. 308-309]

In the article entitled “War in Olympus” (*The Theosophist* for November, 1879), an allusion was made to a great row then raging in Russia, between the defenders and adversaries of the modern mediumistic phenomena. One of the most rabid assailants of the spiritists has long been Mr. Eugene Markoff*, a well-known contemporary Russian

* [Yevgueniy Lvovich Markoff (1835-1903 or 1904) was a well-known writer in Russia. He belonged to an old family of landowners in the Shchigrovskiy uyezd of the Province of Kursk. His mother, Elizabeth Alexeyevna, *née* von Hahn, a very talented woman, was the daughter of Lt.-Gen. Alexey Gustavovich von Hahn of Suvorov’s Army—H.P.B.’s own paternal grandfather. Y. L. Markoff, together with his sisters and brothers—one of whom, Vladislav, was a novelist—were therefore first cousins of H.P.B.

The writings of Y. L. Markoff include: *Barchuki: kartini proshlago* (Barchuki: pictures from the past), St. Petersburg, 1875, which are autobiographical memories of childhood; and *Uchebniye godi barchuka* (Schooldays of Barchuk), in the Journal *Nov’*, Vol. II, 1885, pp. 228-39. His *Collected Writings* were published in two volumes in 1877 at St. Petersburg.—*Compiler*.]

RUSSIAN SUPERSTITIONS

445

critic. No one was ever more bitingly sarcastic or combative against what he called the “modern superstition.” The Russian press is now having a laugh at his expense. In an incautious moment, he suffered himself to be betrayed into an admission of some wonderful phenomena that had come under his personal knowledge some years ago. Treating, in the *Golos*, of the various superstitions of the Russian peasantry, he says that to them the “house-spook” (*domovoi*) or “house-keeper” (*hozyain*)—as this familiar spirit is also called—“has as perfect an objective reality, as the living persons about him. In *it* the peasant puts his trust, and takes it into consideration in every domestic affair.”—Then comes this confession:—

I well remember that in my early manhood there was a learned old man, Stepan Andreyevich, celebrated far and wide in all our neighbourhood, and even far beyond its boundaries. Before the magical achievements and occult powers of this son of the village deacon, before his weird knowledge and prophecies, our people literally prostrated themselves. He was not regarded as a practitioner of black art, but as a benevolent magician; he was simply credited with the performance of the most astounding miracles. He would see and describe to others events transpiring many miles off: he prophesied the day of his own death, and that of various well-known land-owners in our neighbourhood; at a single word from him, a whole pack of wild dogs, that were tearing after a carriage, fell dead in their tracks: at Orel, he evoked, at her prayer, the shade of a widow’s deceased husband, and discovered where he had hidden

some important family papers. As for all manner of illnesses, it was as though he drove them away with a wave of his hand. It was positively said that one lady had paid him 17,000 rubles for curing a case of lunacy; and it was alleged with like positiveness that he had been taken more than once to Moscow and other towns, to cure wealthy invalids. Hysterical diseases yielded to a single touch or even glance of his. In our own house, he relieved an obsessed woman by simply causing her to drink twelve bottles of some infusion of herbs. The obsessed creature would feel beforehand the approach of Stepan Andreyevich; she would be thrown into terrible convulsions and scream loud enough to be heard in the village—‘he comes. he comes! . . .’

As if the above were not wonderful enough, Mr. Markoff cites an instance which has quite recently come under his own observation, and in which he places a faith quite refreshing to behold in so uncompromising an opponent of

everything smacking of “superstition.” This is what he tells us:—

In my cattle-yard, there is a superb young bull, purchased by me from a very wealthy breeder. This bull had no progeny, strange to say, and I, believing it to be the keeper’s fault, rated him soundly for it. The intelligent *muzhik* would only doff his cap and, without replying, shake his head with an air of total disagreement with my opinion.

“Eh! Master, master!” he once exclaimed, with an expression of deep conviction, “Did you not purchase the brute *from a wealthy peasant?* How then can you ever expect that he should breed?”

The fact is that a popular superstition in Russia assures that no rich breeder trading in fine cattle, will ever sell a beast unless it has been made previously barren by the magic means of the “word” (a spell, or mantram). And Mr. Markoff, the great opponent of spiritualism, evidently shares in the superstition, since he adds the following profound reflection:—

There are sufficiently strong reasons to believe that such exorcisms and spells are not merely limited to a “word” but too evidently in many a case become “a deed.”

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

THE DECADENCE OF PROTESTANT CHRISTIANITY

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 12, September, 1880, p. 309]

Doubts have been expressed by Asiatic friends as to the truth of our assertion that Protestantism was fast approaching the crisis of its fate. Yet it needs only to visit any Protestant country to satisfy oneself of this fact. We find copied with approval into one of the most rabid organs of the Roman Church—the *Catholic Mirror*—an editorial article from the *New York Times*, a leading American newspaper

THE DECADENCE OF PROTESTANT CHRISTIANITY

447

peculiarly devoted to the interests of an orthodox Protestant public, containing the following significant warning:

The Protestant clergy do not seem to be aware of the formidable warfare which is now waging against revealed religion. The defences, which were effective against the noisy artillery of Paine, are useless against the noiseless and ceaseless sapping and mining with which Rationalism attacks them. Orthodox Protestantism shuts its eyes to the fact that science and literature are in the hands of its enemies. It refuses to perceive that the ground on which it stands is slipping from under its feet; that Germany, which, at the call of Luther, accepted the infallible Book in place of the self-styled infallible Church, has now rejected the Book, and that the new reformation, which reforms Christianity out of existence, is spreading all over the Protestant world.

The result will, according to the *Times*, accrue to the profit of the Romish Church. It foresees, in fact, that the latter may become “far stronger than she has been at any time since the Reformation.” Certainly the sudden outbreak of bigoted fervour over the pretended “miracles” in France and, more recently, Ireland, and the growing perversions of Anglican priests and laity show a decided drift in the direction indicated. Men in the mass do not think but feel, are emotional rather than rational and go by flocks and swarms to that religion which most appeals to the emotions and imagination and least to the reason. That the whole area of Protestantism is now ready to embrace some new faith which seems more consoling than Protestantism and more reasonable than Romanism, is so palpable and undeniable that no well-informed, disinterested observer will gainsay the statement. This conviction induced the founders of our Society to organize for the quest after primitive truth. And it makes some of us believe that the auspicious hour has come for the Buddhists to begin preparing for a new propaganda of Buddhism.

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**
1880

448

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

STONE-THROWING BY “SPIRITS”

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 12, September, 1880, p. 310]

In the July number we reprinted from the *Daily Chronicle* an account of recent stone-throwings at Plumstead, England, by some mysterious agency. Among other cases reported in the English papers is one at Cookstown, near Belfast, Ireland, vouched for by the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Belfast News Letter*. The missiles in this instance, fell under the very eyes of the police without their obtaining the least clue. The *Spiritualist* cites another similar incident as having happened at Peckham in broad daylight, despite every precaution of the police to entrap any trickster. The editor says that Mr. William Howitt once collected a whole bookful of instances. The thing is well known in India, and that our friends in Europe may have the data for making comparisons, we will be glad if our readers will report to us cases that can be authenticated by respectable witnesses.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

THE NUMBER SEVEN AND OUR SOCIETY

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 12, September, 1880, pp. 311-312]

The thoughtful reader must have pondered well over the mysterious import that the number *Seven* seems to have always had among the ancients, as succinctly epitomized in our June number, as well as the theory of cycles, discussed in the July issue. It was there stated that the German scientists are now giving attention to this manifestation of the numerical harmony and periodicity of the operations of

THE NUMBER SEVEN AND OUR SOCIETY

449

Nature. A series of statistical observations, embracing some centuries of historical events, tend to show that the ancients must have been perfectly aware of this law when constructing their systems of philosophy. In fact, when statistical science shall have been fully perfected, as it seems likely to be, there will be constantly increasing proofs that the evolution of heroes, poets, military chieftains, philosophers, theologians, great merchants, and all other remarkable personages, is as capable of mathematical estimate upon the basis of the potentiality of numbers, as the return of a comet by the rules of astronomical calculations. The comparatively modern system of life insurance rests upon the calculated expectancy of life on the average at certain ages; and, while nothing is so uncertain as the probable longevity of any single individual in a community, nothing is more certain than that the probable life-chance of any one person, in the mass of population, can be known on the basis of the general average of human life. In fact, as M. de Cazeneuve, in the *Journal du Magnétisme*, justly observes, the law of numerical proportions is verified in every department of the physical sciences. We see it in chemistry as the law of definite proportions and multiple proportions; in physics, as the law of optics, acoustics, electricity, etc.; in mineralogy, in the wonderful phenomena of crystallization; in astronomy, in the celestial mechanics. Well may the writer, above-quoted, remark: "Physical and moral laws have so infinitely numerous points of contact, that, if we have not as yet reached the point where we can demonstrate their identity, it is none the less certain that there exists between them a very great analogy."

We have attempted to show how, by a sort of common instinct, a peculiar solemnity and mystical significance has been given the Number *Seven* among all people, at all times. It now remains for us to cite, from the experience of the Theosophical Society, some facts which indicate how its power has manifested itself with us. Continually our experiences have been associated with *Seven* or some

combination or multiple of it. And it must be remembered that, in not a single instance, was there any intention that the

number should play a part in our affairs; but, on the contrary, what happened was in many cases exactly the reverse of what we desired. It was only the other day that we began to take any note of the striking chain of circumstances, and some have only been recalled now at the moment of writing.

The two chief founders of our Society were the President, Colonel Olcott, and the Conductor of this Magazine. When they made each other's acquaintance (in 1874), the office number of the former was *seven*, the house number of the latter *seventeen*. The President's Inaugural Address before the Society was delivered November 17, 1875; the Headquarters were established in the *47th* street (the uptown streets in New York are all designated by numbers), and Colonel Olcott's office was removed to 71 Broadway. On the *17th* December, 1878, our delegates to India sailed for London; the voyage, owing to storms and fogs, lasted *seventeen* days; on the *17th* January, 1879, we left London for Liverpool to take the steamer for Bombay, got on board the next day, but lay all night in the Mersey, and on the 19th—the *seventeenth* day from our landing in England, we got to sea. On March 2—*seventeen* days after reaching Bombay—we removed to the bungalows where we have ever since been living.* On the 23rd March, *thirty-five* (7 x 5) days after landing, Colonel Olcott delivered his first public oration on Theosophy, at Framji Cowasji Institute, Bombay. July 7, the first Prospectus, announcing the intended foundation of *The Theosophist* was written; on the *27th* September, the first† “form” was made up at the printing-office, and on October 1—our *227th* in India—the magazine appeared.

But we anticipate events. In the beginning of April, last year, Colonel Olcott and the Conductor of this Magazine went to the N.W. Provinces to meet Swami Dayânanand, and were absent from the Headquarters *thirty-seven* days, and visited *seven* different cities during the trip. In December

* [Col. Olcott says that this took place on March 7th. See *Old Diary Leaves*, II, 21.—*Compiler*.]

† [Col. Olcott's *Diaries* say that this was the *last* “form.”—*Compiler*.]

of that year we again went northward, and on the *21st* (7x3) of that month, a special meeting of the Society of Benares Pandits was held to greet Colonel Olcott and elect him an Honorary Member in token of the friendliness of the orthodox Hindu pandits for our Society—a most important event.

Coming down to the Ceylon trip, we find, on consulting the diary, that our party sailed from Bombay May 7, the steamer starting her engines at 7:7 A.M. We reached Point de Galle on the 17th. At the first meeting in Ceylon of candidates for initiation, a group of *seven* persons presented themselves. At Panadure, *seven* were also initiated first, the evening proving so boisterous and stormy that the rest could not leave their houses. At Colombo, *fourteen* (7 x 2) were initiated the first night, while, at the preliminary meeting to organize the local branch temporarily, there were *twenty-seven*. At Kandy, *seventeen* comprised the first body of candidates. Returning to Colombo, we organized the “Lanka Theosophical Society,” a scientific branch, on the 17th of the month, and on the evening when the Panadure branch was formed, *thirty-five* (7 x 5) names were registered as fellows. *Seven* priests were initiated here during this second visit, and at Bentota, where we tarried to organize a branch, there were again *seven* priests admitted. *Thirty-five* (7 x 5) members organized the Matara branch; and here again the priests taken into fellowship numbered *seven*. So, too, at Galle, *twenty-seven* persons were present on the night of the organization—the rest being unavoidably absent; and at Welitara the number was *twenty-one*, or three times *seven*. Upon counting up the entire number of lay Buddhists included in our *seven* Ceylon branches, that are devoted to the interests of that faith, we find our mystical number *seven* occupying the place of units, and what adds to the singularity of the fact is that the same is the case with the sum-total of priests who joined our Parent Society.

Our septenary fatality followed us all throughout the return voyage to Bombay. Of the Delegation, two members, having urgent business, took an earlier steamer from Colombo, thus reducing our number to *seven*. Two more fully

intended to come home from Galle by the vessel of the 7th July, but, as it turned out, she did not touch there and so, perforce, our band of *seven* came together on the 12th—the *fifty-seventh* day after our landing. The sea voyage from Ceylon to Bombay may be said to begin upon leaving Colombo, since the run from Galle to that port is in Ceylonese waters. From friends—five laymen and two priests—again *seven*—who came aboard at Colombo to bid us farewell, we learned that the July *Theosophist* had reached there, and being naturally anxious to see a copy, urgently requested that one should be sent us to look at, if possible, before 5 o’clock P.M., the hour at which it was thought we would leave port. This was promised us, and, after our friends left, we watched every craft that came from shore. Five o’clock came, then six and half-past six, but no messenger or magazine for us. At last, precisely, at *seven*, one little canoe was seen tossing in the heavy sea that was running; she approached, was alongside; on her bows, painted on a white ground was the Number *Seven*; a man climbed over the ship’s rail, and in his hand was the paper we were waiting for! When the anchor was up and the pilot’s bell rang for starting the engines, two of our party ran to look at the ship’s clock: it stood at *seven* minutes past 7 P.M.

At Tuticorin, Mr. Padshah, one of our party, went ashore as his desire was to return by rail to Bombay, so as to see Southern India; the little boat in which he went ashore we noticed, after she had got clear from the crowd of craft alongside, bore the number *forty-seven*. Going down the coast on our outward voyage, our steamer touched at *fourteen* (7 x 2) ports; coming home, our vessel, owing to the monsoon weather and the heavy surf along the Malabar Coast, visited only *seven*. And, finally, as though to show us that our septenate destiny was not to be evaded, it was exactly *seven* o'clock—as the log of the *S.S. Chanda* shows — *when we sighted the pilot* off Bombay harbour, at 7.27 the bell rang to slow down the engines, at 7.47 the pilot stepped on the “bridge” and took command of the ship, and, at 9.37, our anchor was dropped off the Apollo Bunder, and

our voyage was thus ended on the 24th of July, the *seventy-seventh* day after the one on which we had sailed for Ceylon. To ascribe to mere coincidence this strange, if not altogether unprecedented, concatenation of events, in which the Number *Seven* was, as the astrologers might call it “in the ascendant,” would be an absurdity. The most superficial examination of the doctrine of chance will suffice to show that. And, if, indeed, we must admit that some mysterious law of numerical potentialities is asserting itself in shaping the fortunes of The Theosophical Society, whither shall we turn for an explanation but to those ancient Asiatic philosophies which were built upon the bed-rock of Occult Science?

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

COMMENTS ON A *TREATISE ON THE YOGA PHILOSOPHY**

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 12, September, 1880, pp. 312-315]

When, in America and Europe, we affirmed upon the authority of the testimony of eye-witnesses the quasi-miraculous physical endurance of certain ascetics in India, our statements were invariably received by the general public with incredulity; and sometimes by physicians, and men of science, with contemptuous sneers. Some of the most humoristic articles, ever printed in the New York newspapers, were written at our expense upon this text. When we mentioned that we had personally known, not only professional *fakirs* and *sannyasis*, but private Jains, who, under the inspiration of fanaticism, would abstain from breathing for over twenty-two minutes, till they brought on a dead trance,

*[By Dr. N. C. Paul, G.B.M.C., Assistant Surgeon. The original edition of 1850 is very rare; a 2nd ed. was published by the *Indian Echo Press*, Calcutta, 1883, 8vo., pp. ii, 52, and is available in the British Museum. A 3rd ed. was published by the Bombay Theos. Publ. Fund of Tukaram Tatya, in 1888, 56 pp.—*Compiler*.]

454

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

while others would fast for over forty days and yet survive, our evidence was regarded as little better than that of a hopeless lunatic. Naturally, therefore, such an experience made us very guarded, and at last we came to speak with great diffidence upon the subject at all, except with good and trusted friends. Knowing what gigantic strides biological science was making, we thought it could not be long before some scientific experiment would turn up, which would prove the possibility of such phenomena and wrest from sceptical science the confession of its previous ignorance. It now seems that we were not to be disappointed.

A Reuter's telegram from New York, dated August 7, apprised the world of the following stupendous event:

Dr. Tanner, who announced his disbelief regarding medical theories about starvation, declaring he could live for forty days without food, and who began here his self-imposed task on the 28th June, completed it today, but is emaciated and exhausted.

At once the idea occurred to us that the time had at last arrived to make the world

acquainted with certain facts which, before Dr. Tanner's courageous experiment, would have been most assuredly classed by the ignorant as fictions along with other facts that have heretofore appeared in our journal, but, although supported by trustworthy evidence, been ranked by the sceptics as incredible. These facts are discussed in a small pamphlet, published at Benares thirty years ago by an Anglo-Indian doctor, which, on account of its subject being so distasteful to the incredulous, failed to attract the attention of men of science at that time. It is through the obliging kindness of the venerable Pandit Lakshmi Narain Vyasa, of Allahabad, that we are enabled to reproduce for the instruction and gratification of our readers, from the copy in his possession, this, Dr. Paul's excellent monograph on the Yoga Philosophy. Though written so long ago, and, of course containing none of the more recent speculations of science, yet this work has a distinct value as an honest attempt to explain, from the standpoint of a medical man, the reason for this, that, or the other of the Yogi's stages of discipline; which, as we have shown, have been repudiated as "scientifically"

impossible. But, as we cannot say that in every case the author has succeeded in making himself or his facts clearly understood, we venture to accompany the text with commentaries. And this with the double object in view of silencing at once the malicious accusation that our Society is no better than a school of "magic," the word being used to signify ridiculous superstition and belief in *supernaturalism* and of preventing our readers from receiving wrong impressions in general.

We are glad to say that the eighteen months passed by us in this country, and the twelve month existence of our journal, have not been fruitless in experience. For, during this period, we have learned at least one most important feature pertaining to the actual state of Hindu society. We find that the latter comprises two distinct parties, one, that of the free-thinkers, *all-denying*, sceptical, and wholly materialistic, whether of the Bradlaugh party, or the "modern school of thought"; the other, orthodox, bigoted, full of the unreasoning superstitions of the Brahmanical schools, and believing in anything if it only tallies with one or the other of the *Puranas*. Both the *ne plus ultra* of exaggeration and, as the saying goes, "each more Catholic than the Pope," whether the latter is represented by Bradlaugh or the Caste Almighty, the most inflexible of gods. The few honourable exceptions go but to enforce the general rule.

The Theosophical Society—whatever any inimical paper may say—knew why it was wanted in India, and came just in time to place itself between the above-named parties. Our journal, its organ, has from the beginning pursued the distinct policy of lending a friendly ear to both these parties, and biding its time to have its full say. By doing so it has puzzled many, given offense to a few—through no malice or fault of ours, though—but afforded instruction, we hope, to such as have had the wit to

understand its policy. And now that the end of the year is reached, we mean to commence our intended series of explanations by reprinting Dr. Paul's treatise, from month to month, with a commentary upon the text as before stated. At the same time the

criticisms of all persons, learned in the Yoga, upon either Dr. Paul's views or our own, are invited.

This Treatise mainly relates to the practices of the *Hatha*, not the *Raja*, Yoga—though the author has devoted to each a distinct chapter. We will notice the great difference between the two, later on.

[In the introductory part of this series of articles, the author, Dr. N. C. Paul, explains that by the practice of certain postures, and the subjection of the body to certain processes, the Hindu ecstatic acquires the power of abstaining from eating and breathing for long periods of time; the final objective being a state of self-induced trance during which the ecstatic experiences clairvoyant visions and a state of bliss. The successful practice of this form of Yoga is dependent upon the expiration and retention of carbonic acid within the body. Thus by the observance of every means of regulating the outflow of carbonic acid the ecstatic accomplishes his purpose. This outflow can be regulated in every normal function of the human organism and in every environment, according to Dr. Paul. He says, among other things: "The use of alcoholic liquor causes a considerable diminution in the amount of carbonic acid given out. The Aghoras, a sect of Hindu fakirs, consume a large quantity of alcoholic liquor in the course of the 24 hours."]

