

“Point out the ‘Way’—However dimly, and lost among the host—as does the evening star to those who tread their path in darkness.”



MERCURY.

EDITORIAL + STAFF:

WILLIAM JOHN WALTERS, +
+ EDITH SEARS, +
+ MARIE A. WALSH.

VOL. II. SAN FRANCISCO, DEC., 1895. No. 5.

THE RATIONALE OF HYPNOTISM AND MESMERISM.

THE subject of mesmerism—or magnetism, as it has sometimes been called—has excited great interest among large numbers of people in Europe for the past century, and has been involved in a maze of mystery, ignorance, and credulity, for it deals with portions of the constitution of man which have not yet come within the domain of Western science (so-called). The mystery is naturally deepened when we observe that the phenomena exhibited by the subjects differ in almost every case.

In the year A. D. 1779, Dr. Antony Mesmer published a pamphlet of his discovery of magnetism* in which he summed up his theory in twenty-seven propositions, which are as follows. To Theosophists, especially, they are extremely suggestive:

1. A responsive influence exists between the heavenly bodies, the earth, and animated bodies.

2. A fluid universally diffused, so continuous as not to admit of a vacuum, incomparably subtle, and naturally capable of receiving, propagating, and communicating all motor disturbances, is the means of this influence.

*Mesmer's Theory (Benet & Feres' translation).

3. This reciprocal action is subject to mechanical laws, with which we are not, as yet, acquainted.

4. Alternative effects result from this action, which may be considered to be a flux and reflux.

5. This reflux is more or less general, more or less special, more or less compound, according to the nature of the causes which determine it.

6. It is by this action, the most universal which occurs in nature, that the exercise of active relations takes place between the heavenly bodies, the earth, and its constituent parts.

7. The properties of matter and of organic substance depend upon this action.

8. The animal body experiences the alternative effects of this agent, and is directly affected by its insinuation into the substance of the nerves.

9. Properties are displayed analogous to those of the magnet, particularly in the human body, in which diverse and opposite poles are likewise to be distinguished, and these may be communicated, changed, destroyed, and reinforced. Even the phenomenon of declination may be observed.

10. This property of the human body which renders it susceptible of the influence of the heavenly bodies, and of the reciprocal action of those which environ it, manifests its analogy with the magnet, and this has determined me to adopt the term animal magnetism.

11. The action and virtue of animal magnetism, thus characterized, may be communicated to other animate and inanimate bodies. Both these classes of bodies, however, vary in their susceptibility.

12. This action and virtue may be strengthened and diffused by such bodies.

13. Experiments show that there is a diffusion of matter, subtle enough to penetrate all bodies without any considerable loss of energy.

14. Its action takes place at a remote distance, without the aid of any intermediary substance.

15. It is, like light, increased and reflected by mirrors.

16. It is communicated, propagated and increased by sound.

17. This magnetic virtue may be accumulated, concentrated, and transported.

18. I have said that animate bodies are not all equally susceptible; in a few instances they have such an opposite property that their very presence is enough to destroy all the effects of magnetism upon other bodies.

19. This opposite virtue likewise penetrates all bodies; it also can be communicated, propagated, accumulated, concentrated, and transported, reflected by the mirror and propagated by sound.

20. The magnet, whether natural or artificial, is like other bodies susceptible of animal magnetism and even of the opposite virtue; in neither case does its action on fire and on the needle suffer any change, and this shows that the principle of animal magnetism essentially differs from that of mineral magnetism.

21. This system sheds new light upon the nature of fire and of light, as well as on the theory of attraction, of flux and reflux, of the magnet, and of electricity.

22. It teaches us that the magnet and artificial electricity have, in respect to diseases, properties common to a host of other agents presented to us by nature, and that if the use of these has been attended with some useful results, they are due to animal magnetism.

23. These facts show, in accordance with the practical rules I am about to establish, that this principle will cure nervous diseases directly and other diseases indirectly.

24. By its aid the physician is enlightened as to the use of medicine and may render its action more perfect, and he can provoke and direct salutary crises so as to control them.

25. In communicating my method I shall, by a new theory of matter, demonstrate the universal utility of the principle I seek to establish.

26. Possessed of this knowledge, the physician may judge with certainty of the origin, nature, and progress of diseases, however complicated they may be; and he may hinder their development and accomplish their cure, without exposing the patient to dangerous and troublesome consequences, irrespective of age, tempera-

ment, and sex. Even women in a state of pregnancy and during parturition may reap the same advantage.

27. This doctrine will, finally, enable the physician to decide upon the health of every individual and of the presence of the diseases to which he may be exposed. In this way the art of healing may be brought to absolute perfection.

The mesmerists declare that the peculiar state they induce is brought about through the agency of what they term the "human aura" (which they believe is identical with the nerve fluids), while the majority of the hypnotists emphatically deny the existence of such an aura, and affirm that hypnosis is but the result of a peculiar modification of the nervous system, resulting from the fatigue or exhaustion of one or more nerve-centers, produced by a lengthened or very sudden stimulation of any of the sensory nerves. I hold that the two states are entirely dissimilar, and to support this I will describe some of the phenomena observable.

The cause of the existing confusion lies in the fact that the mesmerists of to-day *don't* see that their processes are half hypnotic, and the hypnotists *won't* see that their processes are half mesmeric; so a mixed state is the result, with apparently contradictory phenomena.

Now, if we put one person to sleep (I call it 'sleep' for want of a better term) by a *purely* hypnotic method, such as by his gazing intently at a glittering glass button, and another by a purely mesmeric or magnetic process, such as by "passes" or the old "laying on of hands"—we should see they were not in the same state. I may say that people are not placed at once into either the *profound* hypnotic or mesmeric state, but as a rule they require training, at each attempt becoming more and more affected.

But let us suppose that our subjects have been trained, and that we have placed them apparently in a state of deep unconsciousness—unconsciousness from our point of view, that is. Now speak to the *hypnotized* subject—he will not answer; raise his arm—it falls back heavily and inertly; prick him with a needle, he will not feel it; he is in the Lethargic stage. Now slightly waken *one-half* of your subject by raising the right eye, if a light be brought near, the pupil contracts; raise both the arms, the

right one will feel extremely light and mobile while the left is heavy as a lump of dead flesh; now let them go; the left arm drops inert, while, strange to say, the right one remains where placed; close the right eye and the arm gradually sinks. Now raise *both* eyelids, the Cataleptic phase is produced; here the subject's body is extremely mobile, and if you raise a limb it retains the position, though in a short time it relaxes. In this Cataleptic stage you can arouse the *shadow*, as it were, of any passion or emotion, by placing the limbs, etc., in positions depicting or suggesting them; for instance, clench the hands, and the face at once expresses anger; place the body in an attitude of prayer, and the features light up with veneration; now clench one hand, and *one-half* of the face will reflect intense anger, while the other exhibits equally fervent veneration; play a lively tune or talk in a lively tone (it matters not *what* you say) and the subject at once reflects it; now play or talk in a funereal tone, and the expressions change to one of mournfulness; all this while the subject is in a state of perfect automatism; it is *only* the body which is responding as it has been trained to do in daily life, and the different expressions last for a few moments only. Now bring him still nearer to the waking state, and the Somnambulistic stage appears; the subject can hear and partially understand you, but reason and will are still paralyzed. This stage differs from the Lethargic and Cataleptic, in that the subject responds to spoken suggestion; if left to himself he soon returns (apparently) to his normal state.

