

©  
MADAME BLAVATSKY

AND

HER "THEOSOPHY"

A STUDY

BY

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"If there are no Mahatmas, the Theosophical Society is an absurdity."—MRS.  
BESANT (*Lucifer*, December 15th, 1890)

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## PREFACE

IN the *Revue des Deux Mondes* for July, 1888, Mr. Émile Burnouf, the eminent Sanskrit scholar, has an article entitled *Le Bouddhisme en Occident*, which deals in flattering terms with Madame Blavatsky's "theosophy."

"This creed," he says, "has grown with astounding rapidity. In 1876, the Theosophical Society had but one branch. It had 104 in 1884, 121 in 1885, 134 in 1886, to-day it has 158. The branch in Paris dates from last year. Of the 134 centres, 96 are in India. The others are spread over the globe, in Ceylon, in Burmah, Australia, Africa, in the United States, in England, Scotland, Ireland, in Greece, in Germany, in France. The French 'Society of Isis,' though recent, possesses many distinguished names (p. 368)."

But since this article appeared in the leading review of Europe the progress of the society has been still more remarkable if we may trust the list of "charters" published in the *Theosophist* for December, 1891. In 1888 the society had 179 centres. In 1890 it had 241 centres. In 1891 it had 279 branch societies.

This is a great success; and it is to be confessed that in other countries besides France "distinguished names" are quoted in connection with the society. Messrs. Crookes, Myers, and Gurney took an interest in it. Mr. Edward Maitland, a man of genius, the author of the "Pilgrim and the Shrine," joined it, together with Mr. Sinnett and Dr. Hartmann, able writers. Professor Max Müller has given advice to Colonel Olcott on the subject of Oriental translations, and borne testimony to the good work that in that direction "theosophy" has accomplished. And Mr. Gladstone has done this "substitute for a religion" the signal honour of giving it and Mrs. Besant, its chief, a long theological article in the *Nineteenth Century*, that waxwork gallery of the notabilities of the hour.

But a more important conquest was made. Mrs. Besant is a woman of singular integrity and ability. She has brought to the rescue of the society her unrivalled platform eloquence. To show how important theosophy is growing, I think I cannot do better than quote from the *Daily Chronicle* of April 7th, 1894, an account of an interview with this lady on her return from India.

"Late on Thursday evening Mrs. Besant reached her home at Avenue Road, Regent's Park, after nearly five months' lecturing tour in India and Ceylon, where she has been expounding to the Buddhists their own faith. The gift of lucid speech, which has placed Mrs. Besant in the front rank of women orators, has made her reception amongst all classes of people in India one of enthusiastic appreciation. Triumphal arches, unceasing garlanding, and incessant rose-sprinkling have attended her journeyings about. The people have heard her gladly, and priests and philosophers have literally sat at her feet. At Adyar, for many days in succession, she sat in the hall receiving and answering questions. She has aroused the leaders of Indian society to an interest in their ancient institutions and religion never before manifested.

"Shortly after her arrival yesterday morning she was kind enough," says a *Chronicle* interviewer, "to give me an audience. I found her seated in her study, looking very picturesque in a simple Tussock dress, with an Indian shawl arranged gracefully over one shoulder and around her waist. An Indian servant, in native head-dress, was in attendance. Mrs. Besant's hair is now silvery white, and her face has a fuller contour than of yore, and a deeper and more introspective expression.

"Would you explain the object of your Indian tour, Mrs. Besant?"

"I have travelled on behalf of the Theosophical Society, and in company with its president, Colonel Olcott. All the arrangements were made by the Indian section of the society. My object has been to show to the Hindus that theosophy is identical with the teachings of their own scriptures, and that Madame Blavatsky had the special mission of bringing back to India the knowledge which it had itself lost, and then of spreading that knowledge through the world. Her claim, which I have supported, was that theosophy was the underlying



truth of every religion, and that the ancient Hindu scriptures contained the fullest presentment ever made public. I have endeavoured to justify that position in India by proving every point of theosophical teaching by quotations from the Hindu scriptures.

“In towns where the population was mixed in faith, I used the scriptures of the Parsees, Christians, and Mohammedans, and in Ceylon, where the population was Buddhist, I used the Buddhist scriptures. The enormous majority of my lectures were delivered to almost entirely Hindu audiences. I confined myself to the Hindu scriptures, and in all cases I stated that I regarded those scriptures and the Hindu religion as the origin of all other scriptures and all other religions. This was the position learned from Madame Blavatsky, and which I have held since I joined the Theosophical Society.’

“‘How was your teaching received by the people of India?’

“‘Everywhere I met with enthusiastic receptions. The Pundits, or spiritual teachers, gave me the warmest welcome, and continually expressed their extreme pleasure at this justification of Hinduism before the world, as the source of all great religions and philosophies.’