The Aghoras, or Aghora Panthas, can hardly be fairly compared with or even be said to follow any *Yoga* system at all, not even the Hatha Yoga. They are notorious for their filthy habits; eat carrion of various kinds, and, in days of old, were even accused of devouring human flesh! These persons certainly made spirituous liquors their habitual drink, and, unlike *real* Yogis, extorted alms and used their system as a mere pretext for making money. Reduced to a few miserable and disgusting wretches, they were finally suppressed, and have now disappeared.

[One of the most profitable means of reducing the outflow of carbonic acid is the abstention from food to the fullest extent consistent with the maintenance of life. Abstinance from food diminishes the number of respirations, thus diminishing the waste of carbon. We are told that: "The suppression of expiration . . . is the daily practice of the Brahman mendicants who aspire to human hibernation or Yoga."]

Human hibernation belongs to the Yoga system and may

be termed one of its many results, but it cannot be called “Yoga.”

[The prolongation of the interval between expiration and inspiration is another important means of regulating the outflow of carbonic acid. “The absolute quantity of carbonic acid evolved from the lungs in a given time, is less in retarded than in normal expiration.”]

Thus we find, in this portion of the Treatise, a full vindication of the habits of the Hindu ascetics—nay those even of the Christian saints of every period, from the first century down to our own days, as we will prove. And hence the laugh of the ignorant, the sceptic and the materialist, at what seems to them the most absurd of practices, is turned against the jokers. For we now see that—if an ascetic prefers a subterranean cave to the open fresh air, takes (apparently) the vow of silence and meditation, refuses to touch money or anything metallic, and, lastly, passes his days in what appears the most ludicrous occupation of all that of concentrating his whole thoughts on the tip of his nose,—he does this, neither for the sake of playing an aimless comedy nor yet out of mere unreasoned superstition, but as a physical discipline, based on strictly scientific principles. Most of the thousands of fakirs, gosâîns, bairâgîs and others of the mendicant order, who throng the villages and religious fairs of India in our present age, may be and undoubtedly are worthless and idle vagabonds, modern clowns, imitating the great students of the philosophic ages of the past. And, there is but little doubt that, though they ape the postures and servilely copy the traditional customs of their nobler brethren, they understand no more *why* they do it than the sceptic who laughs at them. But, if we look closer at the origin of their school and study Patañjali’s *Yoga-Vidya**—we will be better able to understand and hence appreciate their seemingly ridiculous practices. If the ancients were not as well versed in the details of physiology as are our physicians of the Carpenterian modern school—a question still *sub judice*—they may perhaps be proved,

* [Descriptive name of Patañjali’s *Sûtras*.—*Compiler*.]

on the other hand, to have fathomed this science in another direction by other methods far deeper than the former; in short, to have made themselves better acquainted with its occult and exceptional laws than we are. That the ancients of all countries were intimately acquainted with what is termed in our days “hypnotism” or self-mesmerisation, the production, in a word, of voluntary trance—cannot be denied. One of many proofs is found in the fact that the same method, described here, is known as a tradition and practiced by the Christian monks at Mount Athos even to this very day. These, to induce “divine visions,” concentrate their thoughts and fix their eyes on the navel for hours together. A number of Russian travellers testify to such an occupation in the Greek convents, and writers of other nationalities, who have visited

this celebrated hermitage, will bear out our assertion . . .

Having made clear this first point and vindicated the Hindu Yogi's in the name and upon the authority of modern science, we will now leave the further consideration on the subject to our next number.

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. II, No. 1, October, 1880, pp. 4-6]

[By abstention from food, water, and air, except in well defined and restricted quantities, the Yogi acquires the power of hibernation.]

Dr. Tanner of New York, who has set himself to prove "that it is possible to do without any food—sustaining the body on water and air only for forty days and forty nights," is said by the American papers to have been suggested through a reference to the duration of Christ's temptation in the wilderness. But this special number of "forty days" is older than Christianity, and was practiced by more than one pre-Christian ascetic, on the strength of ancient pathology which knew the limit of man's endurance and had well calculated the powers of the vital organs. Beyond—no man, unless he is in a complete state of hibernation, can go. Thus, is the extreme limit to the Jain fast prescribed

as "forty days"; and we hope to furnish an unimpeachable proof in some future number that there are here, in Bombay, men who practice and carry out this forty days' fast successfully. We know personally two such fanatics. A month earlier our statement would have been not only questioned but positively denied, "as the opposite of Dr. Tanner's theory has been stoutly maintained by the orthodox American physicians."

[The normal number of respiratory movements differs in the various animals and man, and according to the scale of differences, so is the longevity of the animals. The greater the number of respiratory movements per minute the shorter is the life-period. The tortoise has the least respiration, its normal rate being 3 respirations per minute. "It lives to a great age; one instance is recorded of a tortoise having lived 110 years."]

We believe this period underrated. At Colombo, Ceylon, we were shown in a garden a gigantic land turtle, about five feet long and three-and-a-half wide, which—if we have to believe the inhabitants—has lived in that place and known the Dutch in its palmy days. But this is not yet scientifically proved to us.

[The tortoise is notorious for its long abstinence. It can refrain from eating and breathing for a great part of the year, its usual period of hibernation being 5 months, during which it neither breathes nor eats, and is insensible to severe wounds.]

When Dr. Tanner had fasted for over twelve days, some interesting experiments

were made by the physicians to determine whether or not his sensibility was diminished. Says the *New York Tribune* of July 8:

The aesthesiometer was employed, an instrument consisting of two sharp points which are arranged at right angles to a graduated scale upon which they can be moved backward and forward. This was applied to Dr. Tanner's feet, legs, hands, and arms. He was almost invariably able to tell whether one point or two had been applied, even when they were very near together. He distinguished distances as small as three-eighths of an inch, and the opinion of the physicians was that his sensibility had not diminished.

Had the physicians gone on with these experiments, they

would have probably ascertained that he gradually became quite insensible to physical pain.

[Abstinence from food induces the loss of animal heat, which in turn produces sleep and favours hibernation. "Fasting is a common practice among the Hindus . . . more especially at Benares, the focus of Hindu superstition."]

Simple justice compels us to remind the reader that rigid fasts do not pertain merely to "Hindu superstition." The Roman Catholics have as many, and more than one community of monks—especially in the East—in their incessant endeavour to "subdue flesh," adds to such fastings self-torture in the way of hair cloth, and constant flagellation. In India, Native Christians and Roman Catholic converts are made, as a penance after confession, to whip themselves in the presence of their priests till "the blood trickles in torrents," according to the expression of an eyewitness who saw the scene but a short time ago.

[The Yogi, when about to assume the trance-condition, seeks a cave or subterranean retreat where there is neither ventilation nor intrusion of light or sound, and where there is the greatest possibility of repose and the retention of animal heat. He prepares his bed of kuṅṅa grass, cotton, and the wool of sheep.]

The well-known peculiarity of the serpent to live for months together without food, and to cast off its skin, or to rejuvenate; and, its extreme longevity having suggested to the ancient naturalists and philosophers the idea that the secret and instinctive habits of the ophidians might be tried upon the human system, they set to watching, and found that invariably before retiring for the cold season into its hole, the serpent rolled itself in the juice of a certain plant which it did by crushing the leaves. This plant—its name being a secret among the Râja-Yogis—brings on without any elaborate preparation or training for the occasion as in the case of the *Hatha*-Yogis—a dead coma, during which all the vital functions are paralyzed and the processes of life suspended. The Yogis have learned to regulate the duration of this trance. As, while this state lasts, no

wear and tear of the organs can possibly take place, and hence they cannot “wear out” as they slowly do even during the natural

sleep of the body, every hour of such a state generally produced towards night and to replace the hours of rest, is an hour gained for the duration of human life itself. Thus the Râja-Yogis have been sometimes known to live the double and triple amount of years of an average human life, and occasionally, to have preserved a youthful appearance for an unusual period of time and when they were known to be old men—in years. Such at least is *their* explanation of the apparent phenomenon. For one who has seen such cases and assured himself that the assertion was an unimpeachable *fact*, and who, at the same time, utterly disbelieves in the possibility of magic, whether divine or infernal, unless the existence of its wondrous phenomena can be accounted for on the principles of exact science and shown as due to *natural* forces, cannot well refuse to listen to any such explanation. It may be but little plausible, and the probabilities against the advanced theory seem great. Yet—it is not one *utterly impossible*; and this, till we have a better reason to reject it, than our simple ignorance of the existence of such a plant—must be considered sufficient. How often exact science is led astray by its dogmatism is once more proved in the following defeat of the orthodox “regular” physicians, as noted by the *New York Tribune* and in the same case of Dr. Tanner.

Another account, issued on the 7th July states:

Dr. Tanner claims that the crisis is past. No severe craving for food was experienced this morning. Should none make itself felt the test will hereafter devolve entirely upon the ability of the vital organs to maintain their functions without food. One physician expresses the opinion that Dr. Tanner will suddenly become delirious after the twelfth or thirteenth day. Following that event he may die at any moment from lock-jaw or convulsions of the muscles. He might be resuscitated if his condition were discovered in time, but the chances would be against this owing to his excessive weakened condition. The principal change today in his condition is a decline in temperature, it being 98.25 at 6 P.M. If it falls five degrees more the result will be fatal. The doctor is still resolute and hopeful.

And yet the telegram from New York given in our last number announcing that Dr. Tanner has gone without any food for *forty* days and has survived—is there!

instances on record of individuals sleeping for months, even for years.]

We have ourselves known a Russian lady—Madame Kashereninoff—whose sister, then an unmarried lady, about 27, slept regularly for six weeks at a time. After that period she would awake, weak but not very exhausted and ask for some milk—her habitual food. At the end of a fortnight, sometimes three weeks, she would begin to show unmistakable signs of somnolence, and at the end of a month fall into her trance again. Thus it lasted for seven years, she being considered by the populace as a great saint. It was in 1841. What became of her after that, we are unable to say.

[“By Yoga I understand the act of suspending the circulation and respiration. Yoga is chiefly divided into *Râja-Yoga* and *Hatha-Yoga*.”]

Here the author falls into an unmistakable error. He confounds the *Raja* with the *Hatha-Yogins*, whereas the former have nothing to do with the physical training of the *Hatha* or with any other of the innumerable sects who have now adopted the name and emblems of *Yogins*. Wilson in his *Essays . . . on the Religion of the Hindus* falls into the same confusion and knows very little, if anything at all, of the true *Raja-Yogins* who have no more to do with Śiva than with *Vishnu* or any other deity. Alone, the most learned among the Śankara’s *Dandis* of Northern India, especially those who are settled in Rajputana who would be able if they would—to give some correct notions about the *Raja-Yogins*; for these men, who have adopted the philosophical tenets of Śankara’s *Vedanta*, are, moreover, profoundly versed in the doctrines of the *Tantras*—termed devilish by those who either do not understand them or reject their tenets with some preconceived object. If, in speaking of the *Dandis*, we have used above the phrase beginning with the conjunction “if,” it is because we happen to know how carefully the secrets of the real *Yogins*—

may even their existence itself—are denied within this fraternity. It is comparatively but lately that the usual excuse adopted by them, in support of which they bring their strongest authorities, who affirm that the *Yogi* state is unattainable in the present or *Kali* age—has been set afloat by them. “From the unsteadiness of the senses, the prevalence of sin in the *Kali*, and the shortness of life, how can exaltation by the *Yoga* be obtained?” enquires Kaśikhanda. But this declaration can be refuted in two words and with their own weapons. The duration of the present *Kali-Yuga* is 432,000 years of which 4,979 have already expired. It is at the very beginning of *Kali-Yuga* that Krishna and Arjuna were born. It is since Vishnu’s eighth incarnation that the country had all its *historical Yogins*, for as to the prehistoric ones, or claimed as such, we do not find ourselves entitled to force them upon public notice. Are we then to understand that none of these numerous saints, philosophers, and ascetics from Krishna down to the late Vishnu Brahmachari Bawa of Bombay had ever reached the “exaltation by *Yoga*”?

To repeat this assertion is simply suicidal in their own interests.

It is not that among the *Hatha*-Yogins—men who at times had reached through a physical and well-organized system of training the highest powers as “wonder-workers”—there has never been a man worthy of being considered as a true Yogi. What we say, is simply this: the *Raja-Yogin* trains but his mental and intellectual powers, leaving the physical alone, and making but little of the exercise of phenomena simply of a physical character. Hence it is the rarest thing in the world to find a real Yogi boasting of being one, or willing to exhibit such powers—though *he does acquire them as well as the one practicing Hatha Yoga, but through another and far more intellectual system*. Generally, they deny these powers point blank, for reasons but too well-grounded. The latter need not even belong to any apparent order of ascetics, and are oftener known as private individuals than members of a religious fraternity, nor need they necessarily be Hindus. Kabir, who was one of them, fulminates against most of the later

sects of mendicants who occasionally become warriors when not simply brigands, and sketches them with a masterly hand:

I never beheld such a *Yogi*, Oh brother! who forgetting his doctrine roves about in negligence. He follows professedly the faith of MAHADEVA and calls himself an eminent teacher; the scene of his abstraction is the fair or market. MAYA is the mistress of the false saint. When did DATTATREYA demolish a dwelling? When did SUKHADEVA collect an armed host? When did NARADA mount a matchlock? When did VYASADEVA blow a trumpet? etc.

Therefore, whenever the author—Dr. Paul—speaks of *Raja-Yoga*—the *Hatha* simply is to be understood.

[When a Yogi by practice can maintain himself in certain postures and live upon restricted quantities of food, he proceeds to solitude, invoking the state of hibernation by means of suspension of the respiratory movements and the pronunciation of mantras.]

All the above are, as we said before, the practices of *Hatha Yoga*, and conducive but of the production of physical phenomena—affording very rarely flashes of real clairvoyance unless it be a kind of feverish state of artificial ecstasy. If we publish them, it is merely for the great value we set upon this information as liable to afford a glimpse of truth to sceptics, by showing them that even in the case of the *Hatha Yogins* the cause for the production of the phenomena as well as the results obtained can be all explained scientifically: and that, therefore, there is no need to either reject the phenomena *a priori* and without investigation or to attribute them to any but natural though occult powers. more or less latent in every man and woman.

[*Ibid.*, January, 1881, pp. 72-75]

[The Yogi, by artificial means, confines the inspired air within his system, and by this practice is supposedly able to overcome death. "He becomes a pure soul, and can penetrate the secrets of the past, the present, and the future. Without it he can never be *absorbed* into God."]

As the science and study of Yoga Philosophy pertains to Buddhist, Lamaic and other religions supposed to be atheistical, *i.e.*, rejecting belief in a personal deity, and as a Vedantin would by no means use such an expression, we



H. P. BLAVATSKY IN 1880 AT GALLE, CEYLON



GENERAL-OF-THE-ARMY
DMITRIY KARLOVICH VON HAHN

(1831-1907)

Founder and Commander of the Frontier Guards
Corps of the Russian Empire; first cousin of H.P.B.'s father.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

A TREATISE ON THE YOGA PHILOSOPHY

465

must understand the term “absorption into God” in the sense of union with the *Universal Soul*, or *Parama-Purusha*—the Primal or One Spirit.

[Mulabandha is a process by the practice of which an old man becomes a youth. It is attained by posture.]

This posture will hardly have the desired effect unless its philosophy is well understood and it is practiced from youth. The appearance of old age, when the skin has wrinkled and the tissues have relaxed, can be restored but temporarily and with the help of *Maya*. The Mulabandha is simply a process to throw oneself in sleep (thus gaining the regular hours of sleep).

[By the practice of certain postures, together with particular modes of respiration, the Yogi is enabled to overcome corryza, cephalalgia, worms in the frontal sinuses and other diseases.]

And if any one feels inclined to sneer at the novel remedy employed by the Yogis to cure “corryza,” “worms” and other diseases—which is only a certain mode of inhalation—his attention is invited to the fact that these *illiterate* and *superstitious* ascetics seem to have only anticipated the discoveries of modern science. One of the latest is reported in the last number of the *New York Medical Record* (Sept., 1880), under the title of “A new and curious Plan for deadening Pain.” The experiments were made by Dr. Bonwill, a well-known physician of Philadelphia, in 1872, and have been since successfully applied as an anaesthetic. We quote it from the *Dubuque Daily Telegraph*.

[The method is that of causing the patient to breathe rapidly—100 respirations per minute—for from two to five minutes at the end of which an “entire or partial absence of pain results for half a minute or more.” Several minor operations were made by this method, and it is claimed that it may supplant the common anaesthetics.]

And if it be well proved that about 100 respirations per minute ending in rapid puffing expirations can successfully deaden pain, then why should not a varied mode of inhaling oxygen be productive of other and still more extraordinary results, yet unknown to science but awaiting her future discoveries?

[“How the Puñjabi fakir, by suspending his breath, lived 40 days without food and drink, is a question which has puzzled a great many learned men of Europe.”]

But Dr. Tanner’s successful experiment of fasting 40 days that has just been completed, verifies the Puñjabi phenomenon which otherwise would be disbelieved altogether by scientists.

[“. . . I have treated of the various branches of Raja-Yoga by which a Yogi analyses the various corporeal, intellectual, moral, sensual, and religious principles of which man is composed. . . I will now give a succinct account of Hatha Yoga.”]

This system, evolved by long ages of practice until it was brought to bear the above-described results, was not practiced in India alone in the days of antiquity. The greatest philosophers of all countries sought to acquire these powers; and certainly, behind the external ridiculous postures of the Yogis of today, lies concealed the profound wisdom of the archaic ages; one that included among other things a perfect knowledge of what are now termed physiology and psychology. Ammonius Saccas, Porphyry, Proclus and others practiced it in Egypt; and Greece and Rome did not shrink at all even in their time of philosophical glory to follow suit. Pythagoras speaks of the celestial music of the spheres that one hears in hours of ecstasy; Zeno finds a wise man who having conquered all passions, feels happiness and emotion, but in the midst of torture; Plato advocates the man of meditation and likens his powers to those of the divinity; and we see the Christian ascetics themselves through a mere life of contemplation and self-torture acquire powers of levitation or aethrobacy, which, though attributed to the miraculous intervention of a personal God, are nevertheless real and the result of physiological changes in the human body. “The Yogi,” says Patañjali, “will hear celestial sounds, the songs and conversations of celestial choirs. He will have the perception of their touch in their passage through the air,”—which translated into a more sober language means that the ascetic is enabled to see with the spiritual eye in the Astral Light, hear with the spiritual ear subjective sounds inaudible to others, and live

and feel, so to say, in the *Unseen Universe*. “The Yogi is able to enter a dead or a living body by the path of the senses, and in this body to act as though it were his own.” The “path of the senses”—our physical senses supposed to originate in the astral body, the ethereal counterpart of man, or the *jiv-atma*, which dies with the body—the senses are here meant in their spiritual sense—volition of the higher principle in man. The true Raja-Yogi is a Stoic; and Kapila, who deals but with the latter—utterly rejecting the claim of the *Hatha*-Yogis to converse during Samadhi with the *Infinite* I□war—describes their state in the following words:

To a Yogi, in whose mind all things are identified as spirit, what is infatuation? What is grief? He sees all things as one; he is destitute of affections; he neither rejoices in good, nor is offended with evil.

A wise man sees so many false things in those which are called true, so much misery in what is called happiness, that he turns away with disgust . . . He who in the body has obtained liberation (from the tyranny of the senses) is of no caste, of no sect, of no order, attends to no duties, adheres to no shastras, to no formulas, to no works of merit; he is beyond the reach of speech; he remains at a distance from all secular concerns; he has renounced the love and the knowledge of sensible objects; he flatters none, he honours none, he is not worshipped, he worships none; whether he practices and follows the customs of his fellow men or not, this is his character.

And a selfish and disgustingly misanthropical one this character would be, were it that for which the TRUE ADEPT would be striving. But, it must not be understood *literally*, and we will have something more to say upon the subject in the following article which will conclude Dr. Paul's Essay on Yoga Philosophy.

[*Ibid.*, No. 3, April, 1881, pp. 144-147]

["The Hatha-Yogi, like the Râja-Yogi . . . lives in a *gumphâ* or subterranean cell, and avoids the society of men." He practices six processes. One is that of "swallowing a bandage of linen moistened with water, measuring 3 inches in breadth and 15 cubits in length. This is rather a difficult process."]