Now turn your attention to your magnetized subject: raise the lid, and you find the eye turned convulsively upward; if you test, you will find it perfectly insensible to light; call him by name and he will answer; should he be unable to do so, you have but to demagnetize the mouth; if you question him, he replies intelligently; in fact, you find he is superior to his normal state. You find he is possessed of faculties transcending your own, of senses more acute, of reason more clear, of morals more pure. *His* senses are barred by neither distance, obstacle nor time; he can read the mind of another person, or a page from a book fast closed; he can see into his own body or into that of another, and if it be diseased he can prescribe for it, although ordinarily he is ignorant of even

the rudiments of medicine; then, too, he can predict the course the disease will take; often he will foretell events.

This being is evidently in a very different state from the hypnotized one, for while this person transcends, in reason and morals, his normal condition, the other is below, in varying depths of unconsciousness. Thus, the difference between the two states is very marked.

We can obtain some evidence in favor of this from "Binet's and Fere's Animal Magnetism" (which book should really be entitled "Hypnotism.") The Saltpetore School of Hypnotism produced the Somnambulistic phase by rubbing the scalp of a subject in the Cataleptic stage; now, most curiously (from *their* point of view), when the scalp was rubbed by an inanimate object, such as a piece of wood, it only produced what they call "indifferent somnambulism"—the true hypnotic state I have earlier referred to, in which the subject responded to suggestions from *any one*; while (mark the difference) if the scalp were rubbed by the *hand*—it mattered not whether it was the subject's hypnotized or *not*—he only obeyed the suggestion of that person *alone*, and was deaf to all others. This last phase is called "Elective Somnambulism," from the subject displaying a preference for the person who touched him. This phenomenon puzzled the experimenters greatly, but in the light of what I have said it is perfectly clear, and to be expected.

There is another and slighter form of hypnosis, which is best described by the term "Fascination," but to this I will recur when I deal with suggestion.

HERBERT KITCHIN.

[To be continued.]

"A hundred good words are lost upon the wicked; a hundred wise words are lost upon fools; a hundred good precepts are lost upon the obstinate; a hundred sciences upon those who never reflect.

Toleration of the opinions and beliefs of others is not enough, it is appreciation of them that is needed. Toleration is but one step removed from persecution and often lapses into persecution.

Let us appreciate the ideas of others for the truth and beauty, though ever so little, in them, then we shall understand the meaning of Brotherhood.

W. J. COLVILLE.

THE DREAM OF HOR-MA-AKKU.

[Continued from September number.]

IN Egyptian symbolism, this conception of the cosmic Father-mother is represented as a female figure with male attributes; generally, these attributes are expressed in animal symbols. The statue at Sais of the goddess Neith whose triple wings overshadowed the universe, had lion's feet and claws; and its three heads were those of a vulture, a woman, and a lioness. These heads typified the creations of the cosmic duality; viz., the three worlds of spirit, psychic substance, and their astral basis, of which the material world is an illusive aspect. This latter world was symbolized in the cube of stone which supported the statue. It was this same statue of Neith that bore the inscription, "I am the All in All, the past, present and future. No mortal has lifted my veil, and the fruit which I bear within me is the Sun."

These worlds are also represented in the sphynx. The first, by the conical cap of Osiris, generally surmounting its head. The second, by the ever youthful, virgin's face, with its inscrutable expression. The third world, by the body of a lioness; while the rock on which the sphynx reclines symbolizes the material world. Thus the sphynx records the same sublime truths taught by the Kabbalah as Keter, the crown, and the three triads of Sephiroth, ten in all. The first Sephiroth, Keter, is a unity, but sometimes it is taken as a triad, thus making twelve in all. It is the world of Spirit, the beginning and end of all, the ineffable world Aziluth. The first triad, formed of the second, third and fourth Sephiroth, is the psychic world, Briah. The second triad, of the fifth, sixth, and seventh Sephiroth, makes the astral world, Jezirah or Yezirah. The third triad, of the eighth, ninth and tenth Sephiroth emanations, compose the material world, known as Aziah. From Aziluth, all creative powers descend to the most dense and material aspects; from whence they re-ascend to their beginning in Keter or Aziluth. In the Bible, this descent of spirit into matter and its re-ascent to spirit is pictured as Jacob's ladder, on which angels are continually moving up and down.

The same cosmic history is written in the massive blocks of the great pyramids of Gizeh. Its proportions are the creative harmonies, for those who can hear and understand.

If the height of the pyramid from its apex to the bed of the Nile be divided into parts of eighty feet each, there will be ten divisions; seven of these divisions being above the base proper of the pyramid, and three below. These ten divisions correspond to the Sephirothal ten; each Sephiroth an æon, or creative Archangel.

Ancient Adepts taught that every æon is a being of surpassing wisdom whose mission it is to call into existence a form based on the geometrical analogy of his own nature, a synthetical harmony of numbers, producing form, color, and their corresponding musical harmonies.

It is a geometrical law that if a pyramid be divided horizontally, midway between the apex and the base, the part below contains exactly seven times the bulk of that above the dividing line. On this analogy, each creative hierarchy was said to be multiplied seven times in giving existence to that next below it. The topmost tier of the pyramid is the hierarchy of Ptah, the artist god, the geometrical constructive power of the universe, whose numerical equivalent is seven. The seven-fold Ptah multiplies into forty-nine in the next lower hierarchy, the second tier of the pyramid (counting from top), and thus downwards to the lowest or the tenth; each hierarchy having a numerical equivalent of seven times that of its predecessor. This cosmic history is also the history of every human soul. Bibles and myths, pyramid and sphinx record not only the genesis and evolution of a world, but also the genesis and evolution of man. The enigma of the sphinx is the enigma of man's own astral nature. To unfold and comprehend that enigma is to attain the harmony of the divine man; for when man lives in accordance with the divine laws of creation he becomes the Adept. When he sees and understands that the chances and accidents (?) of life are the results of a well-defined law; and when he guides his actions in conscious obedience to that law, life becomes a glorious harmony. And this is the Dream of Hor-ma-akku—Horus on the Horizon. He is Arusha, the harmonic vibrations of the Dawn of Creation, the Proteus of the Cosmos in his multifarious transformations; and he nowhere shines more resplendently than when, out of the chaos of conflicting discords, he strikes his perfectly attuned lyre in their cosmic temple, which is then seen to be his own hitherto unperceived

perfections. This sublime conception of the sphinx, Hor-ma-akku, is the concrete ideation of the duality of cosmic law, of the Thesis of Harmony contracted with the anti-thesis of Discord. The Thesis is represented by the twelve Horu, or hours, or divine attributes; the anti-thesis by the twelve labors which Heracles, the candidate for initiation, had to achieve. Each attribute is triple, active, passive and equilibrated.

As each hour in succession descends from its Thesis and ascends from its anti-thesis, passing in review before the mind of man, being at the hour of its rising and setting neither active nor passive, but neutral; so Horus, the great, neutral, equilibrating power, represents the agglomerated Macro-Cosmos on the horizon neither in day or night, but the synthesis of both. He is the Father of Infinite Wisdom, the Illuminator of Mind, the Hierophant of the World, the Eternal Mystery.

RAMA KEZU.

A WORD FOR THE TIME.