“‘Did they not seek to test your knowledge, Mrs. Besant?’

“‘Yes; the learned Brahmins would come to me with obscure passages and allegories from the sacred writings, asking for interpretation. My answers were based upon the teachings which I have myself received from my Master, one of the great Eastern teachers, to whom I was led by Madame Blavatsky. It is this teaching which enabled me to deal with the learned and spiritual questioners who came to me with their problems. I was able to show them that there really was attainable a secret knowledge which threw light upon the obscurities of their own scriptures. I found no one who was inclined to deny the existence of such knowledge, but I found many who feared that it was entirely lost, and who rejoiced at this definite proof that it was still within reach.’

“But Anglo-Indian society had diverted itself with many funny stories about Mrs. Besant. One was that on board the steamer coming home she had dined apart for fear of losing caste.

“‘What truth is there, Mrs. Besant, in the statement that you have embraced Hinduism?’

“‘There is no truth in the statement as made, but it is true, as I

have already explained, that I regard Hinduism as the most ancient of all religions, and as containing more fully than any other the spiritual truths named theosophy, in modern times. Theosophy is the ancient Brahma Vidyâ of India. Of this, Hinduism is the earliest and best exoteric presentment. Exoterically, therefore, I am a Hindu in my religion and in my philosophy, but this was as true when I went to India as it is true now. There is absolutely no change in my position. It was just because I was Hindu in religion and philosophy that I was given the mission of recalling to the modern Hindus the real grandeur and sublimity of their religion. This could not have been done as effectively by any one who was not at one with them in the broad outlines of religious faith. To the occultist the ceremonials of the Hindu religion are full of significance, for they are all based on the experimental knowledge of the existence and of the powers of spiritual intelligences. As a philosophy intellectually accepted, theosophy may remain apart from all religious faiths, but regarded from the spiritual side—if devotion is to form any part of the life—the theosophist will use the religion most adapted to his own nature. In my own case that religion is Hinduism in its ancient and pure form.'"

I will make one other quotation, for some of the music by and by may be in a different key. The following eloquent tribute is from *Borderland* (October 15th).

"If everything be true that Dr. Hodgson and the Psychical Research Society say about her, it only heightens the mystery, and adds to the marvel of the influence which Madame Blavatsky undoubtedly has exercised, and is exercising, at the present moment. For the most irate of the sceptics cannot deny, and will not dispute, the fact that the Theosophical Society exists, that it is far and away the most influential of all the associations which have endeavoured to popularise occultism, and that its influence is, at the present time, felt far and wide in many lands, and in many churches. The number of pledged theosophists may be few, although it is probably greater than most people imagine. But the theosophical ideas are subtly penetrating the minds of multitudes who know nothing about theosophy, and are

profoundly ignorant of all the controversies which have raged round Madame Blavatsky.

"This is eminently the case with the doctrine of reincarnation, and with the altered estimate which the average man is beginning to form of the mystic teachers and seers of India. Reincarnation may or may not be true. Whether true or false, it has, until the last decade, been almost unthinkable by the average Western. This is no longer the case. Multitudes who still reject it as unproved have learned to recognise its value as a hypothesis explaining many of the mysteries of human life. A few admit that there is nothing in reincarnation antagonistic to the doctrine of Christ, and that it is quite possible to hold firmly all the great verities of the Christian revelation, without rejecting the belief that the life of the individual, upon which judgment will be passed at the Great Assize, is not necessarily confined to the acts done between the cradle and the grave, but may be an existence of which such a period is but one chapter in the book of life. Altogether apart from the question of the actual truth of the doctrine, it is indisputable that the sympathetic recognition of the possibility of reincarnation has widened the range of popular thought, and infused into religious speculation some much-needed charity. And this, which is unquestionably a great achievement, will ever be associated with the name of Madame Blavatsky.

"Still more remarkable has been the success with which this remarkable woman has succeeded in driving into the somewhat wooden head of the Anglo-Saxon the conviction—long ago arrived at by a select circle of students and Orientalists, of whom Professor Max Müller may be said to be the most distinguished living representative—that the East is, in matters of religious and metaphysical speculation, at least entitled to claim as much respect as the West. That indeed is stating it very mildly. 'The snub-nosed Saxons,' as Disraeli used to love to describe the race which made him Prime Minister, are learning somewhat of humility and self-abasement before the races whom, by use of material force, they have reduced to vassalage.