And a happy thing it is, that the process is so difficult, as we do not know of anything half so disgusting. No *true* Raja-Yogi will ever condescend to practice it. Besides, as every physician can easily tell, the process, if repeated,

becomes a very dangerous one for the experimenter. The following "processes" are still more hideous and as useless for psychological purposes.

[A Hatha Yogi also practices the mudras or immovable postures.]

It is needless to remind the constant readers of this magazine of our comments upon the vital difference between the *Raja* and *Hatha*-Yogis. But it may be of some use to the general reader, ignorant of what has been written, to turn to page 31 of this volume (November, 1880), and see for themselves.* Many are those who have in our days adopted the name of *Yogis*, with as little idea of *true* "Yogism" as a poor Chinaman has of the ceremonials and etiquette of the Queen's Drawing-room.

[An authentic case of human hibernation is that of the Punjabi fakir who upon arriving in Lahore engaged to bury himself for any length of time, without food or drink. He was entombed and the strictest watch kept for 40 days and 40 nights. He was then disinterred by the Mahârâja. The body was warm and restoration was quickly accomplished.]

While in Lahore, we had this identical story from an eyewitness, a native gentleman, who was clerk to Sir Claude Wade at the time of the occurrence. His interesting narrative will be found at page 94 of this volume (Feb., 1881).†

[One Hatha-Yoga fakir is famous for the cessation of the growth of hair during hibernation.]

In reference to the arrest of the growth of the hair, some adepts in the secret science, which is generally known in India under the name of *Yoga*, claim to know something more than this. They prove their ability to completely suspend the functions of life each night during the hours intended for sleep. Life then is, so to say, held in total abeyance. The wear and tear of the inner as well as the outer

* [*Vide* the November, 1880, installment of this serial essay.—*Compiler.*]

† [*The Theosophist*, Vol. II, Feb., 1881, pp. 94-95, an account entitled "The Sahoo's Burial Alive at Lahore: Important New Testimony."—*Compiler.*]

organism being thus artificially arrested, and there being no possibility of waste, these men accumulate as much vital energy for use in their waking state as they would have lost in sleep during which state, if natural, the process of energy and expanse of force is still mechanically going on in the human body. In the induced state described, as in that of a deep swoon, the brain no more dreams than if it were dead. One century, if passed, would appear no longer than one second, for all perception of time is lost for him who is subjected to it. Nor do the hairs or nails grow under such circumstances, though they do for a certain time in a body actually dead, which proves if anything can, that the atoms and tissues of the physical body are held under conditions quite different from those of the state we call death. For, to use a physiological paradox, life in a dead animal organism is even more intensely active than it ever is in a living one, which as we see, does not hold good in the case under notice. Though the average sceptic may regard this statement as sheer nonsense, those who have experienced this in themselves know it is an undoubted fact. Two certain fakirs from Nepal once agreed to try the experiment. One of them, previous to attempting the hibernation, underwent all the ceremonies of preparation as above described by Dr. Paul, and took all the necessary precautions; the other, simply threw himself by a process known to himself and others into that temporary state of complete paralysis, which imposes no limits of time, may last months as well as hours, and which is known in certain Tibet lamaseries as . . . The result was that while the hair, beard, and nails of the former had grown at the end of six weeks, though feebly yet perceptibly, the cells of the latter had remained as closed and inactive as if he had been transformed for that lapse of time into a marble statue. Not having personally seen either of the two men, or the experiment, we can vouch only in a general way for the possibility of the phenomenon, not for the details of this peculiar case, though we would as soon doubt our existence as the truthfulness of those from whom we have the story. We only hope that among the sceptical and materialistic who may scoff, we

may not find either people who nevertheless accept with a firm and pious conviction the story of the resurrection of the half-decayed Lazarus and other like miracles, or yet those who, while ready to crush a theosophist for his beliefs would never dare scoff at that of a Christian.

[The Yogi who practices the Unumani Mudra is said to be able to recall the soul, to awaken it, and enjoy heavenly felicity.]

This is more like the real *Raja-Yoga*, and is the true scientific one.

[“A Yogi acquires an increase of specific gravity (garima) by swallowing great draughts of air, and compressing the same within his system.”]

This is what, three years ago, in describing the phenomenon in *Isis Unveiled*, we called “interpolarisation.” (See Vol. I, pp. xxiii and xxiv; paragraphs on AETHROBACY.)

[“A Yogi, in a state of self-trance, acquires the power of predicting future events,* of understanding unknown languages (*a*), of curing divers diseases (*b*), of divining the unexpressed thoughts of others (*c*), of hearing distant sounds, of seeing distant objects, of smelling mystical fragrant odors . . . and of understanding the language of beasts and birds (*d*).”]

a. As a deaf and dumb person learns to understand the exact meaning of what is said simply from the motion of the lips and face of the speaker and without understanding any language phonetically, other and extra senses can be developed in the soul as well as in the physical mind of a mute; a sixth and as phenomenal a sense is developed as a result of practice, which supplies for him the lack of the other two.

b. Magnetic and mesmeric aura or “fluid” can be generated and intensified in every man to an almost miraculous extent, unless he be by nature utterly passive.

*In the eternity there is neither Past nor Future; hence—for the disenthralled Soul (or Inner *Ego*) the three tenses merge into one, the PRESENT. [H. P. B.]

c. We have known of such a faculty to exist in individuals who were far from being adepts or Yogis, and had never heard of the latter. It can be easily developed by intense will, perseverance and practice, especially in persons who are born with natural analytical powers, intuitive perceptions, and a certain aptness for observation and

penetration. These may, if they only preserve perfect the faculty of divining people's thoughts to a degree which seems almost supernatural. Some very clear but quite uneducated detectives in London and Paris, develop it in themselves to almost a faultless perfection. It can be also helped by mathematical study and practice. If then such is found to be the case with simple individuals, why not in men who have devoted to it a whole life, helped on by a study of the accumulated experience of many a generation of mystics and under the tuition of real adepts?

d. The bi-part Soul is no fancy and may be one day explained in scientific language, when the psycho-physiological faculties of man shall be better studied, when the possibility of many a now-doubted phenomenon is discovered, and when truth will be no longer sacrificed to conceit, vanity, and routine. Our physical senses have nothing to do with the spiritual or psychological faculties. The latter begin their action where the former stop, owing to that Chinese wall about the Soul Empire, called—MATTER.

[“By Prakâmya is meant the power of casting the old skin and maintaining a youth-like appearance for an unusual period of time. By some writers it is defined to be the property of entering into the system of another (*e*).”]

e. Perhaps the Hobilgans and the Shaberons of Tibet might have something to tell us if they chose. The great secret which enwraps the mystery of the reincarnations of their great Dalai-Lamas, their Supreme Hobilgans, and others who as well as the former are supposed, a few days after their Enlightened Souls have laid aside their mortal clothing, to reincarnate themselves in young and always previously to that very weak bodies of children, has never yet been told. These children who are invariably on the point of death when designated to have their bodies become the

tabernacles of the Souls of deceased Buddhas, recover immediately after the ceremony, and barring accident, live long years, exhibiting trait for trait the same peculiarities of temper, characteristics, and predilections as the dead man's. But of this no more for the present.

[“Pythagoras, who visited India, is said to have tamed, by the influence of his will or word, a furious bear, prevented an oxen from eating beans, and stopped an eagle in its flight (*f*) . . .”]

f. These are mesmeric feats and it is only by (in)exact scientists that mesmerism is denied in our days. It is largely treated of in *Isis*; and the power of Pythagoras is explained in Vol. I, pp. 283 *et seq.*

[“When the passions are restrained from their desires, the mind becomes tranquil and the soul is awakened. The Yogi becomes full of Brahma (the Supreme Soul) (*g*) . . . A Yogi who acquires this power, can restore the dead to life (*h*).”]

g. In which case it means that the Soul being liberated from the yoke of the body

through certain practices, discipline, and purity of life, during the life-time of the latter, acquires powers identical with its primitive element, the universal Soul. It has overpowered its material custodian; the terrestrial gross appetites and passions of the latter, from being its despotic masters have become its Slaves, hence the Soul has become free henceforth to exercise its transcendental powers untrammelled by any fetters.

h. Life once extinct can never be recalled. But *another* life and *another* Soul can sometimes reanimate the abandoned frame if we may believe learned men who were never known to utter an untruth.

Wherever the word "Soul" has occurred in the course of the above comments, the reader must bear in mind that we do not use it in the sense of an immortal principle in man, but in that of the group of personal qualities which are but a congeries of material particles whose term of survival is limited, this survival of the physical, or material, personality being for a longer or shorter period, proportionately with the grossness or refinement of the individual.

Various correspondents have asked whether the Siddhis

of Yoga can only be acquired by the rude training of Hatha-Yoga; and the *Journal of Science* (London) assuming that they cannot, launched out in the violent expressions which were recently quoted in these pages. But the fact is that there is another, an unobjectionable and rational process, the particulars of which cannot be given to the idle inquirer, and which must not even be touched upon at the latter end of a commentary like the present one. The subject may be reverted to at a more favourable time.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. I, No. 12, September, 1880, pp. 303, 310]

Noticing the sad fact of the impending dissolution of the “Sanskrit Text Society,” founded at London in 1865, through the exertions of the late Professor Goldstücker, Professor Albrecht Weber, the learned Sanskrit Professor at the University of Berlin, mournfully asks the Editor of the *Times*:

Can it be possible that, among the hundreds and thousands of English gentlemen who have spent a large part of their lives in India, in what one often hears called “the most splendid service in the world,” a sufficient number cannot be induced to support a society, founded for the purpose of making available to European scholars the authentic documents for Indian literary research . . . ?

A moment’s reflection would have induced Professor Weber to spare himself the trouble of asking such a question. What proportion of the English gentlemen, who take up an Indian career, care one rap about Indian history or authentic documents? How many real scholars have developed in the Indian branches of service since John Company’s first ship arrived? * Great names, doubtless, there are

*[A curious way of referring to what seems to be the East India Company and Sir William Jones.—*Compiler*.]

to be recalled; but, when the entire list is written, what percentage does it embrace of the educated, even highly educated men who have been to India? If the Professor were to poll the civil and military branches of the public service today, he would find that not one per cent even of the lusty young chaps fresh from the scholastic forcing-houses, would trouble themselves, whether or not the Sanskrit language itself, to say nothing of the Sanskrit Text Society, were extinguished tomorrow. Badminton, lawn-tennis, flirtation, racing, pig-sticking, billiards, and the bubbling peg, interest them, and there is always plenty of money to support clubs and that sort of thing. But Asiatic literature, Aryan religion or philosophy—these are not their “fad”; and, out of all these thousands upon thousands who have passed across the Indian stage, few have turned their backs upon fashionable pleasures and sought their happiness in study. At Kandy, Ceylon, for instance, in the English library which stands just opposite the Dalada Maligawa temple, among the collection of some 7,000 volumes there is, or was a few weeks ago, just one

book on the Buddhists or their religion—Schlagintweit’s observations in Tibet. That tells the story; and Professor Weber need not waste time in wondering that such societies as the one he names enjoys so precarious a tenure of life. If European scholars would show a more respectful and fraternal disposition towards their native Asiatic contemporaries, the case might be different. And if the “enlightened Indian princes and gentlemen” whom he mentions in the same letter to the *Times*, could see that their patronage of such learned bodies would secure them as much consideration with the ruling race as do their subscriptions to monuments and giving of entertainments, no doubt their aid would be generously afforded.

A brother Theosophist suggests one of the tersest and most satisfying definitions of the word miracle, that we have seen. “Would it not be worthwhile,” he asks, “to explain that ‘miraculous’ only means our ignorance of causes, and

that in denying miracles we only intend to deny phenomena *incapable of any rational explanation whatever*; not phenomena far transcending explanation according to commonly known and admitted laws and agencies of nature?” For lack of understanding, the broad distinction we draw between the Impossible and the Unfamiliar in physics, we have often been bitterly criticised by opponents. These have even charged us with inconsistency in denying the possibility of miracles, while at the same time affirming the reality of occult phenomena of an identical character. Our quarrel is with the assumption that whatever phenomenon is strange and unfamiliar, must, *ipso facto*, be ascribed to supernatural agency, hence be miraculous. The world is too old now to be driven or cajoled into the belief that anything whatever can happen or ever did happen outside natural law.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

MADAME BLAVATSKY ON THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY AT BOMBAY

[*The Indian Mirror*, Calcutta, September 18, 1880]

To the Editor of the *Indu-Prakash*.

SIR,—

In your issue of August 30th, I find you commenting on certain “strange reports” about the Theosophical Society, and regarding the facts which have led to the rupture and the withdrawal of Mr. Wimbridge* and Miss Bates as “of a very important character.”

Allow me to correct this impression, which for one who has any true idea of our Society, is really too ludicrously erroneous. If the “strange reports” reached your ears through “Native Members” themselves, and thus were made to

* [*Vide* Vol. I, p. 533, of the present Series for biographical data about Edward Wimbridge.—*Compiler*.]

appear to you “to come from most reliable sources,” so much the worse for those Members; for, having taken, upon entering the Society, a solemn pledge *upon their honour* to keep sacred and inviolable within their own breasts “the private affairs of this body, whether good, bad, or indifferent, so long as they are not unlawful,” the fact of their revealing anything—would stamp them as dishonourable men. Such is the opinion of every English and Native Member here and of every gentleman having a just appreciation of the sacredness of a promise upon one’s *honour*. But were these “Native Members” to reveal even all they knew, it would not yet in the least affect the Society as a body. The “philanthropic profession” of our Society would be as ardent as ever; and surely can never be affected by any row between two women like the present one. If you are really anxious to know the substance of the story, then you are welcome to an outline. While Colonel Olcott, Mr. Wimbridge, and myself were at Ceylon, Miss Bates quarrelled with Mdme. Coulomb and her husband, both as much members of our Society as she was herself. Moreover, Mdme. Coulomb was an old friend of mine, whom I had known ten years ago at Cairo, and who was invited by me to live in my house and take care of it during my absence. The disagreement—a tragic-comedy from the first—degenerated into a storm; and when we returned to Bombay, we found the head-quarters, like ancient Troy, in the full blaze of war. Miss Bates had contrived to

win over to her side several of the members, and Mdme. Coulomb had no supporters. The former wanted the Bombay Society (which is not the Theosophical Society, but simply one of its branches) to expel Monsieur and Madame Coulomb from Membership, and Colonel Olcott and myself to turn them out of the house; and we protested. Our humble opinion was that if Mdme. Coulomb was blameable, Miss Bates was not innocent. Mr. Wimbridge sided with his old friend, Miss Bates, I sided with my old friend, Mdme. Coulomb; then came the split. What took place after can more easily be imagined than described—a purely personal and domestic variance having no bearing whatever upon the question of

Theosophy and of no importance to the public. But if Mr. Wimbridge and Miss Bates so desire it, and especially the friends of these “two English Members” will go on throwing the blame upon the “Founders” of the Society, *then I will make these matters public from the first to the last detail*—we, at least, are ready with every proof in hand to exonerate us. Our only fault was in declining to commit that which, whether rightly or wrongly, we regarded as an act of injustice. Let the “Native Members” remember, if they will, that of the Founders of the Society there are but two in India—Colonel Olcott and myself. Mr. Wimbridge enlisted himself as a simple member, three years after the Theosophical Society was founded, and but shortly before we sailed for Bombay, and he brought Miss Bates with him. Whatever my personal regard for this gentleman may have been, I am yet bound to state that he never has done anything material for the Society either as regards its progress or management beyond serving for a time upon its council. As for Miss Bates, she has been from the first a merely “ornamental,” never an active member.*

You say that you “hear almost all the Native Members of the Society have given up their connection with it.” Then our Society must have hardly merited the name of one, as to my knowledge, and up to the present moment I know only of *four* who have done so—exclusive of the two “English Members.” But, if there are any more members in it, who realize no more than these “four,” that in such a Society as ours, individuals are as nothing, and that by entering it, they pledge themselves to serve a universal and grand idea of Brotherhood and justice, and not merely to follow one of its English members, or even its Founders in particular, and so unhappily become partisans then, the sooner they break their connection with it, the better for the Society.

I have but little to add. To spread reports for the most part based upon no better testimony than servants’ gossip, and entangling oneself in kitchen rows is neither the part

* [A more complete account of this *embroglio* may be found in Col. Olcott’s *Old Diary Leaves*, Vol. II, pp. 206 et seq.—*Compiler*.]

of a man of honour or a Theosophist. But human nature is everywhere the same, and it is no more to be expected that all the members of our great Universal Brotherhood should be angels than that its Founders should be infallible. But the breaking of a word of honour and the violation of a pledge have ever been regarded, whether within or without a Society, as highly dishonourable. A shock has certainly been given to the Bombay *Branch* of the Theosophical Society by this row, but it is far more insignificant than reported, and even that is but temporary. As for the usefulness of our Society proper or even that of its humble and devoted “Founders” being impaired by the hasty action of a handful of malcontents in one city—the idea is too absurd! As well prophesy the downfall of Christianity as the result of a row in some one Methodist Chapel. The grand doctrines which the Theosophical Society represents—that of the Brotherhood of man—and its effort to resuscitate the long-buried ancient literary glories of Aryavarta, have touched the public heart, and the response is coming from the four quarters of the globe. Colonel Olcott and I are pledged to this cause, and we only ask that those who are so ready to impute to us evil motives and actions will outdo us in visible efforts to promote it. As to this present petty scandal we have said all we intend to upon the subject.

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

H. P. BLAVATSKY AND EDWARD WIMBRIDGE

479

[H. P. BLAVATSKY AND EDWARD WIMBRIDGE]

[From H. P. B.'s *Scrapbook*, Vol. X, Part II, p. 453.]

[The above article drew a reply from Edward Wimbridge which was published in the same paper on September 20, 1880. A number of pen-and-ink annotations in H. P. B.'s handwriting appear on the side of the clipping as pasted in her *Scrapbook*. The sentences within square brackets which are published below are excerpts from Wimbridge's article, to which H. P. B.'s comments apply.—*Compiler*.]

[I am compelled to ask for a little space in your valuable journal in which to answer the letter of Madame Blavatsky printed in your last issue.]

Mr. Edward Wimbridge—in a New Light—that of a false witness!!

[It cannot surely be necessary for Madame Blavatsky to assure your readers that she will be as ardent as ever in her "Philanthropic Professions" since all who know Madame Blavatsky and Col. Olcott must be perfectly aware that philanthropic professions cost them nothing. It would have been far better if she had pointed to one small deed accomplished for charity's sake or for the real good of India.]

Mad. Blavatsky is not in the habit of bragging of her charities—the greatest, though, and certainly the one which told the most on her pocket—being that of boarding, lodging, washing, and in many instances CLOTHING Mr. Wimbridge and Miss Bates for over 18 months, in India.

[. . . Brotherhood and justice are mere *ideas* in the Theosophical Society . . .]

"Ideas" in Mr. Wimbridge's brain but realities and facts for us.

480

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

[Madame Blavatsky's threat to disclose what she is pleased to term "all the facts in the case" is even ludicrous. I should have imagined that the effect produced on the Members of the Bombay Branch of the Theosophical Society by the endeavor to make them swallow an *ex parte* statement as a true exposition of the facts can hardly have faded from Madame Blavatsky's memory.]

The effect of the documentary evidence read at the last meeting was such, that Miss Bates was *expelled*, Mr. W. resigned and was followed by four members, Mr. Seervai being the only one of any consequence. It is because the "*ex parte* statement" contained truth and nothing but the TRUTH that they tried to misrepresent it and that we are always to publish it with *the facts contained*.

[It is misleading to call the disagreement a woman's quarrel, seeing that the husband of one lady and the friends of the other took part in it from the first, and if, as Madame Blavatsky takes pains to point out "Madame Coulomb had no supporters" it was probably because lookers-on concluded that she did not deserve support.]

Either that, or that justice and fairness are not always on the right side.

[Until now the Theosophical Society comprised about 8 divisions, now, with the Ceylon Branches, it may number 19 or 17, but the Bombay Branch is by far the most numerous and important of these divisions. It is even whispered that some of the branches number only 5 or 6 members.]

Whispers feel [*sic*] the space. It is also whispered that Mr. W. though a Councillor, never knew anything of the true state of the Th. Society. There are five times as many branches as Mr. W. shows and none of 5 or 6, as any branch has to have 21 members before it can be chartered.

[As to the statement that only four Native Members have resigned from the Society, I will place that under no heading, as I do not wish to be either inaccurate or discourteous. More than 4 persons have resigned and others would no doubt have done so had they not been prevented by the hasty flight to Simla.]