HAS Theosophy helped you? The answer to this question is always an enthusiastic yes. Many of those who have well grasped the teachings of Modern Theosophy say, "Theosophy has done so much for me that it is difficult to discriminate. It is everything." Now if through Modern Theosophy as given by its voice, the Theosophical Society, we have come in touch with vital truths that are a daily help, truths that enable us not merely to endure the ills of life but to overcome them; truths that teach us to evolve our latent possibilities and thus grow into a higher manhood and womanhood, should we not be gratefully content? Suppose the external form be imperfect; suppose this one or that one fall away. Does that imperfection, that defection, rob us of truth, of useful vital truths? Decidedly not. The idea is more than the form; principles, greater than personalities.

We do not cast away the pearl because it is born of a diseased oyster, nor despise the beautiful silk for its worm origin. We certainly would not leave a house in which we took comfort for the

reason that its builders were not just as we would have them. Great teachers, like all great people, have great defects. The sun has spots, many spots. What should we think of one who refused sunshine because of those spots?

The T. S. to-day is a world-wide fact, with a world wide influence; and in spite of imperfections inherent in its human form, that influence has a spiritual quality, a soul-quickenng power. Can quorums, or minutes, or Adyar, or New York affect the living truth, the spirituality, the Christ-resurrecting power of Theosophia or the substantial existence of its vehicle, the T. S. The word that sets us thinking, the thought that fills life with splendor, the center that radiates the light of knowledge, depend *not* on quorums, or minutes, or the correctness of any individual.

Therefore, let all who have found help hold fast, knowing the value of that which they have found, and let no storm, no attack despoil them of their treasure. "Hold fast to that which is good," but cast that which is not good into the fire, that it may be reformed into the good.—ED.

OPPORTUNITY.

THE secret of success is the art of seizing opportunities and making the most of them. This law obtains on the Spiritual as well as on the physical plane.

Now is Christmas not an opportunity? not merely for doing good, those opportunities are ever with us, but for lifting ourselves a little nearer the center by the help of the general thought? At this period sacred to the birth of the Christ-spirit, the great heart of Humanity throbs with kindness. Even the most selfish think a little of some one outside of self. Loving thoughts brighten the Astral waters, helpful, kindly deeds reflect themselves therein. Joy lights up for a brief period the sorrowful world while the glad carols ring far and near "Peace on earth, good will to man." Then it is the feast of little children, and "Of such is the kingdom of Heaven."

The lessons of Christmas are many; for whether the story of Bethlehem be true or not as fact, it is true in essence. The Star that shone o'er the manger has a message for all who will listen.

The wise men follow the Star and find the Christ. He is born in the silence, in the darkness, into the animal life to work, to bear burdens, to give all to save, even to the sacrifice of Calvary: "Greater love than this no man hath." And this myth is written in the stars; it is hidden in the heart of each one; it is a universal truth. All hail! the birth of the Divine Sun.

MERCURY wishes his readers and all the world a Blessed Christmas; and may their gifts be gold, frankincense, and myrrh, which the wise men know to be wisdom, sacrifice, and the mighty strength born of love and pain.

BEHIND THE VEIL.

A DEPARTMENT FOR THE INVESTIGATION BY THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY OF PECULIAR CIRCUMSTANCES RELATING TO THE PSYCHIC LIFE.

Experiences and explanation of experiences are invited, but all personal or irrelevant detail will be omitted.

A Remarkable Dream.

A LADY, whom we will call Miss K—, dreamed one night that while walking in the street she saw approaching her a hearse driven by a young lad. The boy driver stopped his somber vehicle in front of Miss K— and, looking intently at her, said, "Are you ready?" She quickly answered, "No, I am not ready." She immediately awoke, startled into something like fear by the vividness of the dream. The impression produced on her mind was intense, and the features of the driver of the hearse photographed themselves on her brain.

The next day, as she was about to step into an elevator, something diverted her attention and caused her to pause. "Are you ready?" asked the elevator boy. The words sent a tremor through all her nerves, yet she mechanically entered the lift, which immediately began to ascend.

The words, "Are you ready?" recalling all the dream, Miss K. looked at the lad who had uttered them, and saw before her the boy-driver of the hearse. She instantly knew that her dream had a meaning and got out of the elevator at the first floor. Before the elevator reached the next landing it fell, and the occupants, boy included, were killed.

Here we have a true warning given in a dream. Of all forms of submerged consciousness the most familiar to us is that of dreams, and every one some time has asked the question, "What are dreams?" H. P. B., in "Transactions of Blavatsky Lodge, Vol. I," lifts the veil a little on the subject of dreams: It there says "That which dreams is, generally, the physical brain of the personal Ego, the seat of memory, radiating and throwing off sparks like the dying embers of a fire. The memory of the sleeper is like an Æolian seven-stringed harp; and his state of mind may be compared to the wind that sweeps over the chords. The corresponding string of the harp will respond to that one of the seven states of mental activity in which the sleeper was before falling asleep * * * If the personal Ego is in touch with its higher principles, and the veils of the higher planes are drawn aside, all is well."

"Dreams of warning and premonition require the active co-operation of the Inner Ego. They are also often due to the conscious or unconscious co-operation of the brains of two living persons, or of their two Egos."

"It may be said, in the case of persons who have truly prophetic dreams, that it is because their physical brains and memory are in closer relation and sympathy with their 'Higher Ego' than in the generality of men."

"Danger arises from pointing out evil, and success from pointing out a remedy."

"A serpent by drinking milk only increases his venom; thus a fool, being admonished, is provoked but not benefited."

"Though a gem be worn on the feet and glass on the head, the glass is glass, and a gem a gem."

"The union of the small and the weak performs great works, By blades of grass twisted together the elephant is tied fast. The birds caught in the fowler's net plied their wings in concert, and bore away the net through the air."

PRACTICAL THEOSOPHY.

THIS DEPARTMENT IS INTENDED TO BE ONE OF ACTUAL EXPERIENCE. ANY ITEMS SHOWING THE AID THEOSOPHY GIVES IN DAILY LIFE WILL BE WELCOME.

“HOW HAS THEOSOPHY HELPED YOU?”

NOTE—This question was printed on the back cover of the October number of MERCURY, and also appears again in the current number. The following are some of the replies we have already received:

Theosophy is many-sided, therefore it appeals to each character differently. It appeals to the intellect because it offers the only reasonable solution of the mysteries of Nature, and gives an explanation of our existence upon the earth, which is not ascribed to blind chance, or to the whim of a capricious Creator. It appeals to the heart and broadens one's nature, because its fundamental principle of Universal Brotherhood tears down all barriers between man and man, each of us being ready to look for and recognize the God in the other. It appeals to our sense of justice, for it teaches that we have earned in the *past* our *present*, that in the *future* we shall reap the *now*. It appeals to the practical sense, because it gives one something to *do* in working for others, in mounting step by step that ladder whose topmost round stands in the sun; in a word, transmuting the base metal of our lower nature into the pure gold of spirituality. It appeals to and helps me because, in brief, it teaches that each man is his own Savior.

Los Angeles, Nov. 21st.

HATTIE RANDOLPH.

So much has come to me through Theosophic study that I hardly know where to begin, but I will give its best and most practical lesson.

Theosophy has taught me that whatever position I may be in, there I have placed myself; whatever my work, that work I have given myself to do; whatever path I am treading, that path I have chosen to walk in; and that a true development depends upon recognizing that position, doing well that work, pushing steadily onward over all impediments in the present path, knowing that seeming obstacles are useful aids and instruments for my work.