"Down to quite recent times the average idea of the average Englishman—notwithstanding all the books of all our pundits—has been that the Hindoos were benighted and ignorant pagans, whom it was charity to subdue, and a Christian duty to attempt to convert. To-day, even

the man in the street has some faint glimmerings of the truth that these Asiatics whom he despises are, in some respects, able to give him points, and still leave him far behind. The Eastern sage who told Professor Hensoldt that the West studied the stomach, whereas the East studied the soul, expressed strongly a truth which our people are only beginning to assimilate. We are learning at last to respect the Asiatics, and in many things to sit at their feet. And in this great transformation, Madame Blavatsky again figures as the leading thaumaturgist. She and those whom she trained have bridged the chasm between the materialism of the West and the occultism and metaphysics of the East. They have extended the pale of human brotherhood, and have compelled us to think at least of a conception of an all-embracing religion, with wider bases than those of which the reunionists of Christendom have hitherto dreamed."

It seems to me that the most successful creed-maker of the last three hundred years deserves some serious notice. I propose to sketch Madame Blavatsky and her work, using chiefly the testimony of her enthusiasts. I shall have to inquire—

1. Whether there are any Mahatmas?
2. Whether we have their teaching, and, if so, what is that teaching?

In this task I propose to leave out as much as possible the private character of the lady as far as regards sex relations. The authenticity, or non-authenticity, of her "miracles" is plainly too vital to be passed over.

But in its ultimate the real inquiry before us is not so much why Madame Blavatsky failed at times, but how it was she achieved her astonishing success. With the theosophists, the 8th May, the day of her decease, is now called "White Lotus Day," and, according to the terms of her will, a reading takes place at each of the 279 "centres." The works thus honoured are the "Bhagavad Gita" and Sir Edwin Arnold's "Light of Asia."

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# MADAME BLAVATSKY.

## CHAPTER I.

### TIBET.

MADemoiselle HELENA PETROVNA HAHN was born at Ekaterinoslow, in the south of Russia, in 1831. She is described as being what is called mediumistic from her earliest youth. She was more in the company of phantom "hunchbacks" and Roussalkas (water sprites) than of flesh and blood playmates. Mr. Sinnett argues from this that the Mahatmas of Tibet put themselves in communication with the young girl from her very earliest childhood. But an alternative theory, of course, would be that the "Masters" (Sinnett, "Life of Madame Blavatsky," p. 24) were never anything more than the spooks or spirit guides of a medium.

On the 7th July, 1848, Mademoiselle Hahn married General Blavatsky, a gentleman "nearer seventy than sixty." With a humour that developed early she called her husband a "plumeless raven." For three months they lived together, but not as husband and wife, and then she left him, Mr. Sinnett tells us.

If we wish to study a given religion, say Islam, we must begin with a picture of the Founder as he appeared to his disciples. We must study his biography, his teachings. We must examine the text of his Bible and see what the "apologists" have to say before we allow the "critical school" to cut in. From October, 1848, to May, 1857, comes a gap in the Russian lady's existence. During these years she is said to have visited Tibet and learnt the secrets of the Mahatmas.

"After a course of occult study, carried on for seven years in a Himalayan retreat, Madame Blavatsky," says Mr. Sinnett ("Occult World," p. 24), "returned to the world." A seven years' probation, he also tells us, is considered quite necessary before any secrets are divulged to the *chela*. ("Occult World," p. 17.) Madame Blavatsky confirms him here. In the journal called *Light* (August 9th, 1884) she wrote thus:—"I will tell him (a correspondent) also that I have lived in different periods in Little Tibet and Great Tibet, and these combined periods form more than seven years."

But if this gap of eight years is very important, it is a little unfortunate that the school of the apologists have not given us very clear details about it. She went to "Egypt, Greece, and other parts of Eastern Europe." At Paris "a famous mesmerist, still living as I write," says Mr. Sinnett, "though an old man now, discovered her wonderful psychic gifts, and was very eager to retain her under his control as a sensitive. But the chains had not yet been forged that could make her a prisoner. And she quitted Paris precipitately to escape this influence. She went over to London and passed some time in company with an old Russian lady of her acquaintance, the Countess B—, at Mivart's Hotel."

The visit to Paris is dated, according to conjecture, at about a year after her leaving her husband's house, but she kept no diary, and "at this distance of time can give no very connected story of her complicated wanderings" (p. 60). Mr. Sinnett more than once apologises for his vagueness, but this is unfortunate, as it gives an opening to the critical school. She went to New Orleans and studied black magic with the Voodoos. In the year 1851 she was in Paris (p. 62), but this is giving her very little time for her "Course of occult study carried on for seven years in a Himalayan retreat."