Three *lies* in six lines.—Only four native members have resigned and two English, Mr. W. and Bates (*expelled*). Our "hasty flight to Simla" is the biggest fib. But for this



EDWIN ARNOLD
(1832-1904)
Author of *The Light of Asia*.



DÂMODAR K. MÂVALANKAR
(1857- ?)
Bust unveiled in Headquarters Hall at Adyar,
December 24, 1956.

LETTER TO THE "BOMBAY REVIEW"

481

row we would have gone to Simla a few days after our return from Ceylon. Mr. Sinnett can testify that he invited me to come three weeks before we came. And so we had to postpone day after day.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF THE *BOMBAY REVIEW*

[*The Pioneer*, Allahabad, September 20, 1880.]

To the Editor,

SIR,—

Would you oblige me by giving a wider publicity than it would otherwise receive to the following reply which I have addressed to one of the Bombay papers, in reference to certain misrepresentations that have been circulated concerning the Theosophical Society in the local press.

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

To the Editor of the *Bombay Review*.

SIR,—

Since my arrival here on a visit to friends, I have received an extract from the *Bombay Review* concerning the Theosophical Society generally and myself in particular. You say that very many of its most influential members have lately withdrawn from the Society. In reality six members only have withdrawn—they being among the least influential—from what after all is but one of the many branches of a society, the importance of which is quite independent of our efforts at Bombay. The withdrawal of these members has nothing to do with matters of opinion, nor with the aims and objects of the Society, and merely arose from private disagreements, occurring during our absence in Ceylon, between a lady guest of mine and another lady, who though she certainly came with Colonel Olcott

and myself from America in the first instance, has taken no part whatever, as matters have turned out, either in forwarding our enterprise or in sharing any of its expenses. The incident is quite unimportant in itself, but misapprehensions injurious to our Cause may spring from the Press comments on the transaction. The *Review* says that our association thrives financially; that the initiation fees from our members must yield a considerable sum; and that *The Theosophist* must be “a remunerative branch of theosophy.” Permit me to explain that the initiation fees of new members in India—about 50 members only have paid—amount to Rs. 500 in the course of the last 18 months. This would, on your hypothesis, which is groundless in itself I may add, have yielded us an income of about Rs. 28 a month, on which to support the Society, ourselves, and our late friends, Mr. Wimbridge and Miss Bates. As for *The*

Theosophist, the 900 paying subscribers require 900 copies of the publication, and as they only pay 8 annas a month each, the margin of profit would hardly tempt ordinary newspaper proprietors. If *The Theosophist* succeeds in always paying its way, I am amply satisfied. I may add that Colonel Olcott and I have spent from our own private sources for the support of the Society and its representatives, since we left America for Bombay, some Rs. 20,000, without counting considerable sums expended by Colonel Olcott during the three years previous to our leaving and since the Society's foundation.

One other point: my attention has been drawn to the fact that Colonel Olcott's name appears as attached to the designation of a Hindu firm concerned with some trading enterprise. The easy answer is that Colonel Olcott has never derived one rupee of benefit from it. As a Commissioner from the American Department of State, charged with the promotion of trade between India and the United States, he merely hoped to advance, by permitting the use of his name, the success in America, where his name might be a recommendation, of a business of international traffic carried on here by a member of the Theosophical Society in whom he was interested. As the arrangement has been

understood, Colonel Olcott will, on his return to Bombay, rectify the matter.

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

[On Sept. 27, 1880, a Letter to the Editor appeared in the *Indu-Prakash* signed by "A Native Member." It dealt with pledges and secrecy required of members of the T. S. In her *Scrapbook*, Vol. X, Part II, pp. 481-82, H. P. B. wrote on the side of this clipping: "An *infamous* calumny written by Miss Bates."]

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

THE PRALAYA OF MODERN SCIENCE

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. II, No. 1, October, 1880, pp. 11-12]

If Science is right then the future of our Solar System—hence of what we call the Universe—offers but little of hope or consolation for our descendants. Two of her votaries, Messrs. Thomson and Clausius,* have simultaneously reached the conclusive opinion that the Universe is doomed, at some future and not so very remote period, to utter destruction. Such is also the theory of several other astronomers, one and all describing the gradual cooling off and the final dissolution of our planet in terms nearly identical with those used by the greatest Hindu, and even some of the Greek sages. One might almost think he were reading over again Manu, Kanâda, Kapila and others. The following are some of the newest theories of our Western *pandits*.

“All the ponderable masses which must have separated themselves at the evolution or first appearance upon the earth from the primeval mass of matter, will reunite themselves again into one gigantic and boundless heavenly body, every visible movement in this mass will be arrested, and alone the molecular motion will remain, which will equally

*[Most likely James Thomson (1822-92) and Rudolf Julius Emmanuel Clausius (1822-88).—*Compiler*.]

spread throughout this ponderous body under the form of heat . . .,” say our scientists. Kanâda, the atomist, the old Hindu sage, said as much . . . “In creation,” he remarks, “two atoms begin to be agitated, till at length they become separated from their former union, and then unite, by which a new substance is formed, which possesses the qualities of the things from which it arose.”

Lohschmidt, the Austrian professor of mathematics and astronomy, and the English astronomer, Proctor, treating of the same subject, have both arrived at another and different view of the cause from which will come the future dissolution of the world. They attribute it to the gradual and slow cooling off of the sun, which must result in the final extinction of this planet some day. All the planets will then, following the law of gravitation, tumble in upon the inanimate, cold luminary, and coalesce with it into one huge body. If this thing should happen, says the German *savant*, and such a period begins, then it is impossible that it should last forever, for such a state would not be one of absolute equilibrium. During a wonderful period of time, the sun, gradually

hardening, will go on absorbing the radiant heat from the universal space, and concentrating it around itself.

But let us listen to Professor Tay upon this question. According to his opinion, the total cooling off of our planet will bring with it unavoidable death. Animal and vegetable life, which will have, previous to that event, shifted its quarters from the northern and already frozen regions to the equator, will then finally and forever disappear from the surface of the globe, without leaving behind any trace of its existence. The earth will be wrapped in dense cold and darkness; the now ceaseless atmospheric motion will have changed into complete rest and silence; the last clouds will have poured upon the earth their last rain; the course of the streams and rivers, bereaved of their vivifier and motor—the sun—will be arrested; and the seas frozen into a mass. Our globe will have no other light than the occasional glimmering of the shooting stars, which will not yet have ceased to penetrate into and become inflamed in our atmosphere. Perhaps, too, the sun, under the influence of the cataclysm

of the solar mass, will yet exhibit for a time some signs of vitality; and thus heat and light will re-enter it for a short space of time, but the reaction will not fail to re-assert itself; the sun, powerless and dying, will again become extinct and this time forever. Such a change was remarked and actually took place in the now extinct constellations of the Swan, the Crown, and the Ophiuchus in the first period of their cooling. And the same fate will reach all the other planets, which, meanwhile, obeying the law of inertia, will go on revolving around the extinct sun . . . Further on, the learned astronomer depicts the last year of the expiring globe in the very words of a Hindu philosopher depicting the Pralaya:—“Cold and death blow from the northern pole, and spread along the entire face of the earth, nine-tenths of which have already expired. Life, hardly perceptible, is all concentrated at her heart—the equator, in the few remaining regions which are yet inhabited, and where reigns a complete confusion of tongues and nationalities. The surviving representatives of the human race are soon joined by the largest specimen of animals which are also driven there by the intense cold. One object, one aspiration huddles together all this varied mass of beings—the struggle for life. Groups of animals, without distinction of kind, crowd together into one herd in the hope of finding some heat in the rapidly freezing bodies; snakes threaten no more with their poisonous fangs, nor lions and tigers with their sharp claws; all that each of them begs for is—life, nothing but life, life to the last minute! At last comes that last day, and the pale and expiring rays of the sun illuminate the following gloomy scene; the frozen bodies of the last of the human family, dead from cold and lack of air, on the shores of a likewise rapidly freezing, motionless sea”! . . .*

The words may not be precisely those of the learned professor, for they are utilized from notes taken in a foreign language; but the ideas are literally his. The picture is indeed gloomy. But the ideas, based upon scientific,

* [This quoted passage has not been located and is therefore unchecked.—*Compiler.*]

mathematical deductions are *not* new, and we have read in a Hindu author of the pre-Christian era a description of the same catastrophe as given by Manu in a language far superior to this one. The general reader is invited to compare, and the Hindu reader to see in this, one more corroboration of the great wisdom and knowledge of his forefathers, who anticipated the modern researches in almost everything.

“Strange noises are heard, proceeding from every point . . . These are the precursors of the Night of Brahmâ. Dusk rises at the horizon and the sun passes away . . . Gradually light pales, heat diminishes, uninhabitable spots multiply on the earth, the air becomes more and more rarefied; the springs of waters dry up, the great rivers see their waves exhausted, the ocean shows its sandy bottom, and plants die . . . Life and motion lose their force, planets can hardly gravitate in space; they are extinguished one by one . . . Sûrya (the Sun) flickers and goes out; matter falls into dissolution; and Brahmâ (the creative force) merges back into Dyaus, the unrevealed, and his task being accomplished, he falls asleep . . . Night for the Universe has come! . . .” (By Vamadeva).*

* [In *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. II, pp. 273-74, and also in *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, pp. 376-77, this passage is considerably longer and more complete. It is attributed to Vâmadeva-Modelyar, and ref. is given to L. Jacolliot’s *Les Fils de Dieu*, pp. 229-30.—*Compiler.*]

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

ON RAHATSHIP

487

[ON RAHATSHIP]

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. II, No. 1, October, 1880, p. 19]

A sentence in the article on “Rahatship” in the August number, has been caught up by the adversaries of our cause and made much sport of. We wish them joy of their mare’s nest. The expression was this: “We even met [in Ceylon] those who had quite recently encountered such holy men [that is, men who had acquired ‘the exalted psychical powers of adeptship’]; and a certain eminent priest who joined our Society, was shortly after permitted to see and exchange some of our signs of recognition with one.” We expressly explained in the article in question that by the term *Rahat* we meant an adept, or one who “has developed his psychical powers to their fullest extent.” Such a person is known in India as a *Rishi* or a *Yogi*, and there are many stages and degrees of development before the pinnacle of spiritual perfectibility is reached. Thus a *Rahat* may be of a lower or higher degree of development. The four degrees or stages are *Sukkha-vipassaka* (lowest), *Tevijja* (third), *Shad Abhiñña* (second), and *Siwupilidimbiapat* (first) the highest. We affirmed and repeat that neither in India, Egypt, nor Ceylon, has this ancient wisdom died out, and if we believe that there still survive its adepts and initiates, it is because we speak from personal knowledge and not by hearsay. A Ceylon Christian journal charges us with childish credulity in believing in the so-called eminent priest, and giving publicity to an imposition and a myth.” The less our adversary says about impositions and myths the better: his house is of glass, and he had better not throw stones in our garden. Whether the priest did or did

488

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

not see and exchange signs with a stranger who is acquainted with the occult sciences, and hence what the Buddhists call a *rahat* of some one of the degrees, is immaterial: we believe he did, inasmuch as two of our party of Delegates also had a similar experience at two different places on the Island—to say nothing of the experience of the Editor of this magazine, or that of a certain other person, not of our Society, who both saw and conversed with such an individual. If the priest did see him, he saw a living man, not a ghost, or a god, or a spirit. A few weeks after landing in India, and when none but half a dozen of Bombay gentlemen knew our Society signals, Colonel Olcott, being at the Karli Caves, in the Mofussil, was accosted by a Hindu *sannyâsi*, who first gave him the most important of our signs and then all the rest. When asked where he had learned them, he answered that his *guru* (teacher) had sent him from

——— to Karli, ordering him to arrive there at precisely that hour and meet a white man to whom he should give these signs and a message which he then delivered. The point for both enemies and friends to realize is that Buddha declares that the state of Rahat, or adept, may always be attained by those who will follow his precepts.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

OCCULT PHENOMENA

489

OCCULT PHENOMENA

[*Bombay Gazette*, Bombay, October 29, 1880]

Sir,

In the issue of the 19th instant of your worthy contemporary, I find over two columns devoted to the doubtful glorification, but mostly to the abuse, of my humble individuality. There is a long confidential letter from Colonel Olcott to an officer of our Society, obtained surreptitiously by somebody, and marked “private”—a word showing in itself that the document was never meant for the public eye—and an editorial, principally filled with cheap abuse, and venomous, though common-place, suggestions.* The latter was to be expected, but I would like information upon the following points: (1) How did the editor come into possession of a document *stolen* from the desk of the President of the Bombay Branch of the Theosophical Society? and (2) having got it, what right had he to publish it at all, without first obtaining consent from the writer or addressee—a consent which he could never have obtained? and (3) how is such an action to be characterized? If the law affords no redress for a wrong like this I am content, at least, to abide the verdict of every well-bred man or woman who shall read the letter and comments thereon. This *private*

*[Reference is made here to certain extracts from a private letter of Col. Olcott addressed to Dâmodar K. Mâvalankar, then Assistant Corresponding Secretary, dated Simla, October 4, 1880, which were published in *The Times of India* of October 19th, under the title of “One Day with Madame Blavatsky.” Text of this may be found in K. F. Vania, *Madame H. P. Blavatsky, etc.*, pp. 65-67, and in Sven Eek’s *Dâmodar and the Pioneers of The Theosophical Movement*, pp. 156-59.

490

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

letter having been written about, but not by me, I abandon this special question to be settled between the offended and the offender, and touch but upon the one which concerns me directly.

I have lived long enough in this world of incessant strife, in which the “survival of the fittest” seems to mean the triumph of the most unprincipled, to have learned that when I have once allowed my name to appear in the light of a benevolent genius, for the production of “cups,” “saucers” and “brooches,” I must bear the penalty; especially

when the people are so foolish as to take the word “Magic” either in its popular superstitious sense—that of the work of the devil—or in that of jugglery. Therefore and precisely because I am an “elderly lady from Russia *via* America,” that the latter country of unlimited freedom especially in newspaper personal abuse—has toughened me to the extent of being indifferent as to the sneering and jeering of newspapers upon questions they do not understand at all; provided they are witty and remain in the limits of propriety and do no harm but to myself. Being neither a *professional* medium nor a professional anything, and making my experiments in “Occult phenomena” but in the presence of a few friends—rarely before anyone who is not a member of our Society—I have a right to claim from the public a little more fairness and politeness than are usually accorded to paid jugglers and even alleged Thaumaturgists. And if my friends will insist upon publishing about “Occult phenomena” taking place in their presence, they should at least preface their narratives with the following warning: *Pukka* Theosophy believes in *no miracle*, whether divine or devilish; recognizes nothing as supernatural; believes only in facts and Science; studies the laws of Nature, both Occult and patent; and gives attention particularly to the former, just because exact Science will have nothing to do with them. Such laws are those of Magnetism in all its branches. Mesmerism, Psychology, etc. More than once in the history of its past has Science been made the victim of its own delusions as to its professed infallibility; and the time must come when the perfection of Asiatic Psychology and its knowledge of the

forces of the invisible world will be recognized, as were the circulation of the blood, electricity, and so forth, after the first sneers and lampoons died away. The “silly attempts to hoodwink individuals” will then be viewed as honest attempts at proving to this generation of Spiritualists and believers in past “miracle-mongers,” that there is naught miraculous in this world of Matter and Spirit, of visible results and invisible causes; naught—but the great wickedness of a world of Christians and Pagans, alike ridiculously superstitious in one direction, that of their respective religions, and malicious whenever a purely disinterested and philanthropic effort is made to open their eyes to the truth. I beg leave to further remark that personally I never bragged of anything I might have done, nor do I offer any explanation of the phenomena, except to utterly disclaim the possession of any *miraculous* or *supernatural* powers, or the performing of anything by jugglery—*i.e.*, with the usual help of confederates and machinery. That’s all. And surely, if there is anything like a sense of justice left in society, I am amenable to neither statutory nor social laws for gratifying the interest of members of our Society, and the wishes of my personal friends, by exhibiting to them in privacy various phenomena, in which I believe far more firmly than any of them, since I know the laws by which they are produced, and am ready to stand any amount of personal newspaper abuse whenever these results are told to the public. The “official

circles at Simla” was an incorrect and foolish phrase to use. I never produced anything in the “official circles”; but I certainly hope to have impressed a few persons belonging to such “official circles” with the sense that I was neither an impostor nor “a hoodwinker of official personages,” for whom, moreover, so long as I live up to the law of the country, and respect it (especially considering my natural democratic feelings, strengthened by my American naturalization), I am not bound to have any more respect than each of them personally deserves in his individual capacity. I must add, for the personal gratification of the Editor of your contemporary, and in the hope that this will soothe his irate feelings, that of the five eye-witnesses

492

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

to the “cup” production, three (two of these of the “official circle”) utterly disbelieve the genuineness of the phenomenon, though I would be pleased to know how, with all their scepticism, they would be able to account for it. I do not imitate the indiscretion of the Editor and mention names, but leave the public to draw such inferences as they please.

I am a private individual, and no one has a right to call upon me to rise and explain. Therefore, by causing Colonel Olcott’s *stolen* letter to be followed by a paragraph entitled “The way they treat ‘occult phenomena’ in England,” giving an account of the arrest of Miss Houghton, a medium who obtained money under false pretenses, the Editor, by the implied innuendo which likens my case to hers, became guilty of one more unprovoked and ungentlemanly insult towards me, who obtains neither money nor favours of any sort for my “phenomena,” and lays himself open to very hard reprisals. The only benefit I have ever derived from my experiments, when made public, is newspaper abuse and more or less unfavourable comments upon my unfortunate self all over the country. This, unless my convictions were strong indeed, would amount to obtaining Billingsgate and martyrdom *under false pretenses*, and begging a reputation for insanity. The game would hardly be worth the candle, I think.

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

AMRITSAR.

October 25th, 1880.

[The above article has to do with the occult phenomena produced by H. P. B. while at Simla in October, 1880. Consult: Vania, *op. cit.*, Chap. VIII; Olcott, *Old Diary Leaves*, II, 232-41; and the several accounts published in *The Theosophist*, Vol. II, November and December, 1880; also Sennett’s *The Occult World*, pp. 66-85.—*Compiler*.]

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

QU'EST-CE QUE LA THÉOSOPHIE?

493

QU'EST-CE QUE LA THÉOSOPHIE?

[*La Revue Spirite*, Paris, novembre, 1880]

BOMBAY, 5 août, 1880.

À MONSIEUR CHARLES FAUVETY, PRÉSIDENT DE LA SOCIÉTÉ DES ÉTUDES
PSYCHOLOGIQUES, À PARIS,

Très-honoré Monsieur et Président,

Votre estimée lettre du 25 juin est tellement sérieuse et importante qu'après mure délibération, le conseil suprême de la Société Théosophique m'a chargée de vous répondre aussi sérieusement, et sur tous les points.

Vous nous dites que, ce qui vous a forcé à décliner l'honneur de vous joindre à nous—avec plusieurs autres personnes de votre savante société,—c'est «*l'esoterisme* erige en principe» dans nos statuts?

Permettez-moi de vous faire remarquer que vous faites erreur.

Il est vrai qu'il existe dans notre société une section *tout à fait ésotérique*. Mais ce n'est qu'une section, très minime portion de la société qui serait peut-être mieux définie si je la nommais de suite—non seulement le tronc de l'arbre théosophique, ou sa semence—car c'est à cette section que toute notre société doit son origine,—mais la sève vivifiante qui le fait vivre et fleurir. Sans cette section, composée uniquement des adeptes de l'Orient, la Société Théosophique, dont les ramifications commencent à couvrir les cinq parties du globe, ne serait qu'un corps mort et improductif, un corps sans âme. Et cependant, les théosophes qui s'y sont fait admettre jusqu'ici, pourraient être comptés sur les doigts de la main. N'y est pas admis qui veut. Quant au reste des

494

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

théosophes, à l'exception des mots de passe et des mots d'ordre que l'on change à chaque expulsion d'un mauvais et faux frère—ils n'ont aucun secret à garder,—rien à cacher.

Voici ce que les statuts disent à ce sujet.

«XI.—La Société compte trois sections. La première est composée exclusivement des initiés aux sciences occultes ou philosophie ésotérique. Prenant un intérêt profond dans les affaires de l'administration de notre société, ils sont constamment en rapport avec le président-fondateur, mais—restent toujours inconnus à la masse des membres.

Ce n'est que ceux qu'ils choisissent eux-mêmes* qui reçoivent le droit de les connaître et de communiquer avec eux.