San Jose.

P. G.

Its bright rays of God-Wisdom have illumined the whole sphere of thought, and revealed the soul of poetry, science, art, and philosophy. Its clear light has shown to me (*a*) my responsibilities as sovereign and priest over the myriad lives forming my complex being, (*b*) my duties as one of the many lives that make the great Man-Humanity, (*c*) my influence through thought upon the world, not only now, but in the far-distant future. Above all, Theosophy has brought to me the blessed consciousness of oneness with God, with Nature, with Humanity, and taught me a little of the meaning of the words, "I and the Father are one."

MARIE A. WALSH.

AROUND THE ZODIAC.

NOV. 22D TO DEC. 21ST.

December 22d the sun enters Capricorn. Here the sun seems to pause a little, then turns northward, bringing to the world a promise of Spring; hence Capricorn is the birth-sign of the Sun Gods. Among Christians this joyous event is celebrated as the birth of Christ.

The Secret Doctrine, Vol. I, page 233, speaks of Capricorn as related to the 5th Hierarchy: "Those mysterious beings whose task it is to inform the empty and ethereal animal form and make of it the Rational Man."

As the house of Saturn, it represents the 4th globe condition. In the physical form, Capricorn rules the knees, which are "the feet of the soul." Among stones, it rules the sardonyx or onyx. The black poppy and nightshade are its plants.

"As the visible sun in yonder sky illumines the moon and other planets and the whole universe, and removes the darkness of night, so the Divine or spiritual Sun that abides in the lotus of human hearts diffuse slight in man, and dissipates the darkness of sin."

"The destroyer of all successes is ill-timed apprehension of danger."

 T. S. ECHOES.

Few official reports have come in, but personal letters report good work and study in the various Branches and Centers.

PORTLAND, OREGON.—Mr. A. R. Reed, of the Willamette Branch, writes that Branch membership is increasing, and that much interest is taken in their meetings.

Chicago Branch T. S. has carried on its usual activities during November.

On Wednesday evenings the "Secret Doctrine" has been the topic for study, and has proved very interesting to many members.

On Sunday evenings free lectures have been given, the topics during the month having been, "The Evolution of the Thinker," "Dreams," and "Cycles." On the 17th of the month Chicago Branch had a very interesting meeting commemorative of the founding of the T. S. There was a musical and literary program, and the feature of the evening was a paper entitled, "The Birth and Evolution of the T. S.," written by Mr. Alexander Fullerton.

NETTIE E. WEEKS, *Secretary.*

Editor MERCURY,

Dear Sir and Brother:—It will no doubt be of interest to the readers of MERCURY to know that the St. Paul Branch of the Theosophical Society, which, while repudiating the action of the Boston Convention, had hitherto refrained from officially giving its adhesion to the newly formed American Branch, has now determined to cast in its fortunes with that Section, and has officially notified Mr. Fullerton of the fact.

We have taken a new room in the Endicott Building, and although comparatively few in numbers, enthusiasm and devotion to the cause are not lacking.

The St. Paul Branch takes this opportunity of greeting all the brethren who have remained true to the principle of brotherhood on which the Society is based.

Faternally,

A. ISAACSON, *Secretary.*

The Australasian Section is rapidly growing in strength, enthusiasm, and numbers. The work of Countess Wachtmeister is bringing most happy results. "Theosophy in Australasia" has the following notice: "During the stay of the Countess Wachtmeister in Sydney, a meeting was held for the admission of new members to the T. S. Sixteen members were admitted."

NOTE.—The paper on Hypnotism begun in this number comes from South Africa. The Johannesburg Branch is quite active. Truly the Theosophic idea girdles the world.

EUROPEAN SECTION.

London Letter.

November 15th, 1895.

Dear Editor:—This month the news of our section is not sensational, but is a record of steady work. Mrs. Besant is still with us, and will deliver four more lectures in London previous to her departure for India on December 6th. Two of the lectures will be delivered in Queen's Hall, Langham Place, on Nov. 24th, and Dec. 18th, the subjects being "The Higher Bodies" and "The Man." I enclose the syllabus of the whole course, as the sub-headings of each subject would form most useful matter for Lodge study, and it may prove helpful to you to have the whole scheme.

THE ASTRAL MAN.

What is the Linga Sharira? The Thought Body. The Astral Senses: Sight—Hearing—Smell. Repercussion—Historic Cases—Phenomena of Witchcraft.

MESMERISM.

Self-suggestion—the creation of a "personal devil." Hypnotism. Magnetism. Telepathy. Crime by proxy.

ASTRAL PHENOMENA.

Visions. Dreams, prophetic, allegorical, etc. Second Sight in the Highlands—its hereditary character. Religious ecstasy.

THE ASTRAL PLANE.

Human and non-human inhabitants. Elementals—Fairies—Gnomes—Brownies—Kelpies. Family Ghosts. The astral perceptions of animals.

SPIRITUALISM—OLD AND NEW.

Mediums—"genuine" and "fraudulent." Spirit Control. The voices of Joan of Arc. St. Joseph of Cupertino—and his aerial flights. Mr. Stainton Moses—Eusapia Palladino—Mrs. Piper.

UNCONSCIOUS SORcery.

Thought currents. Crime as an infectious disease. "Psychological Atmosphere." Epidemics. The "Convulsionnaires." The Salem Witchcraft.

Mrs. Besant will deliver the remaining two lectures at the Blavatsky Lodge, on Nov. 21st, subject "The Growth of the Ego" and on Dec. 5th, "Responsibility." Mrs. Besant was "At Home" on Friday, Nov. 8th, from 4 to 6 p. m., when many members and their friends availed them-

selves of the opportunity of meeting her and asking questions. There will be one more afternoon gathering before Mrs. Besant leaves England.

Mrs. Cooper-Oakley has just returned to Headquarters from visiting the Northern Lodges. She has delivered lectures and held meetings for students and enquirers in Bradford, Harrogate, Leeds, and Manchester, also at the Sheffield Center. In Liverpool, a new Lodge has been formed under the Presidency of J. H. Duffell; it is called the City of Liverpool Lodge.

During the last few weeks we have had a considerable number of applications for membership to the Society from Holland. The Headquarters at Amsterdam, with its able staff of workers, is a center of most valuable work, and Theosophy is increasing steadily among the Dutch people.

From Spain comes the good news that the first volume of the *Secret Doctrine* has been translated into Spanish, and is now in the hands of the publishers; the second volume will be produced in due course. The most hearty congratulations are due to Senors Xifre and Melian, who have accomplished this truly great work between them. It is indeed not only an enormous work, but a proof of great courage and devotion, which can hardly be appreciated except by those who know the difficulties, and even dangers, to which these champions of truth are exposed. Those of us who live in countries where it is possible for all shades of opinion to be promulgated freely and openly, can hardly realize the difficulties which have to be surmounted in a country like Spain, which still groans under the yoke of the Jesuits. A good illustration of this tyranny occurred recently in Barcelona. I give it in order that your readers may in some measure realize the forces against which our members have to work.

The Professor of Zoology and Geology at the University of Barcelona, a young, and very able man, not long elected to the Chair, after a severe competition, has just been deposed because his teaching on the Law of Evolution did not agree with the view held by the Bishop. Not alone the students, but all those residents in Barcelona possessed of the least spark of public spirit, have revolted against this arbitrary action, and all the more because it was the intention to fill the Chair vacated by the young Professor (too learned for the Bishop) by a priest, who would certainly have been of no assistance in spreading the truth amongst the young students.