In the same year (Olcott, "People from the Other World," p. 320) she passed the summer at Daratschi Tchag, an Armenian place of summer resort in the plain of Mount "Ararat." Her husband, being Vice-Governor of Erivan, had a bodyguard of 50 Khourid warriors, amongst whom one of the strongest and bravest, named Safar Ali Bek



was detailed as the lady's personal escort. In 1875 this Khourd, having died, came to her at a séance in America, but this little anecdote scarcely harmonises with the statement made by Mr. Sinnett, that she fled from her husband for good and all in the month of October, 1848.

And in a short time the dates given to us by Mr. Sinnett begin to perplex us still more. It is recorded that in 1855 Madame Blavatsky went to India, and in the month of September, 1856, she passed into Tibet for the first time, being smuggled in "in an appropriate disguise" by a solitary Shaman, her "sole protector in these dreary wastes." It is added that she came out again, and left India a short time before the Indian Mutiny broke out in 1857. This makes at most seven months instead of seven years.

For her trip to Tibet she started from Kashmir with "the Brothers N—," and an ex-Lutheran minister, Mr. K—. The Brothers N— were promptly sent back at the frontier, and the ex-Lutheran clergyman was arrested by fever, but not before he had witnessed a striking miracle.

Travellers from Tibet have told us that certain Lamas, to benefit humanity, abstain from Nirvâna, and on their deathbed announce to their disciples that they will be re-born in such and such a spot. "At the death of one of these, the disciples repair to the place he has indicated and search for a newly-born child which bears the sacred marks, and is for other reasons the most probable incarnation of the departed saint. Having found the child, they leave him with his mother till he is four years old. Then they return, bringing with them a quantity of praying books, rosaries, praying wheels, bells, and other priestly articles, amongst which are those which belonged to the late incarnation. Then the child has to prove that he is the new incarnation by recognising the property that was his, and by relating reminiscences of his past" ("Where Three Empires meet," E. F. Knight, c. viii.).

It is further added that this incarnating Lama is called a "skooshok," and that only four of them exist in Ladak. But if we are to believe Madame Blavatsky, ordinary travellers can see these and greater miracles, even where no Lama has died.

"About four days' journey from Islamabad, at an insignificant mud village, whose only redeeming feature was its magnificent lake, we stopped for a few days' rest." A native of Russia, a Shaman of Siberia, was of the party, and he told them that a large party of "Lamaic saints" on pilgrimage to various shrines, had taken up their abode in a cave temple near." The Buddhist Trinity (Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha) were travelling with the party, a fact that gave the Bhikshus the power of working "miracles." The Lutheran minister had plainly a little of the old Adam in him, for this statement seemed to have fired his old Protestant hatred of miracles. He determined to expose these cheats, and in consequence paid a visit to the Pase Budhu, the chief of these Lamaic saints, and demanded to see the process of a "re-incarnation" of "Buddha" in the body of a little child. This demand was naturally refused, as it is not stated that any old Lama had died, or that, in fact, any old Lama was within an hundred miles of the place. But Madame Blavatsky produced an A-yu from her pocket, and the Lamaic saints at once became her devoted servants. An A-yu is a talisman of cornelian with a triangle engraved upon it. "An infant of three or four months was procured from its mother, a poor woman of the neighbourhood," and the magical processes began :—

"Suddenly we saw the child not raise itself, but violently jerked, as it were, into a sitting posture. A few more jerks, and then like an automaton set in motion by concealed wires, the four months' baby stood upon its feet. Not a hand had been outstretched, not a motion made, nor a word spoken, and yet here was a baby in arms standing as firm as a man."

Here the testimony of the sceptical Mr. K—— is cited :—

"The baby turned his head and looked at me with an expression of intelligence that was simply awful. It sent a chill through me. The miraculous creature, as I *fancied*, making two steps towards me, resumed his sitting posture, and without removing his eyes from mine, repeated sentence by sentence, in what I supposed to be Tibetan language, the very words which I had been told in advance are commonly spoken at the incarnations of Buddha, beginning

with, I am Buddha! I am the old Lama! I am his spirit in a new body, etc." ("Isis Unveiled," ii., p. 602).

But if Mr. K—— knew no Tibetan language, how did he know that this is what the baby said? Also, to what "old Lama" was the infant alluding? Islamabad is in Kashmir, which is peopled chiefly by Hindoos. There are no "skookshoks" within at least a six weeks' journey. We will make some more quotations:—

"Many of the lamaseries contain schools of magic, but the most celebrated is the collegiate monastery of the Shukt, where there are over 30,000 monks attached to it, the lamasery forming quite a little city. Some of the female nuns possess marvellous psychological powers" ("Isis," vol. ii., p. 609).