«(g) Mais *aucun des ces membres* (ainsi favorisés) *n'aura le droit de divulguer les secrets en sciences occultes qui pourraient lui être communiqués*. Et avant qu'il soit mis en rapports directs ou indirects, avec les adeptes de la première section, il devra prêter le serment le plus solennel de ne jamais révéler ce qu'il aura su ou vu; ou user de ses connaissances pour des motifs personnels et egoïstes, ou même y faire allusion, a moins qu'il ne reçoive permission à cet effet, de son maître lui-même».

Tout le reste est fait au grand jour. Certes, il est vrai que nos membres ont des privilèges autres que ceux qui n'appartiennent pas à notre société. Chaque branche de la société (et il y en a cinquante-trois) a sa bibliothèque contenant des livres plus ou moins rares, des manuscrits inédits, auxquels le public n'a pas accès. Ils ont des *meetings* chaque semaine et ne publient pas leurs affaires en les proclamant sur les toits. Mais en ceci ils n'agissent pas avec plus d'exclusion ou de mystère que n'importe quelle autre société scientifique—où se tiennent des débats scientifiques, où des

*Jusqu'à ce jour, il n'y a que *cinq* membres ou Fellows de la troisième section qui les ont vus, causé avec quelques-uns d'entre eux; et rien que deux qui aient reçu des avis et quelques instructions en sciences occultes; et nous sommes 45,000! Vous pouvez juger comme nos «Frères» de la première section sont faciles à connaître ou à approcher!

expériences sont faites. Si nous n'admettons pas des visiteurs a nos assemblées hebdomadaires, ce n'est pas que nous ayons quelque chose à cacher, mais simplement pour ne pas être dérangés dans nos travaux, et puis, pour éviter les sots propos et les commentaires prématurés des sceptiques. Chaque fois qu'après avoir expérimenté, nous faisons une découverte dans les forces occultes, et que nous réussissons, le fait est publié et plus d'une fois vous pourrez lire, dans le *Theosophist*, le récit de tel ou tel phénomène que nous pouvons reproduire à volonté, que ce soit dans les sciences physiques, physiologiques ou psychologiques.

A part cette branche toute spéciale d'études esoteriques, notre société, comme son nom l'indique, n'est autre chose que la «Fraternité universelle; *the Brotherhood of Humanity*».

Notre Société accomplit ce que les sociétés des Francs-Maçons promettent, mais ne tiennent jamais. Tous les *Frères, sans distinction de position sociale, race ou couleur*, se donnent la main. Un lord hautain, riche et de grande naissance et qui, s'il n'était théosophe, ne laisserait souvent pas un pauvre hindou ou chinois passer le seuil de son antichambre, traite son pauvre et plus humble frère comme son égal.

Jour et nuit, nous travaillons en commun, à la régénération spirituelle des individus moralement aveugles, comme à l'élévation des nations tombées.

Voici un programme auquel vous ne croirez qu'avec peine, peut être, un programme, que vous serez enclin de considérer comme purement *utopique*, et cependant les preuves sont là. Lisez le *Theosophist* et les comptes-rendus de la Société, et vous y trouverez maintes lettres écrites par des Hindous, des Ceylanais (ou Singalais), des Mahométans, pour nous remercier de nos efforts et nous donner des nouvelles des résultats obtenus. Un jeune Anglais, un juge qui est en ce moment aux provinces centrales, M. Scott, Esq., nous confesse que depuis qu'il est devenu membre de notre Société, il écoute les plaintes des *indigènes* avec bien plus d'attention qu'il ne l'a fait jusqu'alors. Il ne pense plus comme il le faisait depuis des années, que, dans chaque

procès ou querelle entre un Européen et un Hindou, *c'est toujours l'Hindou qui doit avoir tort*, il est enchanté de trouver tant d'éducation et d'intelligence parmi les indigènes. Il les considère comme des hommes maintenant, comme des «Frères», tandis qu'avant, ils n'étaient à ses yeux que des *chiens* ou des *nègres*. La femme d'un général, Mrs. Murray, qui vit aux Indes depuis dix-huit ans, après son initiation, s'est mis à causer amicalement avec des Brâhmanes instruits de notre Société, et leur serra la main en partant. «C'était la première fois de sa vie, disait-elle—qu'elle touchait à des Hindous, ou échangeait quelques paroles avec eux»!!! Elle n'avait jamais parlé à un homme de cette race pendant les dix-huit années qu'elle avait passées dans ce milieu; elle était enchantée de trouver tant de personnes bien élevées parmi ces gens! Voilà les fruits de la Théosophie comme «Fraternité universelle». Nous comptons parmi nous des Anglais en nombre considérable; tous sont des employés du gouvernement. Pensez-vous, monsieur, que dans une dizaine d'années, les résultats de nos principes théosophiques n'auront pas fait du bien à ce peuple, jusqu'ici si injustement méprisé, opprimé et méconnu?

Croyez-moi, la Société théosophique est une harpe à plus d'une corde; et pas une de ces cordes qui n'ait fini par vibrer sympathiquement, en réponse à nos efforts incessants. Nous avons de la place pour tout le monde, et pour chaque aspiration. Tout dépend de ce que l'on veut faire. Êtes-vous chrétien, bouddhiste, brâhmaniste, juif ou zoroastrien? Vous n'avez qu'à vous faire affilier à la branche composée des sectateurs de la religion que vous professez. Êtes-vous spiritualiste? Joignez-vous à la branche des spiritualistes. Librepenseur? Devenez un membre de la Société théosophique de Lanka, etc. N'êtes-vous de tout cela, mais seulement un penseur, un travailleur à la recherche de la vérité, et rien que la vérité; un historien, un ethnologue, un savant dévoué aux sciences physiques, un archéologue, un philologue, un antiquaire? Vous trouverez parmi nous les noms les plus savants, les plus illustres. Vous ne travaillerez plus seul et isolé; membre d'une académie, d'une des Sociétés royales et

reconnues «savantes», vous n'aurez plus besoin de trembler en y apportant une découverte à vous, dans l'une des sciences ridiculisées et regardées comme émanant de rêves et d'hallucinations impossibles, car vous n'aurez plus besoin d'y recourir pour prouver cette découverte. Là, où une «Royal Society» vous mettrait à la porte, ou voudrait vous faire passer pour un fou ou un charlatan (comme dans le cas de M. Crookes), vous trouverez une dizaine d'autres collègues et de vrais savants, qui vous soutiendront et vous aideront, parce qu'ils sont membres de la Société Théosophique comme vous, qu'ils ont juré de s'aider mutuellement et de s'enseigner les uns les autres. (Voyez votre *Religion laïque*; ne s'est-elle pas éteinte sous la conspiration du silence?)

Pour en finir, notre Société est tout l'opposé de toutes les autres sociétés qui existent. Nous n'y permettons pas l'ombre de dogmatisme, soit en religion, soit en science. Chacun dans sa branche à lui,—fait et agit comme bon lui semble, mais nul ne s'avise d'imposer ses idées aux autres dans nos réunions générales. Un membre qui dirait à sons «Frère» d'une autre religion: «Crois comme je le fais, ou tu es damné» ou qui tâcherait de lui faire croire que lui seul possède la vérité, ou qui insulterait à ses croyances, serait immédiatement exclu de la Société. La Société centrale protège toute croyance, toute opinion privée, comme elle protégerait la bourse de l'un de ses membres. Nul n'a droit de toucher à la relique ou à la propriété d'un de ses Frères, autrement qu'avec respect et avec l'autorisation de ce dernier. Voilà pourquoi notre Société travaille en harmonie, et que, dernièrement encore, une délégation composée de neuf membres, dont deux bouddhistes, deux libres-penseurs, un chrétien, deux adorateurs du soleil (des Parsis), et deux brâhmanistes, ont été envoyés en mission à Ceylan pour défendre les droits des bouddhistes (jadis leurs ennemis acharnés et qui se haïssaient mutuellement), pour fonder des Sociétés théosophiques bouddhistes, et faire des conférences et des discours en faveur de la religion de ces derniers.

Je vous envoie le *Theosophist*, des son premier numéro, et nous vous l'enverrons régulièrement, en priant vous et votre

société de l'accepter avec nos sincères et fraternels compliments. Lisez-y, je vous prie, dans le numéro d'août* un article ou deux que j'ai marqués: Vous y verrez ce que le *Ceylon Examiner*, un journal chrétien, y dit de notre Société, de ses plans, et du bien pratique qu'elle fait dans le monde. Nous sommes tous humains et faciles à faire erreur, et avons tous nos opinions et nos prédilections, comme nos goûts et une

manière différente de voir les choses. Aidons-nous donc de nos lumières mutuelles, et ne dogmatisons jamais sur rien, à moins que l'hypothèse ne devienne un fait incontestable aux yeux de l'univers entier,—tel que l'existence du Soleil ou des océans. Pourquoi nous embarrasser des opinions personnelles de nos membres en matière de religion! Pourvu qu'une personne soit en sympathie avec nous, en général, sur les points principaux des statuts de notre *Fraternité*, qu'elle soit honnête, pure, sincère et prête à aider son prochain, que nous importe que cette personne le fasse au nom du *Christ* ou de *Bouddha*! Vous n'avez qu'à relire les belles paroles de Spinoza, que vous citez dans la *Religion laïque*, pour comprendre cette tolérance mutuelle, cette indifférence *aux noms* et objets secondaires: «Il n'est pas du tout nécessaire de connaître Christ . . . [Nous ajouterons—ou Bouddha, ou Zoroastre, ou Parabrahm] selon la chair, mais bien le Christ *idéal*, c'est-à-dire ce fils éternel de Dieu, *cette Divine sagesse qui s'est manifestée en toute chose* . . . car c'est elle seule qui peut nous faire parvenir à l'état parfait, en nous enseignant ce qui est vrai et faux, bon ou mauvais». La Société Théosophique, donc, ne doit pas son nom au mot grec *Theosophia*, composée des deux mots «Dieu» et «sagesse» pris comme lettre morte, mais bien plutôt au sens spirituel de ce terme. C'est la Société à la recherche de la *Divine sagesse*, de la sagesse occulte ou spirituelle qui, tout en ne se prêtant guère, ni au creuset de la science toute physique, ni à l'investigation du matérialiste, gît cependant au fond de toute chose matérielle, car elle est l'*omega* ou dernier mot de la création, ou, de

“Veuillez voir les numéros 9, 10, et 11 du *Theosophist*. Les articles à lire sont marqués avec un crayon rouge.

QU'EST-CE QUE LA THÉOSOPHIE?

499

l'évolution plutôt de toute forme, de toute idée, même la plus abstraite.

Cette *Divine sagesse*, M. Edison, le théosophe, l'a découverte dans l'éternité du son, qui ne disparaît jamais, pas même lorsque son organe, la feuille de plomb, disparaît; et Robert Fludd, le grand Rose-Croix, l'a interceptée et interrogée dans la flamme, et le feu, dont ni l'essence, ni l'origine, ne sont encore connus de la science officielle et ne lui seront jamais connus, à moins qu'elle ne condescende à marcher dans la voie tracée par les *Fire-Philosophers* du moyen-âge, ces «rêveurs» et ces «idiots», selon M. Littré. Mais cette *Divine sagesse* ne se trouve-t-elle pas aussi dans l'*harmonie* des sphères, comme dans l'harmonie entre les races et les hommes? Comme membres de la grande *Fraternité Universelle*, la fraternité des sciences, religions et idées, nous *n'avons rien à cacher*; nous faisons tout au grand jour, car, l'harmonie ne peut jamais devenir nuisible, et on ne pourrait trop en abuser.

Les quelques favorisés d'entre nous, qui ont, ou pourraient franchir le seuil des sciences occultes (cette épée à double tranchant, qui *sauve*, mais qui *tue* aussi), n'ont pas le droit de les prostituer au grand jour, ces vérités, ni de trahir le grand secret. Ce

secret n'est pas à nous, Monsieur, il n'appartient pas à notre siècle; c'est l'héritage des martyrs, des philosophes et des saints du grand *Passé*. Si, pour une raison ou pour une autre, les dépositaires de ces secrets, qui seuls les possèdent, trouvent bon qu'ils soient bien gardés et ne risquent jamais de tomber dans les mains des profanes, des gens qui se complaisent dans la discorde et mépriseraient toute idée d'harmonie entre les races soi-disant «supérieures» et celles qu'ils traitent «d'inférieures», c'est à nous qu'il appartient de rejeter leurs conditions ou de les accepter, de défendre ces secrets «avec notre vie».

Vous voyez bien, alors, que l'Ésotérisme n'est «érigé en principe» parmi nous, que, si l'on veut se faire admettre comme néophyte dans la branche des Yoguis, des Sannyasis.

Comme j'ai eu l'honneur de vous le dire, cette branche ne compte que *cinq* membres. Leurs noms même sont inconnus au reste des Théosophes, qui, à l'exception des signes

et des mots d'ordre, n'ont rien à cacher, ni rien à révéler, qui ne soit publié dans notre journal.

Et maintenant, Monsieur, tout en vous priant d'excuser ma longue lettre, ainsi que mon mauvais français, langue que j'oublie ici, entièrement—j'ai fini. Je vous ai expliqué tout, et vous prierai de l'expliquer à votre tour à vos estimables membres, et de faire de cette lettre tout ce vous voudrez.

Agréez, Monsieur le Président, l'expression de mes respectueux hommages.

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Secrétaire correspondant de la Société Théosophique de New York.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

WHAT IS THEOSOPHY?

[*La Revue Spirite*, Paris, November, 1880]

[Translation of the foregoing original French text.]

TO MONSIEUR CHARLES FAUVETY, PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIETY FOR
PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDIES, PARIS.

BOMBAY, August 5, 1880.

VERY HONORED SIR AND PRESIDENT,

Your esteemed letter of June 25 is so serious and important that after mature deliberation, the Supreme Council of the Theosophical Society has directed me to answer you equally seriously, and upon all the points.

You tell us that the reason compelling you to decline the honor of joining us—with several other persons of your learned society—is “*Esotericism* set up as a principle” in our statutes?

Allow me to say that you are making a mistake.

It is true that a *wholly esoteric* section exists in our Society; but it is only a section, a very tiny part of the society which would perhaps be best defined if I call it at the

WHAT IS THEOSOPHY?

501

outset—not only the trunk of the Theosophical tree or its seed—because it is to that section that our whole Society owes its origin—but the vivifying sap that makes it live and flourish. Without this section, composed solely of Oriental adepts, the Theosophical Society, whose ramifications are beginning to cover the five regions of the globe, would be nothing but a dead and sterile body, a corpse without a soul. And yet the Theosophists who have been admitted therein up to this time could be reckoned on the fingers of one hand. Admission is not by asking. As for the rest of the Theosophists, with the exception of the passwords and signs that are changed at every expulsion of a bad and false brother—there are no secrets to preserve and nothing to conceal.

The following is what the *Rules* say on this subject:—

“XI. The Society includes three sections. The first is exclusively composed of initiates in occult sciences or esoteric philosophy. Taking a profound interest in the business of the administration of our society, they are constantly in touch with the President-Founder, but—they remain unknown to the mass of the members. It is only those they themselves choose who receive the right to know them and to communicate with them.*

(g) *But none of these members (thus favored) shall have the right to divulge the*

secrets of Occult Science which may be communicated to them. And before one can be put in touch, direct or indirect, with the adepts of the first section, he must take a most solemn pledge never to reveal what he shall learn or see; or employ his knowledge for personal and selfish motives, or even to refer to it, unless he receives permission to that effect from his Master himself.”

All the rest is open to the day. But it is indeed true that our members have more privileges than persons who do not belong to our society. Every Branch of the society (and

* Up to the present there are only *five* members or *Fellows* of the Third Section who have seen them or spoken with any of them; and no more than two who have received advice and some instruction in occult sciences; and we are 45,000! You may judge how easy it is to know or approach our “Brothers” of the First Section!

there are fifty-three) has its library containing books more or less rare, unpublished manuscripts, to which the public has no access. They hold weekly meetings and do not publish their business by shouting it from the house tops. But in this they do not show any greater feeling of exclusiveness or mystery than any other scientific society—in which scientific discussions are held or experiments made. If we do not admit visitors to our weekly assemblies, it is not because we have anything to hide, but simply in order not to be disturbed in our labors, and also to avoid the foolish talk and the premature comments of the sceptics. Every time we have made an experiment and have succeeded in making a discovery in the occult forces, the fact is published, and more than once you will have read, in *The Theosophist*, the account of such or another phenomenon that we can reproduce at will, whether in physical, physiological, or psychological science.

Aside from that special branch of esoteric studies, our society, as its name indicates, is nothing but the “Universal Brotherhood; the *Brotherhood of Humanity!*”

Our Society accomplishes what the Masonic societies promise, but never perform. All *Brothers*, without distinction of social position, race, or color, offer the hand of friendship to one another. The nobly born, proud, and wealthy Lord who, if he were not a Theosophist, would hardly permit a poor Hindu or Chinese to pass the threshold of his antechamber, treats his poor and more humble brother as his equal.

Day and night, we work in common for the spiritual regeneration of morally blind individuals, as well as for the elevation of the fallen nations.

This is a program which you will perhaps hardly believe without reluctance, and will be inclined to consider purely Utopian, yet the proofs are there. Read *The Theosophist* and the Reports of the Society and you will find many a letter written by Hindûs, Ceylonese (or Singhalese), and Mohammedans to thank us for our efforts and to give us news of results obtained. A young Englishman, a magistrate, who is at

admits to us that since he became a member of our Society, he listens to the pleadings of the *natives* with much more attention than he had done till then. He no longer thinks, as formerly for some years, that, in every case or dispute between a European and a Hindû *it is always the Hindû who must be wrong*; he is delighted to find so much education and intelligence among the natives. He regards them now as men, as “Brothers,” while before they were merely *dogs* or *niggers* in his eyes. The wife of a general, Mrs. Murray, who has lived in India for eighteen years, after her initiation, began to converse amiably with some educated Brâhmanas of our Society and shook hands on leaving. “It was the first time in her life,” she said, “that she had touched any Hindûs or exchanged a word with them”!!! She had never spoken to a man of that race during the eighteen years she had passed in those surroundings; she was delighted to find so many highly cultured persons among these people! That is one of the fruits of Theosophy as “Universal Brotherhood.” We include many English people among us, all of them employed by the Government. Do you think, Monsieur, that in a dozen years the effects of our Theosophical principles will not have brought some good to this people, hitherto so unjustly despised, suppressed, and ignored? Believe me, the Theosophical Society is a harp with more than one string; and there is not one of them that will not finish by vibrating sympathetically in response to our constant efforts. We have a place for everyone and for every aspiration. All depends on what you want to do. Are you Christian, Buddhist Brahman, Jew, or Zoroastrian? You have only to affiliate with the Branch composed of the followers of the religion you profess. Are you a Spiritualist? Join the Spiritualistic branch. Freethinker? Become a member of the Lankâ Theosophical Society, etc. Are you none of these, but only a thinker, a laborer in search of Truth, and nothing but the Truth; a historian, an ethnologist, a savant devoted to the physical sciences, an archaeologist, a philologist, an antiquary? You will find among us most learned, most illustrious names. You will not work alone or isolated any longer.

If a member of an Academy, of one of the Royal Societies recognized as “learned,” you will have no further need to tremble in bringing to it any of your discoveries in the ridiculed sciences which are regarded as emanating from dreams and impossible hallucinations, because you will no longer need to appeal to it in order to prove that discovery. Where one “Royal Society” would show you the door, or make you look

like a fool or a charlatan (as in the Crookes' case), you would find a dozen colleagues and true scientists who would support and help you, because they are members of the Theosophical Society like yourself, and have sworn to mutually help and teach one another. (Compare your *Religion laïque*; is it not extinguished under the conspiracy of silence?)

To conclude this subject, our Society is entirely the opposite of every other society that exists. We do not permit in it the shadow of dogmatism, whether of religion or of science. Each in his own particular branch does and acts as it seems good to him, but no one thinks of imposing his ideas on others in our general meetings. A member who would say to his "Brother," of another religion: "Believe as I do or you will be damned," or who would try to make him believe that he alone possessed truth, or who should insult his beliefs, would be immediately expelled from the Society. The Parent Society protects every belief, every private opinion, as it would protect the purse of one of its members. No one has the right to touch the sacred or private property of one of his Brothers, except with respect and with the authorization of the latter. This is why our Society works in harmony, and why, even quite recently, a delegation of nine members of whom two are Buddhists, two Freethinkers, one Christian, two Sun-worshippers (Pârsîs), and two Brâhmanas, has been sent on a mission to Ceylon to defend the rights of the Buddhists (hitherto their implacable bitter enemies, mutually hating one another) to establish Buddhist Theosophical Societies, and to hold meetings and give addresses in favor of the religion of the latter.