The depth of feeling aroused by this incident, which at one time threatened to become very serious, shows, on the one hand, the desire of the Spanish people of to-day to shake themselves free of the clerical yoke which has weighed them down for centuries, and on the other hand is a proof of the enormous power still wielded by the Jesuits. The works of Professor D. Odon de Buen, notwithstanding that they have been highly

commended and praised by the Spanish Academy, have been refused by the University of Barcelona in consequence of the bishop being in authority there! This little incident gives a true picture of the liberty (?) in Spain at the present time, and at the same time shows what may be expected by those who have the courage to oppose the reigning fanaticism. While it is true that the Inquisition no longer has its publicly recognized tribunals, it is also equally true that the same powers are exercised with an audacity and impunity which show that the powerful machinery is still in force in Spain.

Greater activity is now being shown amongst the German members than ever before, and arrangements are now in progress with Dr. Goring for the translation of the *Secret Doctrine* into German. It will be an immense boon to our non-English-reading members when they can read H. P. B.'s great work for themselves, instead of being dependent on scraps translated here and there.

At Headquarters, all the winter's work is now organized. The fortnightly Sunday evening meetings were begun on Nov. 10th, and the *Secret Doctrine* class also resumes its fortnightly Saturday meetings. Still another class studies "Astronomy," with Mr. M. A. Moore as teacher. Tuesday evenings are to be given up to this study, which should prove a most valuable help to students of the *Secret Doctrine*.

At a recent meeting of the Blavatsky Lodge Library Committee, it was suggested that a subscription should be taken out for *MERCURY*, in order that the members of the Lodge might hear of the doings in the American Section.

With greetings to our colleagues in America,

Faternally,

L. M. COOPER.

BOOK REVIEWS.

LUCIFER for November is a brilliant and instructive number. "The Watch Tower" eloquently declares that, after twenty years of struggle, treachery, and losses, the Society is full of vitality and is "strong in confidence in the Masters who created it"; it speaks out also for the dumb brethren, regretting goat-sacrifice in Durga-worship in India, and showing kindly understanding of "that pleasant Stoic, the Cat." In "Occult Chemistry," Mrs. Besant describes some psychic investigations into the ultimate elements of the chemical atom of Science; no clue is given as to the manner of this study, and it is hoped these marvelous results will be extended by further study. The accompanying chart shows the oneness of form, and similar manner of evolution on all planes; studied in conjunc-

tion with Mr. Mead's interpretation of Greek myths, the snake-like atom of oxygen (the element of intense activity, and necessary to life), suggests at once the Caduceus of Mercury, the type of procreation, while the spiral motion in the egg shape of the atom is the same as in the Hiranyagarba and the Auric envelope of man.

In a thrilling astral experience, the fact is noticed that the conscious going-out of the thought-body caused "a moment of excruciating pain" to the physical. The strange mechanism of man, and the many forces swaying him, are clearly and thoroughly classified by Mr. Leadbeater in an article on Dreams. Theosophy among the Quietists, a system of Christian Mysticism similar to Raj Yoga, and Pre-existence in early Christian teachings, are interesting.

The VAHAN for November is a valuable number, as it discusses the very interesting subjects of "Sound," "Heaven," and "Prayers for the Dead." This last question brings out some vital points. We quote the following:

"All loving thoughts of the dead assist in breaking up the Kama-rupic shell which retains them in Kama-Loka."—L.

"The value of a prayer is that of a thought, and a prayer, like any thought, creates a form in which is individualized a portion of elemental energy; this form is * * 'an active, beneficent power,' which goes to the person for whose benefit it has been called into existence, and affords that person an aid for which opportunity occurs."—A. B.

THEOSOPHY IN AUSTRALASIA concludes "Purpose of The Theosophical Society," by Mr. B. Keightley. In "Questions and Answers," Prayer is also discussed. The Lotus Circle lesson on Light is very suggestive.

Our Hindu brethren of Madras have a weekly paper called THEOSOPHIC THINKER. The THINKER is well named, and its articles on Sanskrit lore and Vedic Philosophy deserve the attention of all students. In them we find the true Oriental thought and color.

ARYA BALA BODHNI of October has some very good things. "The Building of Character," "Why I Sympathize with the T. S." are to the point. "Is There a God?" shows that the seeming cruelty of Nature is really love. "Spiritual Revival" (finishing chapter) begins with these words: "Earnestly set about to effect spiritual reform; all other reforms will follow in its wake."

ANTAKARANA, a Spanish monthly, Barcelona, is giving a translation of the Bhagavad Gita. Numerous notes explain the strange terms, and readings of difficult passages from the different translations of the Gita enhance

the value of the work. The October number contains the sixth Book, "India, Its Past and Future," by Annie Besant, is a concise and interesting outline of the ideas of the Vedas and Upanishads, with many quotations from the latter works.

Received NOTES AND QUERIES and THE LAMP.

THE WORLD-MYSTERY. By G. R. S. Mead, B. A., M. R. A. S. Theosophical Publishing Society, London.

When we herald a *new* book on Theosophy, we forget that the only *newness* possible is due to the individual mind that filters out for us truths as old as the hills. Hence the value of Mr. Mead's volume—because it is the work of a scholarly Theosophist, a student both of science and of occultism.

The first of the four separate essays fills half the book, and deals with the statement; "the World-Soul is the One Soul of Humanity, which will differ for each soul in proportion to the state of consciousness it has arrived at." First vigorously attacking the Golden Calf of blasphemous familiarity with Deity, it erects a noble and world-wide altar to the unknown God of every religion, raising it on a scaffolding of wonderful extracts from the scriptures of all peoples that prove the Oneness of Truth amid a multitude of symbols. The author begins "with the oldest scriptures of our Aryan race, the Vedas, and the Puranas. Next Taoism, the most mystical of the creeds of the far East; then passes to the Avesta of the Parsis, and so on to Egypt; first quoting from the Zohar and other kabbalistic writings which contain the wisdom of the Chaldeans and a key to the misunderstood scriptures of the Jews. Egypt leads to the wisdom of Hermes and the Gnosis of those who are now known generally as Gnostics; and this leads to a quotation from Paul and some reference to Greek and Roman philosophy." Ideas from the system of Orpheus, the Scandinavian peoples, and Lufism are also identical in meaning.

Can the rarest spiritual thought of to-day utter more tender words than these of the founder of the hoary Chinese Taoism? "Death is to life as going away is to coming. How can we know that to die here is not to be born elsewhere? How can we tell whether, in their eager rush for life, men are not under a delusion? Ah! men know the dreadfulfulness of death; but they do not know its rest. How excellent is it, that from all antiquity Death has been the common lot of men! It is repose for the good man, and a hiding away of the bad. Death is just a going home again. The dead are those who have gone home, while we, who are living are still wanderers."

There is a correct rendition of Paul's *Colossians* (1:12-19) in its real

Gnostic sense, demonstrating that the personal attributes so loudly praised were really names of Æons, impersonal forces of Nature. The author offers this explanation of the passage :

“The identity of every Soul with the Over-Soul has been, is, and will be a fundamental doctrine of the Gnosis. The glorified initiate, the Christ, is the man, who, perfected by the sufferings and consequent experiences of many births, finally becomes at one with the Father, the World-Soul, from which he came forth, and at last arises from the Dead; he, indeed, is the first born, the perfected, self-conscious Mind, or Man, containing in himself the whole divine Creation or Pleroma, for he is one with the hierarchies of spiritual Beings who gave him birth, and instead of being the Microcosm, as when among the Dead, has become the Macrocosm or the World-Soul itself.”