She says also that the real religion of Buddha is not to be judged by the fetishism of some of his followers in Siam and Burmah:—

"It is in the chief lamaseries of Mongolia and Tibet that it has taken refuge, and here Shamanism, if so we may call it, is practised to the utmost limits of intercourse allowed between man and 'spirit.' The religion of the Lamas has faithfully preserved the primitive science of *magic*, and produces as great feats now as in the days of Kublai Khan. . . . At Buddha-lla, or rather Folt-lla (Buddha's mount), in the most important of the many thousand lamaseries of that country, the sceptre of the Bodhhisgat (*sic*) is seen floating unsupported in the air, and its motions regulate the actions of the community. Whenever a Lama is called to account in the presence of the superior of the monastery, he knows beforehand it is useless for him to tell an untruth. The 'regulator of justice' (the sceptre) is there, and its waving motion, either approbatory or otherwise, decides instantaneously and unerringly the question of his guilt" ("Isis," vol. ii., p. 616).

"The lives of these holymen, miscalled idle vagrants, cheating beggars, who are supposed to pass their existence in preying upon the easy credulity of their victims, are miracles in themselves. Miracles because they show what a determined will and a perfect purity of life and purpose are able to accomplish, and to what degree of preternatural asceticism a human body can be subjected, and yet live and reach a

ripe old age. At Bras-s-Pungs, the Mongolian college, where over three hundred magicians (*sorciers*, as the French missionaries call them) teach about twice as many pupils, from twelve to twenty, the latter have many years to wait for their final initiation. Not one in a hundred reaches the highest goal" ("Isis," vol. ii., p. 617).

The Buddhist priests dance at times:—

"As in the instances of Corybantic and Bacchantic fury among the ancient Greeks, the spiritual crisis of the Shaman exhibits itself in violent dances and wild gestures. Little by little the lookers-on feel the spirit of imitation aroused in them. Seized with an irresistible impulse, they dance and become in their turn ecstatics" ("Isis," vol. ii., p. 625).

Here is another marvel:—

"If our scientists are unable to imitate the mummy embalming of the Egyptians, how much greater would be their surprise to see, as we have, dead bodies preserved by alchemical art, so that after the lapse of centuries they seem as though the individuals were sleeping? The complexions were as fresh, the skin as elastic, the eyes as natural and sparkling as though they were in the full flush of health. The bodies of certain very eminent personages are laid upon catafalques in rich mausoleums."

We now come to more important matters, the cave libraries:—

"Moreover, in all the large and wealthy lamaseries there are subterranean crypts and cave libraries cut in the rock wherever the *gonpa* and *lhakhang* are situated in the mountains. Beyond the Western Tsaydam, in the solitary passes of Kuen-lun, there are several such hiding-places. Along the ridge of Altyn Toga, whose soil no European foot has ever trodden so far, there exists a certain hamlet, lost in a deep gorge. It is a small cluster of houses, a hamlet rather than a monastery, with a poor-looking temple in it, with one old Lama, a hermit, living near to watch it. Pilgrims say that the subterranean galleries and halls under it contain a collection of books, the number of which, according to the accounts given, is too large to find room even in the British Museum" ("Secret Doctrine," i., xxiv.).

But this is not the end of these wonders. It appears that the Brahmins and Buddhists are in league (p. xxviii.)

to hide their genuine sacred literature from the Mlechchhas. This was the term applied by the ancient Aryans to the black savages that they tried to displace, and according to Madame Blavatsky, it is applied to white-faced Sanskrit professors and other white-faced respectabilities now. The Brahmins in giving us the Rig Veda, the Upanishads, the Mahâbhârata, etc., have foisted upon us "bits of rejected copies of some passages" only (p. xxx.). The large literature of Buddhism is a blind. It is given to conceal, not convey, the real teaching. The real books are hidden away. It is hinted that the Japanese followers of Lao Tse use the same places of concealment.

"The Japanese, among whom are now to be found the most learned of the priests and followers of Lao Tse, simply laugh at the blunders and hypotheses of European Chinese scholars, and tradition affirms that the commentaries to which our Western sinologues have access are not the real occult records, but intentional veils, and that the true commentaries, as well as almost all the texts, have long *disappeared* from the eyes of the profane" (p. xxv.).

These occult libraries are well guarded: "Built deep in the bowels of the earth, the subterranean stores are secure; and as their entrances are concealed in such oases, there is little fear that any one should discover them, even should several armies invade the sandy wastes where—

"Not a pool, not a bush, not a house is seen,  
And the mountain range forms a rugged screen."  
(P. xxxiii.)

But there is another great name to be added to this vast fraternity of concealment. Our best available authorities tell us that Confucius was not a religious teacher at all, and certainly not a mystic. He was a politician and an atheist, and he has enmeshed China in a vast network of ceremonialism that binds her hand and foot. This is erroneous. He too seems to have his real doctrine concealed in some underground crypt (p. xxv.) in some of these "immense libraries reclaimed from the sand," the "secret crypts of libraries belonging to the occult fraternity" (p. xxxiv.).