I am sending you *The Theosophist*, from its first issues, and we will send it to you regularly, requesting you and

your society to accept it with our sincere and fraternal compliments. Read, I beg you, in the August number* an article or two which I have marked. You will see therein what the *Ceylon Examiner*, a Christian paper, says of our Society, of its plans, and of the practical good it has done in the world. We are all human and can easily make mistakes, and we have our opinions and our preferences as well as our tastes and different ways of seeing things. Let us then help each other mutually with the light we may have, and never dogmatize about anything, at least until a hypothesis has become an undeniable fact to the whole universe—such as the existence of the sun or the oceans. Why should we worry about the personal opinions of our members on the question of religion? Provided that a person is in sympathy with us, in general, on the principal points of the rules of our *Brotherhood*, that he is honest, pure, sincere, and ready to help his neighbor, what is it to us whether that person does it in the name of *Christ* or of *Buddha*! You have merely to re-read the fine saying of Spinoza that you quote in *Religion laïque* to understand that mutual tolerance, that indifference to secondary *names* and objects: "It is not at all necessary to know Christ . . . [we will add—nor Buddha, nor Zoroaster, nor Parabrahman] according to the flesh, but rather

the *ideal* Christ, that is to say the eternal son of God, *that Divine Wisdom which manifests itself in everything . . .* because it is that alone which can carry us to the perfect state, by teaching us what is true and false, good or bad.” The Theosophical Society, then, does not derive its name from the Greek word *Theosophia*, composed of the two words “God” and “wisdom” taken in the dead letter, but rather in the spiritual sense of the term. It is the Society for searching into *Divine Wisdom*, occult or spiritual wisdom which, while hardly yielding itself either to the crucible of an entirely physical science, or to the investigation of the materialist, lies, however, at the foundation of everything, material or immaterial, because it is the

*Please see numbers 9, 10, and 11 of *The Theosophist*. The articles to read are marked in red pencil.

omega or last word of creation, or rather of the evolution of every form, of every idea, even the most abstract.

This *Divine Wisdom* has been discovered by Mr. Edison, the Theosophist, in the eternity of sound, which never disappears, not even when its organ, the sheet of lead, disappears; and Robert Fludd, the great Rosicrucian, intercepted and interrogated it in the flame, in the fire, of which neither the essence nor the origin are yet known to official science, and which will never be known, at least unless it condescends to walk in the way traced by the Fire-Philosophers of the Middle Ages, those “dreamers” and those “idiots,” according to Mr. Littré. But is not that *Divine Wisdom* also found in the *harmony* of the spheres as well as in the harmony of races and men? As members of the great *Universal Fraternity*, the fraternity of sciences, religions, and ideas, we *have nothing to hide*: we do everything in the open, because harmony can never become harmful, and it cannot be abused.

The few favored persons among us who have or could have crossed the threshold of the occult sciences (that double-edged sword which *saves*, but also *kills*), have no right to expose these truths in open day nor to betray the great secret. That secret is not for us, Monsieur, it does not belong to our century; it is the heritage of the martyrs, of the philosophers and the saints of the great *Past*. If for one reason or another, the custodians of those secrets, who alone possess them, find it right that they should be well protected and never exposed to the risk of falling into the hands of the profane, the people who indulge themselves in discord and who despise every idea of harmony between the so-called “superior” races and those they treat as “inferior,” to us belongs the choice of rejecting their conditions, or accepting them and defending those secrets “with our life.”

You see clearly, then, that Esotericism is “erected as a principle” among us only for the purpose of gaining admission as neophytes in the Branch of the Yogins, the Sannyâsins.

As I have had the honor of informing you, that Branch only reckons *five* members. Their names even are unknown

to the rest of the Theosophists, who, with the exception of the signs and passwords, have nothing to hide, nothing to reveal, which may not be made public in our magazine.

And now, Monsieur, begging to be excused for my long letter, as well as for my bad French, a language that I am completely forgetting here—I have finished. I have explained everything to you, and I will request you to explain everything in your turn to your esteemed members, and to do with this letter whatever you wish. Accept, Monsieur le Président, the expression of my respectful compliments.

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

*Corresponding Secretary of the New York
Theosophical Society.*

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

[SIR RICHARD TEMPLE AND OUR SOCIETY]

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. II, No. 3, December, 1880, pp. 45-46]

Sir Richard has done our Society the great honour of misrepresenting its character and objects to an English audience. A pamphlet edition of “A Speech delivered in the Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford, on Monday, May 10, 1880, by Sir Richard Temple, Bart., G.C.S.I., C.I.E., late Governor of Bombay, in furtherance of the Oxford Mission to Calcutta,” just sent us from England, informs the Oxonians that “modern education is shaking the Hindu faith to its very foundation”; and “among the consequences of such a change in the minds of the people is the formation of several important sects.” He, however, bethought him of only three—the Brahmo Samaj, the Prârthana Samaj, and—the sect of Theosophists! “There is another sect,” says Sir Richard, “called the Prârthana Samaj, *which is now being established in Poona*; and in the city of Bombay itself, *there is another sect*, called the Theosophists.” The religious opinions of two of these three important sects are kindly

508

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

explained. The Brahmos “are almost, though not entirely, Christians. You may attend one of their lectures, and you will hear the speaker begin with a text from the New Testament, and he will proceed for many minutes before you will find out that he is not a Christian. In fact, these men are lingering upon the very threshold of Christianity, ‘almost persuaded,’ to be Christians.” The Prârthana Samajists are passed over without notice, though their handsome white edifice is one of the conspicuous ornaments of the Girgaum quarter of Bombay. But he knows all about us at any rate: possibly from the reports of his secret police. “The Theosophists of Bombay are, I believe,” remarks the eminent lecturer, “being instructed by persons, not natives, but of European descent, who have, after abandoning Christianity, proceeded to India to discover in the Vedas, the ancient writings of that country, the true source of wisdom.” And he most kindly suggests that the one thing which “the upper educated classes of the people of India” need is “to send out to them men of greater culture than their own.” Stopping only to remark that neither Oxford nor any other European university ever turned out a scholar, the equal of any one of fifty Indian philosophers who might be named, we will say that greater ignorance of the objects and principles of the Theosophical Society could not have been shown. It is not led by persons who abandoned Christianity, since they never accepted it; nor is it a religious sect, nor does it profess to be, but, on the contrary, it distinctly affirms that as a society it has no creed, and takes in members of all creeds upon equal terms. While so far from our helping or encouraging Hindus to “throw off

the faith of their fathers,” we have been doing our best for the past two years to make them respect that faith more than ever, and to realize that their ancestors taught a better religion, better philosophy, and better science than any other nation of Europe ever heard of. If Sir Richard means to discourse again at Oxford upon Indian religious opinion and “sects” he would do well to study his subject a little deeper. He might then even ascertain that there is a Hindu sect-leader with some three lakhs of

followers, named Pandit Dayânand Saraswati Swami, whose Arya Samaj has fifty branches throughout India—one at Bombay, with a member of the Governor’s Council as President—and the avowed object of which is to promote the study of the *Vedas*.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

PRANKS OF “SPIRITS” AMONG LAYMEN

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. II, No. 3, December, 1880, p. 54.]

[The following introductory note by H. P. B. was appended to a ghost story which she quotes from the *Cincinnati Enquirer*.]

By “laymen,” in this case, we mean that class of society and humanity in general, who are not “orthodox spiritualists”; neither are they prepared to declare themselves as believers in the “New Dispensation” theory. We include among this number all ordinary mortals—Christians, sceptics, and “half and halves”—if we may be pardoned this unusual expression. Whenever, therefore, we hear of well-authenticated phenomena, alleged to be produced by some invisible agency—the “souls of the departed” as the spiritualists have it, and outside their temples of orthodoxy—the “circle rooms” where mediums as high priests and priestesses lead the service—we give them far more consideration than we would otherwise. Such weird phenomena cannot be easily doubted, nor, if the personal experience and the testimony of millions of people from the remotest ages is worth anything, can they be as little disproved as accounted for. No; not even by the most rabid freethinkers of Bradlaugh’s school, unless they are determined to be illogical and go against the very spirit of their own teaching—“Believe but in that which your own eyes see, your own ears hear, and your own hands touch,” and whatever the agency sceptics may attribute such phenomena to. In regard to spiritualists, we would only remind them, that in all such strange events

showing a malicious, wicked intelligence underlying them, our theory of the elementaries, or earth-bound incarnated thoughts of evil men who have passed away, holds as good as ever. Such phenomena pin all believers in the “angel world” more firmly than ever between the horns of a very disagreeable dilemma. They have either to admit with the Christians the existence of the devil, or with the Kabalists that of the “elementaries.” To speak frankly, and in all sincerity, we fail to perceive any substantial difference between a Christian devil—originally a “fallen angel”—and a bad, wicked “spirit”—or a departed soul—each of which the spiritualists hold as being of angelic divine origin.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. II, No. 3, December, 1880, pp. 47, 49, 59, 60]

[*Moksha*—The abstract condition of pure spirit, almost identical with the *nirvâna* of the Buddhists.

[Footnote appended to Joseph Pollock's article "Is Man only a Machine?"]

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

[*Kâma-rupa*—An illusionary form, one whose apparent solidity is a deception of the senses. Observers of "form manifestations" should ponder.

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

511

[In his article "Satgoor Swami," Lalla Maikoolal speaks of the Yogi whose motive power is his own will, and of the Tantras which contain several systems treating of the practical application of magnetic power. He says: "However useful, practically, this hidden power may be . . . the point should not be lost sight of, that the Siddhis of Yoga and the Tantras are only of secondary importance." To this H. P. B. remarks:]

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

[The following concluding note is appended by H. P. B. to Dr. Batukram S. Mehta's description of "A Physiological Test for Thief-Catching."]

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

very carefully for the benefit of our readers?

[From H. P. B.'s *Scrapbook*, Vol. X, Part II, p. 511]

[*The Times of India*, in an article published Dec. 13, 1880, quotes a Dr. Prime, Editor of the *New York Observer*, stating that he does not believe that the T.S. has fifty members in the whole of the U.S.A., and that “no person of any distinction, minister or layman, is known as a member.” To this H. P. B. adds the following annotation:]

A pretty fib. The T.S. had from the beginning more than a dozen clergymen or ministers and—was not at all proud of the acquisition.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

1880

512

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

A FRENCH VIEW OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS

[*The Pioneer*, Allahabad, December 2, 1880]

With a little book entitled *Les Femmes qui Tuent et les Femmes qui Votent*, Alexandre Dumas, *filis*, has just entered the arena of social and political reform. The novelist, who began by picking up his Beatrices and Lauras in the social gutter, the author of *La Dame aux Camélias* and *La Dame aux Perles*, is regarded in France as the finest known analyst of the female heart. He now comes out in a new light; as a defender of Women's Rights in general, and of those women especially whom English people generally talk about as little as possible. If this gifted son of a still more gifted father never sank before to the miry depths of that modern French realistic school now in such vogue, the school headed by the author of *l'Assommoir* and *Nana*, and so fittingly nicknamed *l'École Ordurialiste*, it is because he is a born poet, and follows the paths traced out for him by the Marquis de Sade, rather than those of Zola. He is too refined to be the rival of writers like those who call themselves *auteurs-naturalistes* and *romanciers-expérimentalistes*, who use their pen as the student in surgery his scalpel, plunging it into the depths of all the social cancers they can find. Until now he idealized and beautified vice. In the work under review, he defends not only its right to exist under certain conditions, but claims for it a recognized place in the broad sunlight of social and political life.

His *brochure* of 216 pages, which has lately been published in the shape of a letter to J. Clarétie, is now having an immense success. By the end of September, hardly a week after its appearance, it had already reached its sixth

FRENCH VIEW OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS

513

edition. It treats of two great social difficulties—the question of divorce, and the right of women to participate in elections. Dumas begins by assuming the defense of the several women who have recently played an important part in murder cases, in which their victims were their husbands and lovers.

All these women, he says, are the embodiment of the idea which for some time past has been fermenting in the world. It is that of the entire disenfranchisement of the woman from her old condition of slavery, created for her by the *Bible*, and enforced by tyrannical society. All these murders and this public vice, as well as the increasing mental labour of women, Mr. Dumas takes to be so many signs of one and the same

aspiration—that of mastering man, getting the best of him, and competing with him in everything. What men will not give them willingly, women of a certain class endeavour to obtain by cunning. As a result of such a policy, he says, we see “those young ladies” acquiring enormous influence over men in all social affairs and even in politics. Having amassed large fortunes, when older, they appear as lady-patronesses of girls’ schools and of charitable institutions, and take a part in provincial administration. Their past is lost sight of; they succeed in establishing, so to say, an *imperium in imperio*, where they enforce their own laws, and manage to have them respected. This state of things is attributed by Dumas directly to the restriction of Woman’s Rights, to the state of legal slavery women have been subjected to for centuries, and especially to the marriage and anti-divorce laws. Answering the favourite objection of those who oppose divorce on the ground that its establishment would promote too much freedom in love, the author of *Le Demi-Monde* bravely pushes forward his last batteries and throws off the mask.

Why not promote such freedom? What appears a danger to some, a dishonour and shame to others, will become an independent and recognized profession in life—*une carrière à part*—a fact, a world of its own, with which all the other corporations and classes of society will have to reckon. It will not be long before everyone will have ceased to protest against its right to an independent and legal existence. Very shortly it will form itself

into an integral, compact body; and the time will come when, between this world and the others, relations will be established as friendly as between two equally powerful and recognized empires.

With every year women free themselves more and more from *empty formalism*, and Mr. Dumas hopes there will never again be a reaction. If a woman is unable to give up the idea of love altogether, let her prefer unions binding neither party to anything, and let her be guided in this only by her own free will and *honesty*. Of course it is rather to review an important current of feeling in an important community than to discuss *au fond* the delicate questions with which Mr. Dumas deals, that we are taking notice of his book. We may thus leave the reader to his own reflections on this proposed reform, as also in reference to most of the points raised.

A certain Hubertine Auclair, in France, has lately refused to pay her taxes on the plea that political rights belonging to man are denied to her as a woman; and Dumas, with this incident as a text, devotes the last part of this *brochure* to a defense of Woman’s Rights, as eloquent, impressive, and original as other portions which will less bear discussion. He writes:

In 1847 political reformers thought it necessary to lower the electoral franchise and distribute the right of vote according to capacity.

That is, to limit it to intelligent men. The government refused, and this led to the Revolution of 1848. Scared, it gave the people the right of universal suffrage, extending the right to all, whether capable or incapable, provided the voters were only men. At present this right holds good, and nothing can abolish it. But women come, in

their turn, and ask: "How about us? We claim the same privileges."

What [asks Dumas] can be more natural, reasonable and just? There is no reason why woman should not have equal rights with man. What difference do you find between the two which warrants your refusing her such a privilege? None at all. Sex? Her sex has no more to do with it than the sex of man. As to all other dissimilarities between us, they go far more to her credit than to ours. If one argues that woman is by nature a weaker creature than man, and that it is his duty to take care of and defend her, we will answer that hitherto we

have, it seems, so badly defended her that she had to pick up a revolver and take that defense into her own hands; and to remain consequent [consistent] with ourselves we have to enter the verdict of "Not guilty" whenever she is caught in that act of self-defense.

To the plea that woman is intellectually weaker than man, and is shown to be so by sacred writings, the author sets off against the biblical Adam and Eve, Jacolliot's translation of the Hindu legend in his *Bible dans l'Inde*, and contends that it was man, not woman, who became the first sinner and was turned out of Paradise. If man is endowed with stronger muscles, woman's nerves surpass his in capacity for endurance. The biggest brain ever found—in weight and size—is now proved to have belonged to a woman. It weighed 2,200 grammes—400 more than that of Cuvier. But brain has nothing to do with the electoral question. To drop a ballot into the urn no one is required to have invented powder, or to be able to lift 500 kilogrammes.

Dumas has an answer for every objection. Are illustrious women exceptions? He cites a brilliant array of great female names, and contends that the sex in which such exceptions are to be met has acquired a legal right to take part in the nomination of the village *maires* and municipal officers. The sex which claims a Blanche de Castile, an Elizabeth of England, another of Hungary, a Catherine II and a Maria Theresa has won every right.

If so many women were found good enough to reign and govern nations, they surely must have been fit to vote. To the remark that women can neither go to war nor defend their country, the reader is reminded of such names as Joan of Arc, and the three other Joans, of Flanders, of Blois, and Joan Hachette. It was in memory of the brilliant defense and salvation of her native town, Beauvais, by the latter Joan, at the head of all the women of that city, besieged by Charles le Téméraire, that Louis XI decreed that henceforth and forever the place of honour in all the national and public processions should belong to women. Had woman no other rights in France, the fact alone that she was called upon to sacrifice 1,800,000 of her sons to Napoleon the Great, ought to ensure to her every right.

The example of Hubertine Auclair will be soon followed by every woman in France. Law was ever unjust to woman; and instead of protecting her, it seeks but to strengthen her chains. In case of crimes committed, does law ever think of bringing forward as an extenuating circumstance, her weakness? On the contrary it always takes advantage of it. The illegitimate child is given by it the right to find out who its mother was, but not its father. The husband can go anywhere, do whatever he pleases, abandon his family, change his citizenship, and even emigrate, without the consent or even knowledge of his wife.

She can do nothing of the kind. In case of a suspicion of her faith, he can deprive her of her marriage portion; and in case of guilt may even kill her. It is *his* right. Debarred from the benefits of a divorce, she has to suffer all, and finds no redress. She is fined, judged, sentenced, imprisoned, put to death, and suffers all the penalties of the law just as much and under the same circumstances as he does, but no magistrate has ever thought of saying yet:

“Poor weak little creature! . . . Let us forgive her, for she is irresponsible, and so much lower than man!”

The whole eloquent, if sometimes rhapsodical plea in favour of women’s suffrage is concluded with the following suggestions:

First, the situation will appear absurd; but gradually people will become accustomed to the idea, and soon every protest will die out. No doubt at first the idea of woman in this new *rôle* will have to become the subject of bitter criticism and satire. Ladies will be accused of ordering their hats *à l’urne*, their bodices *au suffrage universel*, and their skirts *au scrutin secret*. But what then? After having served for a time as an object of amazement, then become a fashion and habit, the new system will be finally looked upon as a duty. At all events it has now become a claimed *right*. A few *grandes dames* in cities, some wealthy female land-owners in provincial districts, and leaseholders in villages, will set the example, and it will soon be followed by the rest of the female population.

The book winds up with this question and answer:

I may, perhaps, be asked by some pious and disciplined lady, some fervent believer in the idea that humanity can only be rescued from perdition by codes and gospels, by the Roman law and Roman Church:

“Pray, tell me, sir, where are we driving to with all these ideas?” “*Hé, madame!* . . . we go where we were going to from the first, to that which must be, that is, the inevitable. We move slowly onward, because we can spare time, having some millions of years yet before us, and because we have to leave some work to do for those who are following us. For the present we are occupied in enfranchising women; when this is done we will try to enfranchise God. And as soon as full harmony will have been established between these three eternal principles—God, man, and woman—our way will appear to us less dark before us, and we will journey on the quicker.”

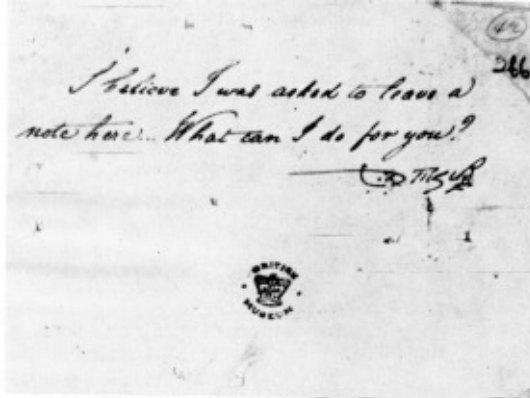
Certainly the advocates of Woman’s Rights in England have never yet approached their subject from this point of view. Is the new method of attack likely to prove more effective than the familiar declamation of the British platform, or the earnest prosing of our one great woman’s champion, John Stuart Mill? This remains to be seen; but certainly for the most part the English ladies who fight this battle will be puzzled how

to accept an ally whose sympathy is due to principles so frightfully indecorous as those of our present author.