The aim of this labor of intelligent research is “that both the believers in a Personal God and those who refuse to give any attribute to Deity, may find some common ground of agreement in the concept of the World-Soul.”

After a severe dissection of those that say “Theosophy is an enemy of Christ, and a child of that interesting creation of the human brain which is called the Devil, because it destroys *their* dogmas and superstitions.” The eloquent essay closes with this wholesome truth: “But equally so is Theosophy destructive of dogmas and superstitions in Brahminism, or Buddhism, or Taoism, or Mohammedanism, and so to the bigoted externalist of each of these religions, it must be anti-Brahminical, anti-Buddhistic, and so on.”

The search-light of the author’s understanding is flung, in the second essay, on “The Vestures of the Soul,” which will reward close intuitional study. With Gnostic and Kabbalistic keys he unlocks the mystic truths hidden in the Bible, and interprets the symbolic garments of Enock, Nimrod, Joseph and Adam, beginning with “the coats of skin” which covered the spiritual nakedness of our primeval Selves, in the childhood of our present humanity,” and adding as a commentary to Paul’s “first man,” and “second man” in 1 Cor., chapter xiv., the following extract from the Zohar :

“When Adam dwelled in the Garden of Eden he was dressed in the celestial garment, which is a garment of heavenly light. But when he became subject to the wants of this world, what is written? The Elohim made coats of skin unto Adam and to his wife and clothed them.”

This brilliant chapter closes by identifying the Three Transcendent Vestures of the Glorified Christos, according to Gnostic philosophy, with the three Robes of Buddhism as defined in the “Voice of the Silence.”

What is said “as to these Robes woven of Nature Powers—which are really Human Powers, if we would only ‘help Nature and work on with

her'”—opens to the eye of the fearless disciple doors leading to Adeptship.

Growing naturally from the previous teachings, “The Web of Destiny” is of an ethical and philosophical character.

The law of Cause and Effect is traced from the Cosmic plane as stated in the marvelous Stanzas of Dzyan down to the personal Karma of each.

“The web of the universe is woven with the shuttle of divine love—love for all that lives and breathes. * * * But, here in the world of men the shuttle whereby we weave our web of destiny is the shuttle of desire. This is selfishness; a power that concretes, that draws to itself for itself. We weave our webs of destiny from the warp and woof of things of sensation and of matter by means of the shuttle of desire.” The stern fact that this living web “extends beyond matter into the realms of feeling, emotion, volition and mind. Thought is one of the most important substances from which it is woven,” certainly tends to arouse aspiration. The concluding chapter, entitled “True Self-Reliance” is deeply mystical. It opens with an echo from long-dead sages, “That art thou. That is thy Self, none other,” and claims that this creed is not cold, but that “it is truth that transcends enthusiasm, that surpasses all hope, that merges the highest ideal of love into an endless, boundless compassion for all that lives and breathes.”

Every golden sentence quoted from immortal world-scriptures has borne through the ages its message of peace and wisdom and divine love for the struggling souls of humanity and now stands knocking at the door of the heart. If we open to the Shining and Deathless One, then we can sigh in truth: “The knot in the heart is loosed, all doubts are solved, and all deeds (Karma) perish, when a man once sees the vision of that which is both high and low. In the highest golden envelope dwells the passionless, partless one, the Highest. He is the pure Light of all lights, and that they know who know the Self.” (Mundaka-Upanishad.) E. S

“Theosophy in Every Day Life.”

BY THE COUNTESS WACHTMEISTER.

PUBLISHED BY THE SYDNEY BRANCH OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

PAPER,.....15 CTS.

This little book of twenty-nine pages contains hints for Theosophists arranged under headings of the days of the week, intended for every-day guidance, giving quotations from various Theosophical works, and treats, among other things, of the training of the mind and the development of the will by right thought and action. The quotations are very appropriate, and enhance the value of the book to a great extent. It is a guide to self-mastery, and should be in the hands of every Theosophical student.

THE CHILDREN'S CORNER.

[This Department will be devoted exclusively to children; questions and answers from Lotus Circles on Theosophical Subjects are invited and will receive special attention.]

A LOVING CHRISTMAS TO YOU ALL.

CHRISTMAS, the happiest, gladdest feast of all the year, is almost here. All our young people are thinking about Santa Claus, etc., etc. But as MERCURY'S young folks do a great deal of thinking, they will no doubt ask: "What is the meaning of all this? What is the history of Christmas?" So MERCURY has asked Aunt May to answer some of these questions.

At one time, when Peter, Paul, and John taught, and even long after their day, Christians (they were very few then) kept Christmas in spring time. Was not that queer? But in the third century, 1500 years ago, it was decided to keep Christmas on the 25th of December. There was no chance in this decree; the good Law ordered it aright. The Law knew the true meaning of this Christ-birth, and placed it on the 25th of December, when the sun begins its return journey northward. This period had always been a time of rejoicing with many different peoples as the Birthday of the Sun Gods. And thus the birth of Christ became one with the birth of the sun. We know that the Christ Principle is our true Sun, whose love-light makes us happy, strong, and beautiful. Let Christ be born in every heart, then love and peace will bless the world.

The Sun-feast of Christmas became the merriest feast of the year, especially in the northern countries where dwelt the numerous German peoples. They made it a home festival. The children and the poor were made happy by gifts; the houses were brightened with green boughs and gay berries. In the cold North, where snow covers the flowers, and green leaves give place to icicles during the bleak December days, the fir, the holly, and mistletoe have grown to be the true Christmas decorations. There is a beautiful story about the mistletoe that will just do for next month.

Now comes Santa Claus, the old darling, who is the American Knight Rupert. "Who is Knight Rupert?" you ask. Well,

Knight Rupert is the soul of good St. Nicholas that is ever "marching on," like the soul of John Brown. St. Nicholas lived many centuries ago, and every Christmas eve it was his wont to go round to the homes of the poor and the forsaken and slip in some nice present, unseen and unheard. Sometimes, even, he gave, in this simple way, a marriage portion to some poor, but worthy maiden. But St. Nicholas went to Devachan one day and there was mourning in the land. However, his soulful kindness entered into the hearts of many, and presents were still dropped into shoes, in stockings, on the pillows, by the unseen Knight Rupert, or our own Santa Claus.

Alas, the good old yule-tide bids fair to become mere selfish show. Our Chinese brothers, in wonder at our strange, restless, showy way of giving, call it "Catch-much-a-day."

Dear young friends, you can change this selfishness into Altruism. Begin by making some sad heart glad on Christmas day.

AUNT MAY.

KRISHNA.

Let us now unfold our Thought-wings and speed our way through the thought world (some call it Astral World) to Krishna's time. It is many thousands of years behind us; we won't say just how many. It is not necessary to know the exact date; for when we travel on Thought-wings, it is all sufficient to think clearly of the person or the event we want to find, and lo! we are there. Is it not convenient? So we will think ourselves at that seemingly far distant yesterday when the blessed Vishnu saved the world and its children under the form and name of Krishna.