But fortunately these great secrets are to be complete

secrets no longer. In one of these concealed crypts (which one, perhaps, she is not allowed to state), Madame Blavatsky was allowed to peruse the Book of Dzyan or Dzan. It was "an archaic manuscript, a collection of palm leaves made impermeable to water, fire, and air, by some specific, unknown process" (p. i.). It is written "in a tongue absent from the nomenclature of languages and dialects with which philology is acquainted." It is needless to say that it "ante-dates the Vedas" (p. xxxvii.).

We will quote a few verses of this great book :—

The eternal parent wrapped in her ever invisible robes had slumbered once again for Seven Eternities.

Time was not, for it lay asleep in the infinite bosom of duration.

Universal mind was not, for there was no AH-Hi to contain it.

The seven ways to bliss were not.

The great causes of misery were not, for there was no one to produce and get ensnared by them.

Darkness alone filled the boundless all, for Father, Mother, and Son were once more one, and the Son had not awakened yet for the New Wheel and his pilgrimage thereon.

The causes of existence had been done away with. The visible that was, and the invisible that is, rested on eternal non-being, the one being.

Alone, the one form of existence stretched boundless, infinite, causeless, in dreamless sleep, and life pulsated unconscious in universal space, throughout that all-presence which is sensed by that opened eye of the Dangma.

But where was the Dangma when the Alaya of the Universe was in Paramartha, and the great wheel was Arupadaka ?

Where was the silence ? Where the ears to sense it ? No, there was neither silence nor sound. Naught save ceaseless eternal breath, which knows itself not. The hour had not yet struck.

Behold, oh, Lanoo, the radiant child of the two ! It is Oeaoahoo ! He is the blazing divine Dragon of Wisdom.

The One is Four ! And Four takes to itself Three, and the union is Sapta (seven).

The Dzyu becomes Fohat, the swift son of the divine sons, whose sons are the Lipika.

The eternity of the Pilgrim is like a wink in the eye of self-existence.

Madame Blavatsky does not explain how it is that if this poem is in the archaic unknown tongue, it bristles all over

with Sanskrit and other languages. Fohat is not Sanskrit. In "Isis Unveiled," she announced that "Fohat" was the Tibetan for Buddha. How does Buddha turn up in these very early MSS.?

I will give here Colebrooke's translation of a celebrated passage in the Rig Veda:—

1. There was then neither nonentity nor entity; there was no atmosphere nor sky beyond it. What covered (all)? Where was the receptacle of each thing? Was it water, the deep abyss?

2. Death was not then, nor immortality; there was no distinction of day or night. That one breathed calmly, with *svaddha* (nature); there was nothing different from It (that One) or beyond It.

3. Darkness there was; originally enveloped in darkness, this universe was undistinguishable water; the empty (mass), which was concealed by a husk (or by nothingness), was produced singly by the power of austerity (or heat).

4. Desire first arose in It, which was the first germ of mind. This the wise, seeking in their heart, have discovered by the intellect to be the bond between nonentity and entity.

5. The ray which shot across these things,—was it from above, or was it below? There were productive energies and mighty powers; Nature (*svaddha*) beneath, and Energy (*prayati*) above.

6. Who knows, who here can declare whence has sprung, whence this creation? The gods are subsequent to its formation; who then knows from what it arose?

7. From what source this creation arose, and whether (any one) created it or not. He who in the highest heaven is its ruler, He knows, or He does not know.

If the Book of Dzyan was first in the field the Vedic author seems to have plagiarised from it.

Already we are met with a puzzle. When Mr. Sinnett's narrative first appeared the misbelievers pointed out that if Madame Blavatsky had only been seven months in Tibet they did not see how she could have gone through a seven years' training. To one of these Madame Blavatsky in a



letter addressed to *Light* (July 27th, 1889) thus replied :—

"SIR,—It is perhaps hardly worth while to take up your space in exposing the careless and ignorant blundering of 'Colenso'—a singularly inappropriate signature, by the way, for one so reckless about his facts. But, for this once, I will make a statement that may put an end to the incessant carping over trifles that can serve but to needlessly embitter controversy.

"There is no such thing known to occultists as a 'seven years' initiation.' The probations, which 'Colenso' confuses with initiation, can be lived out anywhere, and this 'Colenso' would have known if he had read Mr. Sinnett's paragraph with even ordinary care, since he says that any English gentleman can pass through it without observation. 'Colenso's' inexorable arithmetic is thus wasted trouble, and his careful calculations on Himalayan ranges are wholly beside the mark ; since the seven years' initiation in one place is an absurdity, and a seven years' probation attached to the skirts of the Masters is another. All this is a creation of his own imagination, and while I regret that my life does not fit into the framework made for it by him, and by other similar critics, the misfit is scarcely my fault. Bishop Colenso's work would have fallen very flat if he had been as careless of his facts as the writer who now uses his name.