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

END OF VOLUME II

Collected Writings VOLUME II



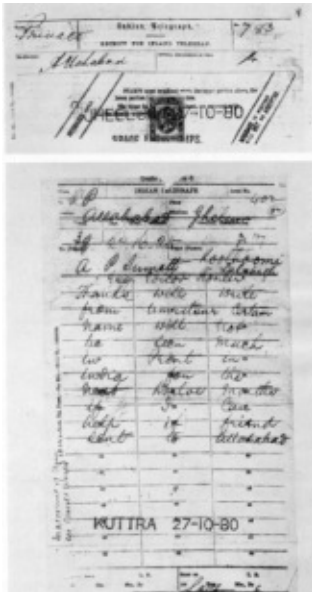
FACSIMILE OF THE FAMOUS "PINK SLIP"

Note written by one of the Teachers on pink paper and left in a tree on Prospect Hill, Simla, India, for the benefit of Mrs. Patience Sinnett.

Original is in the British Museum.

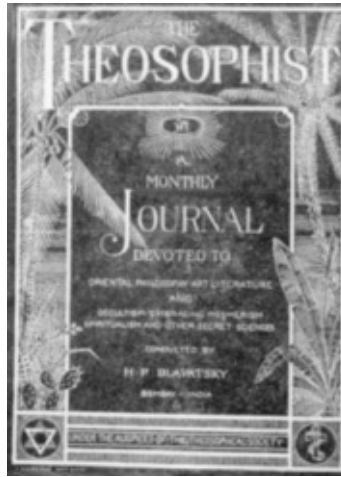
Consult for an account of this phenomenon, Col. H. S. Olcott's *Old Diary Leaves*, II, 231-32; and A. P. Sinnett's *The Occult World*, American edition, New York, 1885, pp. 61-63.

Collected Writings VOLUME II



FACSIMILE OF THE JHELUM TELEGRAM
 Telegram sent by Koothoomi Lalsingh from Jhelum
 To A. P. Sinnett at Allâhâbâd. Original in the British Museum
 Consult for details and references p. xxxiv of the
 Chronological Survey in the present VOLUME.

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**



ORIGINAL COVER OF *THE THEOSOPHIST*

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**



ENTRANCE TO CROW'S NEST, BREACH CANDY, BOMBAY
The Founders moved into this residence at the end of 1880.

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**



H. P. BLAVATSKY AROUND 1870

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**



NORENDRONÂTH SEN

Proprietor and Editor of *The Indian Mirror* of Calcutta,
and personal pupil of Masker K. H.

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**



H. SUMANGALA

High Priest of Adam's Peak; President of the
Widyodaya College, Colombo, Ceylon; Vice-President
of The Theosophical Society in 1880.

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**



JUDGE KHÂN BAHÂDUR N. D. KHANDALAVALA
Valuable Supporter of the Founders.

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**



TEOTIHUACÁN, MEXICO—PYRAMID OF THE SUN
(From Eugen Kusch, *Mexiko im Bild*, 1967. Courtesy
Hans Carl, Publisher, Nürnberg, Germany.)

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**



PALENQUE, CHIAPAS, MEXICO—TEMPLE OF INSCRIPTIONS
(From Eugen Kusch, *Mexiko im Bild*, 1967. Courtesy
Hans Carl, Publisher, Nürnberg, Germany.)

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**



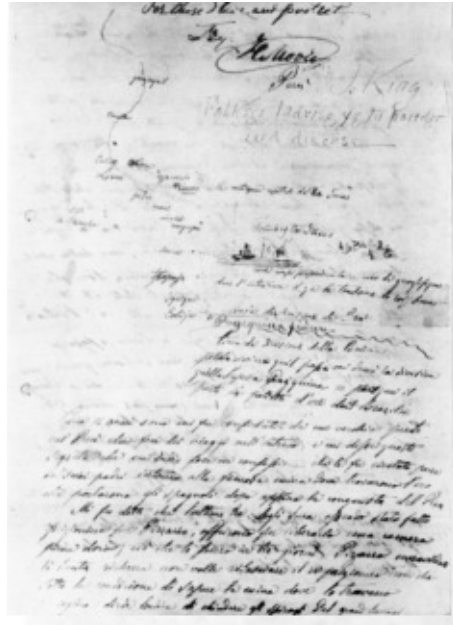
CHICHÉN ITZÁ, YUCATÁN, MEXICO—PYRAMID OF QUETZALCÓATL-KUKULKAN
(From Eugen Kusch, *Mexiko, im Bild*, 1967. Courtesy
Hans Carl, Publisher, Nürnberg, Germany.)

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**



CUZCO, PERU
TWELVE ANGLES STONE,
IN THE HOUSE OF THE VIRGINS OF THE SUN
(From Gonzalo de Reparaz, *Peru*, 1960. Courtesy
Editiones de Arte Rep, Lima, Peru.)

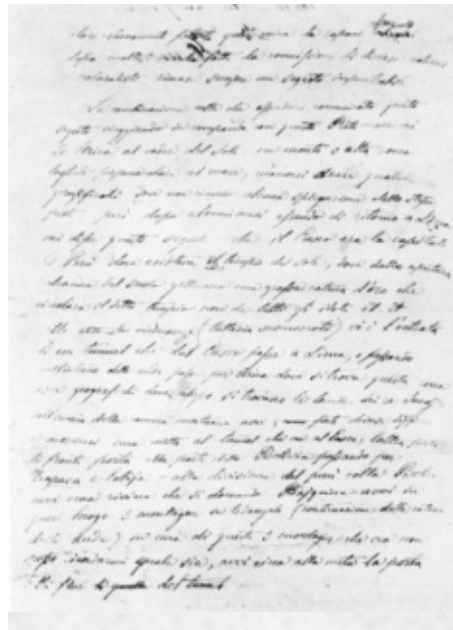
Collected Writings VOLUME II



FACSIMILE OF A DOCUMENT IN THE ARCHIVES OF THE
THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, ADYAR

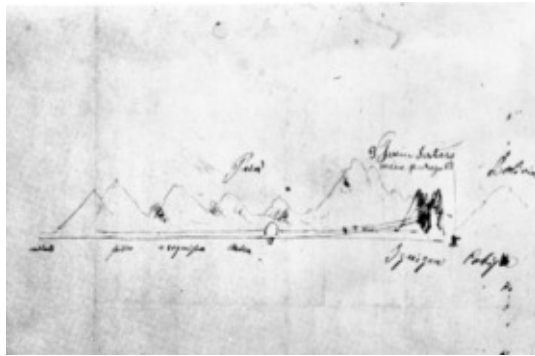
(Page One of the Document)

Consult Appendix by the Compiler, pp. 339-43 in this VOLUME.



FACSIMILE OF A DOCUMENT IN THE ARCHIVES OF THE
THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, ADYAR

(Page Two of the Document)



FACSIMILE OF A DOCUMENT IN THE ARCHIVES OF THE
THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, ADYAR
(Page Four of the Document, page Three being blank)

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**



TRAPEZIUM GATE IN A WALL ON
OLLANTAYTAMBO HILL, PERU

(From Heinrich Ubbelohde-Doering, *The Art of Ancient Peru*,
1952. Courtesy Ernst Wasmuth, Publisher, Tübingen, Germany.)

Collected Writings VOLUME II



MACHU PICCHU, PERU—HOUSE OF THE THREE WINDOWS
(From Heinrich Ubbelohde-Doering, *The Art of Ancient Peru*, 1952. Courtesy Ernst Wasmuth, Publisher, Tübingen, Germany.)

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**



ZIGZAG WALLS AT SACSAYHUAMAN, NEAR CUZCO, PERU
(From Heinrich Ubbelohde-Doering, *The Art of Ancient Peru*,
1952. Courtesy Ernst Wasmuth, Publisher, Tübingen, Germany.)

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**



MONOLITHS ON OLLANTAYTAMBO HILL, PERU
(From Heinrich Ubbelohde-Doering, *The Art of Ancient Peru*,
1952. Courtesy Ernst Wasmuth, Publisher, Tübingen, Germany.)

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**



H. P. BLAVATSKY IN 1880
(From the Archives, The Theosophical Society, Adyar.)

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**



ANAGARIKA DHARMAPALA
(1864-1933)

Renowned Buddhist Reformer and Teacher, whose actual name was D. H. Hewavitarne. Founder of the Mahâ Bodhi Society in 1891. Became dedicated to the cause of Buddhism as a result of meeting H. P. B. in 1880.

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**



TUKARAM TATYA

Outstanding Writer and Publisher of Theosophical
Literature; Organizer of The Theosophical Society Publication Fund, Bombay

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**



H. S. OLCOTT AND BUDDHIST PRIESTS AT MÂLIGÂKANDA TEMPLE, COLOMBO
+ the High Priest H. Sumangala.
(From *The Theosophist*, Vol. LIII, August, 1932)

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**



H. P. BLAVATSKY IN 1880 AT GALLE, CEYLON

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**



GENERAL-OF-THE-ARMY
DMITRIY KARLOVICH VON HAHN
(1831-1907)

Founder and Commander of the Frontier Guards
Corps of the Russian Empire; first cousin of H.P.B.'s father.

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**



EDWIN ARNOLD
(1832-1904)
Author of *The Light of Asia*.

Collected Writings **VOLUME II**



DÂMODAR K. MÂVALANKAR
(1857- ?)

Bust unveiled in Headquarters Hall at Adyar,
December 24, 1956.

Collected Writings VOLUME II

CHRONOLOGICAL SURVEY

xxv

CHRONOLOGICAL SURVEY

OF THE CHIEF EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF H. P. BLAVATSKY AND
COL. HENRY S. OLCOTT, FROM JANUARY, 1879, TO DECEMBER, 1880,
INCLUSIVE.

(the period to which the material in the present volume belongs)

1879

January 1—Steamer, with the Founders on board, enters British Channel; pilot taken on at 2:30 p.m.; anchored off Deal, 5:30 p.m. (*ODL*, II, 3) .

January 2—Still in the Channel; have to anchor a second night; reach Gravesend morning of the 3rd, and take train to London (*ODL*, II, 4).

January 3—Arrive in London at the Fenchurch St. Station. Stop at the suburban home of Dr. and Mrs. D. H. J. Billing at Norwood Park (*ODL*, II, 4; *Ransom*, 123).

January 5—The Founders attend a meeting of the British Theosophical Society in London (*ED*, 12; *ODL*, II, 4).

January 6—H.P.B. and Mrs. Billing visit the British Museum (*ODL*, II, 7) .

January 17—Order No. 1 from Col. Olcott appointing General Abner Doubleday as Acting President of the Theos. Soc. *ad interim*. Covering letter from Wm. Q. Judge dated Jan. 31st (*ODL*, II, 8; *Ransom*, 124-25 for text).

January 17—The Founders, Miss Rosa Bates and E. Wimbridge leave from Euston for Liverpool, at about 9:40 p.m. (*ODL*, II, 8; *Ransom*, 125) .

January 18—The party is at Liverpool and at 5 p.m. embark on the *SS Speke Hall* (*ODL*, II, 8).

January 19—After lying at anchor in the Mersey River the night of the 18th, sail at dawn (*ODL*, II, 9).

xxvi

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

January 23—Round Cape Finisterre (*ODL*, II, 10-11).

- January 28—Anchor at Malta; party goes ashore; leaves again next morning (*ODL*, II, 10-11).
- February 2—Reach Port Said; enter the Suez Canal at 10:30 a.m; tie up that night opposite the Arab village of Khandara; tie up the following night five miles from Suez (*ODL*, II, 9, 11) .
- February 12—Flue bursts on steamer; they stop for repairs (*ODL*, II, 12).
- February 16—Enter the Bombay harbor in the early morning. Met by Mûlji Thackersey, Pandit Shamji Krishnavarma and Mr. Ballaji; the Founders are taken to Harichandra Chintamon's own house on Girgaum Back Road (*ODL*, II, 12-13, 16) .
- February 17—Reception held at the photographic studio of Harichandra Chintamon; about 300 invited guests (*ODL*, II, 18).
- February 17—Probable date of the famous phenomenon of the transport of a glove to London on behalf of C. C. Massey (*Vania*, 41-42; *Bombay Gazette*, Mch. 31, 1879) .
- February 18—First disappointment with Harichandra; he renders large bill for expenses incurred (*ODL*, II, 20).
- February 25—First letter from Alfred Percy Sinnett, Editor of *The Pioneer*, to Col. Olcott, expressing desire to become acquainted with the Founders; answered by Olcott on the 27th (*ODL*, II, 28; C. W. Leadbeater in *Theos.*, XXX, July, 1909, p. 488) .
- March 2—*The Indian Spectator* publishes H.P.B.'s first article written in India and entitled “Not a Christian.” She wrote it Feb. 25, in reply to an annoying article publ. on Feb. 22 in *The Bombay Review* (*Ransom*, 127).
- March 2—Mûlji finds a servant for H.P.B., a Gujarâti boy named Babula, 15 years old, speaking several languages (*ODL*, II, 21) .
- March 7—The Founders take up residence in a lodging house at 108 Girgaum Back Road, Bombay (*ODL*, II, 21) .
- March 18—Shamji Krishnavarma sails for England to join Prof. Monier-Williams at Oxford (*ODL*, II, 22-23).
- March 23—Col. Olcott delivers his first public address at the Framji Cowasji Hall in Bombay, on “The Theosophical Society and its Aims” (*ODL*, II, 38-40; *TROS*, 49 *et seq.*).
- March 24—CoL Olcott begins framing and discussing with others new Rules for the Theos. Soc., and arranging new council, because of great distance of other early members (*Ransom*, 128).

- March 29—Date of the curious incident when the Founders drove in company with Mûlji Thackersey to a house in the vicinity of Bombay, to see an Adept. The house could not be found on any later occasion (*ODL*, II, 42-46).

March 30—Col. Olcott's first article in Indian papers is written for *The Bombay Gazette*, on the subject of "Theosophical Thaumaturgy." (*Ransom*, 129).

March—Beginning of a collection of books for a Library; Shankar Pandurang presents a copy of his translation of the *Rig-Veda* to the Society (*Ransom*, 129).

April 4—H.P.B. goes by train with Col. Olcott, Mûlji and Babula to see the Caves of Kârli, and receives orders from her Teacher to go to Râjputâna; returns from Kârli about the 8th. On the return trip, H.P.B. flings from railway coach a handwritten note addressed to her Teacher, and Col. Olcott receives in Bombay a telegram from him in reply thereto. This is one of the earliest written communications from the Master (signing himself Goolâb Singh) on record, and is still in the Adyar Archives (*ODL*, II, 46-61; HPB to Alex. Wilder., Apr. 28, 1879; *Ransom*, 129).

April 11—The Founders leave for Râjputâna, together with Mûlji and Babula (*ODL*, II, 62). Visit Allâhâbâd, Benares, Cawnpore (14th), Jâjmau (15th), Bharatpur, by way of Âgra, and the ancient palace at Digh. Thence to Jeypore (20th) and Sahâranpur. Visit Amber. After a visit to Meerut, start May 7 back to Bombay, via Jubbulpore (May 9th), returning to Bombay in the morning of May 10th (*ODL*, II, 63-81; *Diaries*; HPB to Alex. Wilder, April 28, 1879, in *Theos. Forum*, XIX, July, 1941).

May 13—General Council meets and expels Harichandra Chintamon, on recommendation of Dayânanda Saraswatî (*Ransom*, 131).

May 20—Approximate time when the Founders went with Miss Bates to visit the Sardâr of Dekkan (*ODL*, II, 90-91).

May 19—Col. Olcott publishes in *The Bombay Gazette* a Letter concerning the police surveillance to which the Founders were subjected, entitled "Chops and Tomato Sauce." (*Vania*, 44-47 for text).

May 23—Entry in Col. Olcott's *Diaries* stating that H.P.B. "broke ground" for the writing of "her new book on Theosophy." On the 24th he "gave her, by request, the skeleton outline of a book embodying such crude ideas as suggested themselves to one who did not intend to be the writer of it." On the 25th the Colonel "helped in preparing the Preface"; on June 4th they finished it, and "that seed lay in the mummy's hand five or six years before it sprouted as *The Secret Doctrine*, for which the only thing I then did was to invent the title and write the original Prospectus . . ." (*ODL*, II, 89-90).

xxviii

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

June 5—*Ceylon Times* publishes a brief defence of H.P.B. by Emma Coulomb (*ODL*, II, 97; *Vania*, 51, for text).

June 10—Letter from Emma Coulomb to H.P.B. written from Ceylon, and begging for a loan (*Report*, App. VIII, 6; *Hastings*, II, 18; *ODL*, II, 96, where date of Aug. 11 is given).

June 11—Letter from Master M. to Col. Olcott (*LMW*, II, No. 27). As far as can be ascertained, this seems to be the earliest letter from him that has been preserved.

June 23—The following curious entry was made by Col. Olcott in his *Diaries*: "At 10:30 p.m. went to H.P.B.'s room and worked with her until 2:30 a.m. on the idea of an Antetypion, or machine to rescue from Space the pictures and voices of the Past." Nothing else seems to be known about it (*ODL*, II, 89).

- July 4—Consultation held which decided the Founders to publish a magazine of their own (*Diaries*).
- July 6—Prospectus for the magazine *The Theosophist* is written (*Diaries*).
- July 9—The Founders correct first proofs of the Journal (*Diaries*).
- July 15—Master M. comes in his physical body. H.P.B. sends Babula to Col. Olcott to tell him to come over to her bungalow; “a most important private interview” follows (*Diaries*).
- July 31—Wimbridge designs the cover of *The Theosophist* (*Diaries*).
- August 3—Col. Olcott issues Fellowship papers to Dâmodar K. Mâvalankar (*ODL*, II, 95).
- August 6—Fellowship in the Society given to Lt.-Col. Wm. Gordon and Mrs. Alice Gordon (*ODL*, II, 96).
- August 22—The Founders are busy revising articles for the forth-coming Journal (*Diaries*).
- September 2—Wimbridge begins engraving the heading of the Journal (*Diaries*).
- September 11—Workmen fitting up *The Theosophist* Office in the new Compound (*Diaries*).
- September 20—First form of 8 pages of *The Theosophist*, is run off (*Diaries*). The last foam is made up on the 27th.
- September 28—Col. Olcott goes to printer at 5:30 a.m. to make certain changes ordered by the “revered Old Gentleman,” late the night before (*Diaries*). This might be Master Nârâyana.
- September 30—400 copies of *The Theosophist* (32 pages, royal 4to) are delivered (*Diaries*).

CHRONOLOGICAL SURVEY

xxix

- Sept.-October—Approximate time when Dr. Anna Bonus Kingsford and Mr. E. Maitland first read *Isis Unveiled*; it was before they left Paris to return to England (*Life*, II, 15-16) .
- October 1—First issue of *The Theosophist* is out. “All hands busy pasting and directing wrappers . . .” (*Diaries*).
- October 3—Letter received from Master Serapis ordering the Founders to assert their rights to the Journal which was established for them (*LMW*, II, No. 29).
- October 4—Durbâr held for the Founders and party by Sand Saga Achârya, Jaina priest in Bombay (*ODL*, II, 98).
- October 30—*The Theosophist* has by now 381 subscribers, and it is decided to print 750 copies for second issue (*Ransom*, 135).
- November 29—The Founders celebrate the 4th anniversary of the Theosophical Society, the first public function of the kind. The Library is opened (*ODL*, II, 111-13; *Ransom*, 135-36).

December 2—The Founders leave Bombay by train, with Dâmodar and Babula, on their way to Allâhâbâd to visit the Sinnetts (*ODL*, II, 113; *Dâmodar*, 32-33, letter to Judge, Jan. 24, 1880).

December 4—The party arrives at Allâhâbâd by early morning train; they stay with the Sinnetts until the 15th (*ED*, 23-26; *ODL*, II, 114-18; *OW*, 42; *Autobiogr.*). Meet Allan Octavian Hume also, during same period. Dâmodar goes to Benares alone to see Dayânanda Saraswatî on Ritual business (*Dâmodar*, 33).

December 15—The Founders go to Benares with the Sinnetts and Mrs. Alice Gordon; stay at house provided by the Mahârâjâ of Vizianagram; spend some time with Dayânanda Saraswatî. The Sinnetts return home after two days (*ODL*, II, 118; *OW*, 51; *Autobiogr.*).

December 16—The Founders visit Majji, the female ascetic; she returns the visit (*ODL*, II, 120-21, 123; *Dâmodar*, 35-39).

December 17—Meeting of the Small General Council held at the Palace of the Mahârâjâ; Dayânanda present; the Rules are revised (*Ransom*, 137).

December 22—The Founders leave Benares, and go back to Allahabad, staying with the Sinnetts again (*ODL*, II, 136; *Ransom*, 138; *Autobiogr.*).