The earth-people of that time, our ancestors, perhaps our very selves; who knows? It sounds queer doesn't it, but may it not be possible? They were earth-people, were they not? So are we. Well, they or we, whichever it may be, were in a sad plight. A cruel, rapacious, tyrannical being, Kansa by name, had enslaved the people. Life became a long misery, even little children wept because they lived. Vishnu seemed to have forgotten his people; but he had not forgotten them; he was waiting for the right time to come. The gods always do everything just at the

right time, never a moment too early or late. It is only foolish mortals who work at wrong times and play at wrong times, thus getting out of time with destiny, out of tune with themselves; and then they cry, "Failure, Failure!" But we are getting into by-paths, a very easy matter; for traveling in a straight line is very difficult in the Thought World.

But now, we must prepare to scale Mount Meru, where dwells the Preserver, Vishnu, with his beautiful consort, Lakshmi. The Blessed Ones are sorrowful. Lakshmi's eyes are tear-dimmed, as she turns to her august spouse and thus makes plaint:

"My beloved, it is in vain that I make the fields rich in harvest; that I bring wealth from the sea, from the mountain caves; that I heap the blessings of abundance upon the earth! Look, how the earth-people suffer. They starve in the midst of the plenty; they are slaves, though born to freedom; and their lives go out in agony in spite of all I do. Vishnu, arise, help our people!"

Vishnu sighed, for he loved the earth and its children. Had he not proved his love by leaving his heavenly home seven times in order to help the world? He looked earthward. Heavy cloud masses of dark red, streaked with purple, hid the earth; and as they surged and tossed like angry waves, they moaned and shrieked, "Vishnu, help!" But Vishnu was powerless. Even he, a god, could not make a pathway through that horrible sea of selfish thought, of cruel hate, and despair. He must wait until some of earth's children helped him to descend by making a pathway.

While he looked there broke through the surging gloom a shaft of soft, tremulous light, golden light, rose flushed. Steadily it rose far, far above the darkness; it widened out into a path of radiance that spanned the ether and rested at last on the holy mount; it floated into heaven; it enfolded Vishnu's throne; it filled the blest abode with sweet fragrance. The lovely light rose and fell in rhythmic cadence; then it took voice and sang in plaintive, tender tone:

"Vishnu, our loved one,
Come, save thy loved ones,
Come for love's sake."

Vishnu smiled, and joy beamed in Lakshmi's eyes, for the path to earth was made. Some of earth's children had found the secret. That path of song, perfume and light by which mortals reach the gods, by which the gods descend to earth, was made; yes, and it is always made by loving, helpful, earnest, unselfish thought and persistent, unselfish, active will, the will to be good, to do good, to reach God. Such thought and will make prayer.

"Vishnu, we love you,
Come for love's sake."

And ever and always Vishnu answers, as he answered in that long-ago time:

"For love's sake, I come,
The world to save."

Along that tuneful, radiant path of holy, beautiful thoughts, Vishnu sped and found himself in the pretty cottage of Vasudeva and Devaki, and there he became the baby Krishna.

Vasudeva and Devaki were a young couple of royal blood and truly royal hearts. They were as loving, as unselfish, as pure as their uncle King Kansa was cruel, selfish and wicked. King Kansa hated Devaki, and for some time he kept her shut up in a horrid dungeon; for some magician had told him that Devaki's son would one day destroy him and his wicked power. Vasudeva never slept day nor night until he had released his beloved Devaki from the dungeon; then the young people fled from Kansa's Court and found a refuge in the little cottage on a secluded hillside, where Vishnu found them. Vasudeva and Devaki mourned very much over the wretched condition of the world. They wanted to help it in some way; but what could they do, poor young things, against a mighty king and magician such as Kansa?

"If only Vishnu would come to save the world," said Vasudeva.

"We can bring him down, perhaps," replied Devaki.

"But where shall we find the sacrifices? Why, we do not dare go to the temple, and the holy men have been all banished."

"My dear husband, the sacrifices shall be ourselves, our desires, our thoughts; the fire shall be loving will. Do not the books say that thought and will made the world?"

"So the books say, Devaki."

"Then let us think and will the Lord Vishnu to come to earth, that the people may no longer groan in misery."

“Devaki, the devas have whispered to you this beautiful idea. We will do it.”

Thus it came about that the young people instead of spending time in search of amusement, or in regrets for their lost court-life, or in wishing that things were not as they were, went to work to think the world into happiness. They spent hours painting thought-pictures of a world of good, loving, unselfish, free, happy people. As you know, thought-pictures become life-pictures; hence, it is not surprising that this devoted young couple made that pathway of light to Mount Meru, and that they *did* bring Vishnu down to save the world for the eighth time. And was it not natural that he should appear as their son, their wonderful son, Krishna?

While little Krishna (who, by the way, was very dark) lay in his cradle, strange rumors went from place to place. Everybody felt that something was going to happen. It was the Devas (angels) who whispered this one and that one; “Help is coming, for the Blessed One is here.” At last King Kansa heard that Vasudeva and Devaki had a son, the son that the oracle said would one day dethrone him. Then he made up his mind that Krishna should not live. He sent gypsies to steal him; he sent soldiers to kill him; he laid snares for both Krishna and Krishna’s parents; but even a Kansa could not overcome Vishnu. No matter how much Kansa plotted and schemed, none of his plots or schemes injured Krishna.

Kansa, out of patience, determined on a very cruel deed. He ordered that all the male children of Krishna’s age should be put to death.

There was another king named Herod who did a like cruel deed, once upon a time, Yes, and there was the wicked Pharaoh of the time of Moses. Do you suppose that these kings did have the baby boys put to death, or is there another meaning to the story? However, the records say that Devaki and Krishna were guarded by Devas, and escaped the fate intended for them by Kansa.

Krishna, the dark, some say that he was dark blue in color, grew apace in gentleness and beauty. The poor and the sick

loved him, for he brought them gifts of contentment and health. Many a sorrowing mother brought her suffering babe to be healed by the soft touch of Krishna's hand. In time, the little cottage on the hill-side became a sacred place where hundreds came to worship the heavenly child. Indra, the god of the lower heaven, became jealous of the homage given to Krishna. Indra was not a strong, powerful deity, he often felt his inferiority, and therefore gave way to jealousy and envy. Indra was a friend of Kansa's, and the latter whispered to Indra that the boy god who could not be killed was rather a dangerous being, and that some day, perhaps, this child who defied Kansa might defy Indra. Then Indra, who always was afraid of losing his throne, grew much alarmed. Fear intensified his jealousy, and he determined to destroy his rival.

So he sent upon the country where Krishna lived a terrific storm of rain, of hail, of thunder and of lightning. The oldest inhabitant—and people lived to be very old in those days—did not remember anything like it. Villages were swept out of existence, forests uprooted, and as for the people, no one ever knew how many were killed.

Krishna's followers ran to him as their place of refuge, and implored the child to save them. The boy lifted his hands in command, made a holy sign, moved his little finger, when, presto! a high mountain upheaved itself far, far above the storm, above Indra's abode, and lifted into safety Krishna's home and all his followers.

Some wise folk say that the little finger is MERCURY's finger, and MERCURY is Thought. Now think about that, then, perhaps, the story of the heaven-reaching mountain heaved up by the twirl of Krishna's little finger may not be so foolish after all.

The mountain was named Govenden, and it became the home of art, poetry, and music, like unto the famous Mount Parnassus.