"But, apart from this latest attack, why should spiritualists feel so interested in my travels, studies, and their supposed dates ? Why should they be so eager to unravel imagined mysteries, denounce alleged (or even possible) mistakes, in order to pick holes in everything theosophical ? To even my best friends I have never given but very fragmentary and superficial accounts of the said travels, nor do I propose to gratify anyone's curiosity, least of all that of my enemies. The latter are quite welcome to believe in and spread as many cock-and-bull stories about me as they choose, and to invent new ones as time rolls on and the old stories wear out."

But does this quite meet "Colenso's" arithmetical difficulties ? In *Light* (August 9th, 1884) Madame Blavatsky



herself had distinctly announced that "she had lived in different periods in Little Tibet and in Great Tibet, and that these combined periods form more than seven years."

Mr. Sinnett is equally explicit:—

"Never, I believe, is less than seven years from the time at which a candidate for initiation is accepted as a probationer, is he ever admitted to the very first of the ordeals." These ordeals are very severe, Mr. Sinnett tells us; indeed, I remember in the old days hearing that Madame Blavatsky's ordeals had been by earth, air, and fire and water. But if no Brothers are by to inspect, how could these ordeals be quite satisfactory? A "probationer" might take a bath at Ostend and announce a "trial by water."

A suspicion had formed itself in my mind, and a passage from Colonel Olcott has rather confirmed it, otherwise I should not have liked to have brought it forward. This is, that when Madame Blavatsky talks about the "Blazing Divine Dragon of Wisdom" and similar matters her pen is sometimes guided by her spooks or her "masters."

"She wrote me," says Colonel Olcott, "that it ('Isis Unveiled') was a book on the history and philosophy of the Eastern schools, and their relations with those of our own times. She said she was writing about things she had never studied, and making quotations from books she had never read in all her life" (*Theosophist*, April, 1893).

The colonel goes on:—

"Whence did H. P. B. draw the materials which compose 'Isis?' From the Astral light—and by her soul senses from her teachers—the 'Brothers,' 'Adepts,' 'Sages,' 'Masters.'"

He quotes her as saying:—

"At such times it is no more *I* who write, but my 'luminous self,' who thinks and writes for me" (*Theosophist*, April, 1893).

Professor Max Muller and several native scholars have attacked the Sanskrit of this good lady's "luminous self," and it is difficult to guess from what other source she has got much of her philology. Many prominent words in her system are nonsense. "Koot Hoomi Lal Singh" is said by Mr. Sinnett to be the "Tibetan baptismal name" of the great Adept. This statement was at once turned into ridicule by the editor of a native newspaper.

"Lal Singh" is Hindustani, and an expert at the British Museum assured me that the words "Koot" and "Hoomi" were not to be found in the language of Tibet. Then Dhyani Chohans is a made-up word. "Chohan" is not to be found in any Sanskrit dictionary nor in the admirable glossary of Sanskrit, Tibetan, and Chinese Buddhist words drawn up by Mr. Eitel. "Devachan" is a Tibetan word, but instead of being an abode of probation as Madame Blavatsky announces, it contains spirits that cannot return to earth. (Schlagintweit, "Buddhism in Tibet," p. 102).

In "Isis Unveiled" (vol. ii., p. 290) she says that Buddha in Tibet is called "Ferho," or "Faho," or "Fo." He is really called Behom-dan-hdas Sangs-r-gyäs.

In the same work (vol. ii., p. 599) she says that Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha are called in Tibet "Fo, fa, and Sengh." Our dictionaries, on the contrary, tell us that Dharma is called T. Teh'os and Sangha d Ge hdun. We learn, too, that a monk is called a Shaman, the good lady being evidently under an impression that Chinese is the language of Tibet.

"Fohat" is another nonsensical word. In "Isis Unveiled" (vol. ii., p. 616) she says that Buddha-lla and Foht-lla are Tibetan words for "Buddha's Mount."

On February 20th, 1893, a paper was read by Captain Bower before the Geographical Society describing a trip into Tibet from Sri Nagar in Kashmir, the point of departure of the Russian lady.

He started on the 17th April, and took six weeks to get to Leh, a distance of some 130 miles from Sri Nagar as the crow flies. Between India and Tibet is the most formidable mountain wall in the world. It is everywhere from 70 to 120 miles thick—rock and glacier and precipice.