December 23—Reception given the Founders by Hindûs at the Allâhâbâd Institute. Col. Olcott delivers an address on the "Ancient Âryâvarta and Modern India," and H.P.B. makes one of her very infrequent discourses (*ODL*, II, 136).

xxx

BLAVATSKY : COLLECTED WRITINGS

December 26—The Sinnetts are taken into Fellowship. At about the same time Prof. Adityarâm Bbââchârya, orthodox BrâhmaĶa and famous Sanskritist, joins the T.S. (*ODL*, II, 136-37; *Ransom*, 138).

December 30—The Founders leave for Bombay, and arrive there on New Year's Day, 1880 (*ODL*, II, 137; *Autobiogr.*).

1880

Jan. 4—First formal meeting of the T.S., as a body, in India, in the Library at Bombay (*ODL*, II, 137).

January—H. S. Olcott undertakes weekly lectures at the Bombay Library, on Mesmerism, Psychometry, Crystal—reading, etc., with experimental illustrations (*ODL*, II, 138).

Feb. 26 and 28—Revised Rules for the T.S. considered and ratified by the Council (*Ransom*, 140).

March—H. S. Olcott proposes institution of Medal of Honor (*ODL*, II, 142; *Theos.*, I, Mch., 1880, p. 134).

March 9—Khân Bahâdur N. D. Khandalavala admitted into T.S. at a special meeting (*ODL*, II, 143).

March 15—H.P.B. disappears in the evening of the 14th and turns up the next day at Thana Station. H.S.O. speaks of the whole experience as a "chapter out of `Arabian Nights'." (*Diaries*).

March 18—"Severe and scornful" letter from Swâmi Dayânanda Saraswatî, returning his diploma (*Ransom*, 141).

- March (middle)—Approximate time when H.S.O. asks Laymarie to form a Branch in France (*Ransom*, 141).
- March 25 (evening) —H.P.B., H.S.O. and Dâmodar, while on a drive out during a thunderstorm, to the Warli Bridge at the farther end of causeway, meet one of the Teachers (not identified by name) whose portrait H.P.B. wore later “in a large gold locket.” (*ODL*, II, 144-46) .
- March 28—Alexis and Emma Coulomb arrive in the evening at Bombay Headquarters, from Galle, Ceylon (*Diaries*; *ODL*, II, 146) .
- April 9—Tookaram Tatya, then a cotton commission merchant, calls for the first time (*ODL*, II, 149).
- April 25—Organization of the Bombay T.S. Branch, the pioneer of all Indian Branches, and the third in the whole Society (*ODL*, II, 152).

CHRONOLOGICAL SURVEY

xxxix

- April 17—Date of a letter written by H.P.B. to General Abner Doubleday in New York, notifying him of his election as Vice-President of the T.S. (*Theos. Forum*, XV, Nov., 1939).
- April—A silver badge with gold center made for H.P.B.; later worn by Annie Besant (*ODL*, II, 151).
- May 7—H.P.B. and H.S.O. embark for Ceylon on the British India coasting steamer *SS Ellora* (Captain Wickes); accompanied by E. Wimbridge, Ddmodar, Purshotam, Panachand Anandji, Sorabji J. Padshah, Ferozshah D. Schroff, Mrs. Purshotam and Babula. Leave Headquarters in charge of Miss Rosa Bates and Emma Coulomb (*ODL*, II, 152, 153; *Theos.*, I, June, 1880, p. 240). It is on this trip to Ceylon that the Founders met for the first time young D. H. Hewavitarne, sixteen years of age at the time, who later became the world—renowned Anâgârîka Dharmapâla, the great Buddhist reformer.
- May 16—Drop anchor in Colombo harbor. Met by Meggetuwatte Gunananda and others (*ODL*, II, 156).
- May 17—Arrive at Galle and land, staying at the house of Mrs. Wijeratne (*ODL*, II, 158).
- May 26—The party starts in carriages from Galle northward; first to Dodanduwa (*ODL*, II, 169-70).
- May 27-29—The party is at Piyâgale, Kalutara, Pânadure (where H.P.B. makes one of her infrequent speeches); they leave by rail for Colombo (*ODL*, II, 170-71, 177).
- June 8—Colombo T.S. organized (*ODL*, II, 179).
- June 9—The party leaves by train for Kandy (*ODL*, II, 179).
- June 11—H.S.O. delivers an address at the Town Hall in Kandy on “The Life of Buddha and its Lessons” (*ODL*, II, 181) .
- June 13—A visit to Gompola, returning to Kandy (*ODL*, II, 182).
- June 25—The party is at Galle, and at Mâtara on the 26th (*ODL*, II, 198).
- July 13—The party embarks at Colombo on *SS. Chanda*, on their return trip to Bombay; accompanied by the Pereras and others; sail on the 14th, at 7:07 p.m. One evening, while on board, Master M. and two other high occultists visit Dâmodar and leave with him a letter for H.P.B. to be read by him also (*ODL*, II, 205;

Diaries; Dâmodar, 57-58, letter to Judge, June 21, 1881 .

July 15—Party arrives at Tuticorin (*Diaries*).

xxxii

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

July 24, 9:37 a.m.—Party reaches Bombay, after brief stops at Alleppey (18th), Cochin and Calicut (19th), Tellicherry (20th), Canmore (21st), and Karwar (22nd). (*Diaries*.)

July 24—Situation at Headquarters colorfully described by H.S.O. in his *Diaries*: “Arriving house found a hell of a row on the carpet between Dame Coulomb and Spin. Bates.”

July 28—H.S.O. obliges the quarreling Coulomb and Bates to consent to an “armed neutrality” (*Diaries*).

July—Emma Coulomb offers to sell H.P.B.'s “secrets” to the Rev. Bowen of the *Bombay Guardian*. Begins to build her plan of treachery soon after her arrival in Bombay (*LBS*, No. XLVI, p. 110).

Aug. 4—One of the Teachers visits the Founders and dictates a long and important letter to an influential friend of theirs in Paris. Whereabouts of this letter is unknown (*ODL*, II, 208).

Aug. 6—Differences between Rosa Bates and the Founders come to a head; H.S.O. immortalizes the event in most telling language: “Hell of an explosion between Rosa and us , : . This settles her hash: she must go” (*Diaries*)

Aug. 12—Approximate time when the original foursome finally split; E. Wimbridge moves to another part of Bombay and, helped. by Olcott's connections, sets up an art-furniture and art-decoration business (*ODL*, II, 210) .

Aug. 15—Date on which Henry Kiddle delivers his address on “The Present Outlook of Spiritualism,” at Lake Pleasant Camp Meeting; this gives rise later to the so-called “Kiddle Incident.” (*Light*, Sept. 1, 1883; *OW*, Amer. ed., Appendix, 209; consult also *ML*, Index).

Aug. 23—While H.P.B., H.S.O. and Dâmodar are conversing in the office at Bombay, the portrait of the Yogin of “Tiruvalla”-phenomenally produced for Judge and H.S.O. in New York, and which had disappeared from its frame in the latter's bedroom just before he left New York-falls through the air on the desk; also a photo of Dayânanda Saraswatî Swâmi (*ODL*, II, 214) .

Aug. 27—H.P.B., H.S.O. and Babula leave Bombay by evening mail train for the North. Halt briefly at Allâhâbâd (*ODL*, II, 215) .

Aug. 30—The party reaches Meerut; have a debate on Yoga with Dayânanda Saraswatî, whose attitude has temporarily changed for the better (*ODL*, II, 215-23; *Ransom*, 145; *Diaries; Theos.*, II, Dec., 1880, p. 46) .

CHRONOLOGICAL SURVEY

xxxiii

Sept. 7—While at Meerut H.S.O. writes for the *Times of India* a Circular regarding the incident with Miss R. Bates, etc. Brief introd. note by Dâmodar; countersigned by H.P.B. It was published Sept. 13th (*Vania*, 60-62, for text).

Sept. 7, 4:14 p.m.—Party leaves Meerut for Simla. After a halt at Umballa until 11 p.m., they drive all night

up the mountain road in a dāk-gâñî. At daybreak on the 8th, they stop for some five hours at Kalka; then resume their trip to Simla up the military road (*ODL*, II, 225; *Diaries*).

Sept. 8, at sunset—Arrive at Simla to visit with the Sinnetts who live at the time in a house called “Brightlands” just over the Mall (*ODL*, II, 225; *Diaries*; *ED.*, 26; *Autobiogr.*; *OW.*, 56; consult also Marion Crawford’s *Mr. Isaacs*, London, 1882, for visit to Simla).

Sept. 27—Date of a letter from H. S. Olcott to the Secretary to the Government in the Foreign Department, requesting abrogation of measures taken by the Government to spy on the various moves of the Founders. After some back and forth correspondence, measures are rescinded October 20, 1880 (*ODL*, II, 229-31, 245-48).

Sept. 29—H.P.B., H.S.O. and Mrs. Patience Sinnett go to the top of Prospect Hill at Simla; Mrs. Sinnett gets a note on pink paper from one of the Teachers. It was left in a tree and read: “I believe I was asked to leave a note here. What can I do for you?” Original of this “pink slip” is in the British Museum (*ODL*, II, 231-32; *OW*, 61-63; *Vania*, 81-82 for text of *Times of India* account).

Oct. 3—Sinnetts give at Simla a picnic-breakfast, at which the cup and saucer phenomenon occurs (*ODL*, II, 232-34; *OW.*, 66-71; Letter of Oct. 4, from H.S.O. to Dâmodar, in *Vania*, 65-67; *ODL*, II, 237). Same evening a dinner party takes place at the Humes, where the phenomenon in connection with Mrs. Hume’s brooch occurs (*ODL*, II, 237-41; *OW*, 77-85; *Vania*, 70-71).

Oct. 7—H.S.O. lectures at Simla, at the United Service Institution, on “Spiritualism and Theosophy.” Attends Lord Ripon’s ball at Government House in the evening (*ODL*, II, 242).

October (middle)—Approximate time when Sinnett and Hume begin to consider the formation of an Anglo-Indian Theosophical Society (*Ransom*, 147).

October (most likely somewhat before 15th)—Sinnett sends through H.P.B. his *first* letter to the Master, addressing him as “Unknown Brother.” Asks about the production of the London *Times* phenomenon (*OW.*, 93; *Autobiogr.*; *Hastings*, I, 14, where approximate date is suggested). Sinnett writes his second letter without waiting for reply to the first one (*OW.*, 94).

xxxiv

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

Oct. 16—Mrs. Alice Gordon invites the Founders, the Sinnetts and Major S. to a picnic at her home; phenomenon of duplicating a handkerchief occurs; A. O. Hume sends over to H.P.B. his *first* letter for transmission to the Teachers (*ODL*, II, 242-43; *OW*, 59-60, 102; *Diaries*).

Oct. 18—Most likely date for the receipt at Simla of the *first* letter from Master K.H. to A. P. Sinnett (*ML.*, No. 1, pp. 1.6; *OW.*, 95-100, excerpts; *Hastings*, I, 14).

Oct. 19—Second letter from K.H. to Sinnett received at Simla (*ML.*, No. II, pp. 6-10; *OW.*, 100-108, excerpts; *Diaries*).

Oct. 20—Pillow phenomenon at Simla, while picnicking again on Prospect Hill. Mrs. Sinnett’s brooch No. 2 is brought and letter from K.H. found inside the pillow (*ML.*, No. IIIB; *ODL*, II, 244-45; *OW.*, 109-113, 115).

Oct. 21—The Founders leave Simla a little before noon, and reach Kalka at 8 p.m., staying at Laurie’s Hotel (*ODL*, II, 248; *Ransom*, 148; *Diaries*).

Oct. 22—They leave Kalka for Umballa at 3 p.m. by dāk-gāñî; dine there and then take the 9:51 train for Amritsar (*Diaries*).

Oct. 23, 7 a.m.—They reach Amritsar. H.S.O. lectures twice, 27th and 29th). They stay there for the Divâlî festival on November 2nd. Meet one of the Teachers around the Temple. H.P.B. writes (Oct. 25th) her “Occult Phenomena” article, publ. in the *Bombay Gazette*, Oct. 29th (*ODL*, II, 248, 255, 256-58; *Diaries*).

While at Amritsar, the Founders receive news that the Galle, Ceylon, T.S. has opened the first Buddhist Theosophical School with 300 pupils, most of them from Christian schools (*Ransom*, 149).

Oct. 24—Just before leaving Simla for Allâhâbâd, Sinnett writes a letter to Master K.H. and sends it to H.P.B. who is then in Amritsar (*OW.*, 117, 121; *ML.*, No. IV, p. 13).

Oct. 27—Sinnett reaches Allâhâbâd (*OW.*, 116).

Oct. 27, 2 p.m.—Sinnett's letter addressed to Master K.H., and sent to H.P.B., reaches her at Amritsar. It reaches Master K.H. some five minutes later about thirty miles beyond Rawalpindi (*ML.*, No. IV, p. 13; *OW.*, 121).

Oct. 27—Telegram sent by Koothoomi Lalsingh from Jhelum, to A. P. Sinnett at Allâhâbâd, at about 4 p.m., and received by him the same day (original in the British Museum; *OW.*, 116-18).

Oct. 29—Letter from K.H., then at Amritsar, to Sinnett, replying to his of Oct. 27 (*ML.*, No. IV, pp. 11-17; *OW.*, 119-24, excerpts).

CHRONOLOGICAL SURVEY

xxxv

Nov. 1—Reply of Master K.H. to A. O. Hume's first letter of Oct. 16th (not incl. in the *Mah. Lttrs.*; copy only in the British Museum; see also *OW.*, 125-39; *ML.*, p. 17; *Vania*, 102; *Diaries*).

Nov. 3—H.P.B. and H.S.O. leave Amritsar for Lahore on the 4:45 p.m. train; reach destination at 7 p.m. (*Diaries*). H.S.O. lectures there on the 7th (*ODL*, II, 258-60) . Lord Ripon holds a Durbâr described by H.P.B. as “The Durbâr in Lahore,” in the *Russkiy Vestnik*, Vol. 153, May, June, and Vol. 154, July, 1881 (*ODL*, II, 263-65) .

Nov. 15—Headquarters in Bombay moved to the so-called “Crow's Nest,” Breach Candy, in the absence of the Founders.

Nov. 17—H.S.O. leaves H.P.B. at Lahore, and goes to Multân (*ODL*, II, 265) .

Nov. 20—H.S.O. returns to Lahore and finds H.P.B. laid up with Pañjâb fever, nursed by Babula; her condition is quite serious (*ODL*, II, 266; *Diaries*; *IBS*, No. V, pp. 6-7) .

Nov. 25—H.P.B. and H.S.O. take train from Lahore to Umballa (*ODL*, II, 268; *Ransom*, 149; *Diaries*) Reach destination the next morning.

Nov. 28—Tbey take the morning train for Cawnpore and get there the following morning (*Diaries*).

Dec. 1-11—The Founders are visiting the Sinnetts at Allâhâbâd (*ML*, p. 11, A.P.S.'s Note to Letter No. IV; *Autobiogr.*; *ED.*, 29; *Diaries*).

Dec. 3—H.S.O. leaves H.P.B. with the Sinnetts and goes himself to Benares, as guest of the Mahârâja; sees Majji while there (*ML.*, p. 11, Sinnett's Note; *ODL*, II, 268-74) .

Dec. 10—Approximate time when Sinnett received an important letter from K.H., discussing the “Kiddle Incident” and giving a prophetic outline of future developments in science, etc. (*ML.*, No. VI, 22-24; No. XCIII, 420-29; *OW.*, 144, 148-50, excerpts).

Dec. 11—H.P.B. arrives at Benares at about 4 p.m. and joins H.S.O. there; plans to stay about eight days (*ODL*, II, 274, 275; *ML.*, p. 11; *Ransom*, 150; *Diaries*).

Dec. 14—Meeting between H. S. Olcott and a number of scholars and Pandits at P. D. Mitra's residence. Important resolution drawn up with regard to a friendly union between T.S. and the Sanskrit Sâmaja (*ODL*, II, 277-79; *Ransom*, 150).

Family motto of the Mahârâja of Benares was at about this time adopted by the T.S. It is a somewhat modified passage from the *Mahâbhârata*, Śântiparvan, chap. 160, stanza 24 (*ODL*, II, 280-83; *Theos.*, II, May, 1881, p. 178; *Ransom*, 151 & (note)).

xxxvi

BLAVATSKY: COLLECTED WRITINGS

Dec. 20—The Founders leave by train for Allâhâbâd again, staying at the Sinnetts. H.P.B. suffers for several days with Dengue fever; nursed by Dr. Avinas Chandra Banerji. They spend Christmas with the Sinnetts (*ODL*, II, 286, 287; *Ransom*, 151; *Diaries*; *ML.*, p. 11).

Dec. 28—They take train for Bombay (*ODL*, II, 287-88; *ML.*, p. 11).

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

Autobiogr.—An *Autobiography of A. P. Sinnett*, dated June 3rd, 1912, with additions dated May 1916, and Jan. 2, 1920, which exists in the form of a typewritten MSS. in the Archives of the Mahâtma Letters Trust in London. ,

Dâmodar—*Dâmodar and the Pioneers of The Theosophical Movement*. Compiled and Annotated by Sven Eek. Adyar, Madras: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1965; xvi, 720 pp.; Ill., Index.

Diaries—Col. H. S. Olcott's *Diaries*, in the Adyar Archives.

ED—A. P. Sinnett, *The Early Days of Theosophy in Europe*. London: Theosophical Publishing House, 1922; 126 pp., Index.

Hastings—*Defence of Madame Blavatsky*, by Beatrice Hastings. Vols. I and II. Published by the Author, Worthing, Sussex, England, 1937. 60 and 105 pp. resp.

LBS—*The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett*, and Other Miscellaneous Letters Transcribed, Compiled, and with an Introd. by A. T. Barker. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co., 1924. xvi, 404 pp.

Light—*A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research*, edited by Stainton Moses (“M. A. Oxon.”), London, 1881, etc.

LMW—*Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom*. Transcribed and Annotated by C. Jinarâjadâsa. With a Foreword by Annie Besant. *IInd Series*. Adyar, Madras: Theos. Publishing House, 1925; Chicago: Theosophical Press, 1926. 205 pp.; Ill.

ML—*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* (from the Mahatmas M. and K.H.). Transcribed, Compiled and

with an Introd. by A. T. Barker. London: T. Fisher Unwin, December, 1923; New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co., 1923. xxxv, 492 pp.; 2nd rev. ed., London: Rider & Co., 1926; 3rd ed., Adyar, Madras: Theos. Publ. House, 1962.

CHRONOLOGICAL SURVEY

xxxvii

ODL—Old Diary Leaves, by Henry Steel Olcott. Second Series, 1878-83. Adyar: Theos. Publ. House, 1900. The original ed. contains nine illustrations, all of them being views of the Theos. Society's Estate at Adyar, Being too faded for further reproduction, eight of these have been eliminated from the 2nd ed. of 1928.

OW—The Occult World, by A. P. Sinnett. London: Trübner & Co., 1881. 172 pp. 8vo; first Amer. ed., with special Appendix regarding the "Kiddle Incident." New York and Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1885.

Ransom—A Short History of The Theosophical Society. Compiled by Josephine Ransom. With a Preface by G. S. Arundale. Adyar, Madras: Theos. Publ. House, 1938. xii, 591 pp.

Report—Report of Observations Made during a Nine Months Stay at the Headquarters of The Theosophical Society at Adyar (Madras), India, by Dr. Franz Hartmann. Madras: Printed at the Scottish Press, by Graves, Cookson and Co., 1884. 60 pp.

Theos. Forum—The Theosophical Forum. New Series. Publ. under the authority of the Theosophical Society, Point Loma, Calif. Editor, G. de Purucker. Vols. I-XXIX, September, 1929 - March 1951 incl. Later edited by Arthur L. Conger.

Theos.—The Theosophist. A Monthly Journal Devoted to Oriental Philosophy, Art, Literature and Occultism. Conducted by H. P. Blavatsky, under the Auspices of The Theosophical Society. Bombay (later Madras) : The Theos. Soc., October 1879—, in progress, (Volumes run from October to September incl.)

TROS—Henry S. Olcott, Theosophy, Religion and Occult Science. New edition, rev. and enl. London: George Redway, 1885. xiii, 384 pp.; Glossary; Index.

Vania—Madame H. P. Blavatsky, Her Occult Phenomena and the Society for Psychological Research, by K. F. Vania. Bombay, India: Sat Publ. Co., 1951. xiv, 488 pp.