Krishna's next exploit was the killing of a huge serpent that poisoned the streams from which the people drank.

But at last came the one great day for which Vishnu had descended to the earth—the day when in the fullness of time Kansa was to meet his merited doom. Krishna stood on the

threshold of manhood, young, handsome, strong, a hero of heroes. The two came face to face, the tyrant king and the mighty Preserver. Kansa, with crown and scepter, and clothed with pomp, his councilors on either side, his army at hand ready to obey his signal. Krishna, alone, with no weapons save his trusty bow and its far-speeding arrows. But an awful majesty descends upon Krishna; his brow grows awesome, and the glance of his eye is the lightning flash. He looks at Kansa, who immediately trembles and grows weak. The king tries to raise his scepter as a sign to his soldiers to destroy Krishna, but his arm falls powerless at his side. Krishna raises his hand with a threatening gesture, and scathes the wicked one with another glance. The king shrinks into himself, down fall crown and scepter; his councilors turn and flee; his soldiers sink to the earth in dread. Then Krishna bids the tyrant magician stand forth and receive his death sentence. Like a beaten coward, Kansa crawls forward. He is palsied with an awful fear; the weight of centuries of sin press him down and crush him. Krishna reads the awful record of a life spent in selfish deeds, of power used to make others miserable. The air grows dark; there's a sound of a speeding bolt; Kansa is dead to the earth. His people are free. Krishna, the Deliverer, all hail!!

Then do you suppose that Krishna becomes king? No, indeed! He becomes a teacher. He shows the people how to till the earth, how to tend their cattle; he becomes the gentle Govinda.

In the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna is the soul's charioteer and teacher.

And now, dear young friends, who is Krishna, Vishnu's eighth avatar? Who is Kansa? Are they myths or truths ever with us?

Let us discover the secret of Krishna, the Deliverer. All hail!

MARIE A. WALSH.

The essence of lying is in deception, not in words; a lie may be told by silence, by equivocation, by the accent on a syllable, by a glance of the eye attaching a peculiar meaning to a sentence; and all these kinds of lies are worse and baser by many degrees than a lie plainly worded.—*Ruskin*.

THE SONG of the SEA.

A merry band of children played on the sands. Some chased the waves of the ebbing tide; some gathered foam-bubbles; some sought shells, sea-anemones and other wonders of the waters. And this frolicsome band was Aunt May's Lotus Circle. Wasn't it a queer one? For the children were not on any picnic—not a bit of it—it was their Sunday meeting. This Lotus Circle had no rooms, no books, no set exercises. Sometimes the Circle met in a little grove of cedars and pines, the last remnants of a forest; on wet Sundays the children took refuge in Aunt May's little parlor. This day they are on the sands to hear what the sea has to say to them.

Aunt May seated herself in a sheltered nook, and there, one by one, came the children with their newly found treasures; all eager, to tell their discoveries, and to ask questions.

"How restless it is, coming, going, up and down, up and down! What makes it move so?"

AUNT MAY.—"What makes us move?"

"'Cause we're alive. The sea ain't alive."

A. M.—"Isn't it? How do you know it is not alive? It is pretty active."

"Does it not ever keep quiet—when it is asleep? The sleeping sea, that comes in one of my pieces."

A. M.—"Are we perfectly quiet when we are asleep?"

"I'm quiet, but sissy there walks in her sleep some. Then some folks snore."

A. M.—"So nothing moves within us when we sleep?"

"Why yes, we breathe or we couldn't live. Breathing is moving."

A. M.—"Let us have some breathing exercises and watch the sea while we're going through them." The children inhale and exhale for a minute or so; then several voices exclaim: "It's the same, just the same; the sea breathes, it breathes."

A. M.—"And when you get very excited how do you breathe?"

"Ever, ever so quick; the breaths come and go."

"That's just how the sea does when it gets angry. Look at it now."

Big Boy.—"The waves are made by the rubbing motion of the wind on the water. That's what books say."

A. M.—“What’s the wind?”

“Air moving.”

A. M.—“And what do we breathe?”

Small Girl.—“Air. I know; the wind is the quick breathing of the sea when it gets angry. Isn’t it, now?”

A laugh greets this remark. Then Aunt May asks if any one had learned the verses she had given them a week before.

“Yes, yes. One is from Genesis: ‘The spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.’”

A. M.—“The other is also from Genesis: ‘Breathed into man the breath of life; and man became a living soul.’”

BIG GIRL.—“There, I see it now! Air is breath, and breath is life; and life is soul, and soul belongs to the Spirit of God. So the Spirit of God does move over the face of the waters; it is breath. We were reading in class the other day that ‘the king of the waters is lord of the strength and flow of life.’ Teacher asked us to copy the quotation, because it is so beautiful.”

A. M.—“It is beautiful, and that life is the Breathing of the Eternal One. And the sea is the most beautiful picture of that Breath; ever rising and falling in crest and hollow; ever coming and going, yet ever the same; keep the picture in your mind, dear children. Think of the breath and voice of the waters, for we have only begun to understand this Song of the Sea.”

“If any one worshipping with faith desire to reverence any personage, I make that faith of his constant. Gifted with such faith, he seeks the propitiation of that personage, and from him receives the pleasant object of his desires, which in reality were directed by me alone. But the reward of these little-minded men is finite. They who sacrifice to the gods, go to the gods. They who worship me, come to me.” —*Bhagavad Gita.*

To control your mind (Manas), speech (Vak), and body (Kaya), does not mean to be thoughtless, silent, or inactive, like beasts and trees; but, instead of thinking what is evil, speaking untruth, and doing harm to others, they should be applied to good thoughts, good speech, and good deeds. —*Vairagasataka.*

AIDS.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS IN NOVEMBER NUMBER.

13.—Have you not heard, sometimes, a little voice saying right within your heart, "That is wrong", or "That is right"? Certainly you have. Well, that voice is the voice of the Higher Self, the Watcher. It is the voice of God, the only God we know. The Higher Self sees every act, yes, every thought; therefore, it is quite true that God sees all. But God is not an impossible Being, reached somewhere in the sky on a big throne. It is a something within each one and of which each one is a part. It is the Sun and we are the beams of that Sun. Yes, God sees and Karma judges.

14, 15.—The word deva comes from a Sanskrit root, meaning "to shine," and Devas are beings living in the shining ethers, or the invisible worlds. Oriental stories are full of these ethereal beings who are sometimes good and sometimes anything but good. Peris are of the deva race, so are angels. But the real meaning of the term Angel is "Messenger." Our thoughts when messengers of love, of help, are good angels. Unkind thoughts are bad angels. Every one of us should think loving, helpful thoughts, with all our strength, with all our might, so as to surround ourselves with bright angels. We cannot begin too soon.

NEW QUESTIONS.

- 16.—What makes the plants grow?
 17.—What are stars?
 18.—Why do we breathe?
 19.—Should children say their prayers?

 OBITUARY.

Mrs. M. Watson Morris, of San Francisco, Cal., closed this incarnation December 11th, and her remains were cremated the afternoon of December 13th. A large number of F. T. S. were present at the cremation, and some very appropriate remarks were made by Miss Marie A. Walsh, before the body was committed to the fire. Mrs. Morris has been a member of the Theosophical Society for some years, and quite recently became a member of the Golden Gate Lodge, in which branch she took quite an interest, and will be greatly missed by her numerous friends.