Captain Bower had baggage ponies, but so steep is the Zoji La Pass that an army of coolies had to carry his baggage as far as Leh, and the ponies had to be led without burdens. The trip from Kashmir to Lha Sa occupied seven months. Before reaching that capital, he was stopped and forced to branch off to China. For five of these months he never encamped below 15,000 feet elevation. The thermometer registered minus 15°. Also the officials everywhere confessed that they had strict orders from the Chinese to

murder all "Pelings" who tried to enter Tibet from Hindustan. Nothing but the good English breech-loaders of Captain Bower's little army saved him. China gets annually a profit of eight millions sterling for her brick-tea, and she knows that the English could sell the same amount of tea at the quarter of the price.

Thus, when we read that Madame Blavatsky was smuggled into Tibet "in a suitable disguise," and that her "sole protector in those dreary deserts" ("Isis," vol. ii., p. 662) was a solitary Shaman, we must ask if this means that she succeeded in traversing the formidable *ghats* without baggage ponies, without tents, without an army of coolies, a store of food? It certainly does seem so on the surface, for she tells us that this Shaman was a Russian subject, who had quite as much need of being smuggled in as the Russian lady. He wanted to work round to his home in Siberia. ("Isis Unveiled," vol. ii., p. 599.) Then Captain Bower, starting in April, had the summer months before him, whereas Madame Blavatsky, starting in September, and returning to India just in time to leave that country "shortly before the Mutiny troubles began," must have travelled all the time in the *middle of winter*, when the *ghats* are choked with ice and snow. And yet she tells us in a letter to *Light* (August 9th, 1884) that she had "penetrated further than any traveller had penetrated before."

One or two other passages are noteworthy:—

In "Isis Unveiled," vol. ii., p. 609, is this statement:—"We met a great many nuns travelling from Lha Sa to Kandi. . . . They take refuge in caves or viharas prepared by their co-religionists at calculated distances."

What would be thought of a modern traveller who announced that along the roads of Sussex he had met numbers of the "Valas" or prophetesses of Woden, and that at the stone circles, where they stopped for the night, mead and the flesh of the boar *Sæhrimmer* were doled out to them. Buddhist viharas and Buddhist nuns have disappeared from Hindustan quite as long as the priests of Woden from England.

Besides, as Mr. Spence Hardy tells us, there are no female recluses in Ceylon. ("Eastern Monachism," p. 61.)

But there is more beyond. In the sharp controversies that Madame Blavatsky's statements provoked in 1884, she was challenged to give at any rate the date of her trip, the name of the ship she went out in, or the name of some three or four Anglo-Indian officials that she had come across during her passage through India. Her reply (*Light*, August 9th, 1884) was a refusal. "As to the names of three or four English (or rather Anglo-Indians) who could *certify* to having seen me when I passed, I am afraid their vigilance would not be found at the height of their trustworthiness," and then she went on to say that she evaded the Anglo-Indian officials. This is all very well, but in steering clear of one difficulty we sometimes run into another. She says now that in 1856 she entered Tibet through Kashmir, not knowing that the Maharajah at that date allowed no Feringhy in his dominions without a passport duly signed by an English official.

## CHAPTER II.

### WHAT MADAME BLAVATSKY LEARNT IN TIBET.

ACCORDING to Mr. Sinnett, Madame Blavatsky, during this trip into Tibet, was instructed by the Mahatmas in the great gospel of "Theosophy." But this teaching was not made public until October, 1881, that is some twenty-four years afterwards. But we must anticipate matters, and give a short sketch of this gospel here, and then see if the utterances of Madame Blavatsky were always quite in harmony with this gospel. Mr. Sinnett tells us that for the first time a "block of absolute truth regarding spiritual things was given to the world" ("Esoteric Buddhism," p. 6). "Theosophy" proclaims that at death the individual becomes practically two individuals; one of which takes off all the good qualities to the "rosy slumber" of Devachan or Paradise. The second, with all the bad qualities, remains on the earth plane for a time, attends séances, deceives spiritualists, and is by and by annihilated. The only communications that mortals can receive from the unseen world are from these semi-fiends. Occultism should, in consequence, never be attempted, except under the supervision of the Mahatmas of Tibet. To this has been added the Indian doctrine of Karma. It is proclaimed that the good half of the individual must remain in Devachan for 1500 years. It is then reborn on earth; and Karma, or the causation of its previous acts, will force this process to be repeated, "at least 800 times." Then perfection will be gained, and with it annihilation.

It will be seen at once that we have here two distinct schemes for gaining perfection.

By the first, perfection, even with an atrocious murderer, is obtained at the second of death, a perfection greater than that of the angel Gabriel, for the smallest

blemish will be removed. By the second, even St. Paul will be 1,280,000 years obtaining perfection.

Now this may be thought a little extravagant, but in Madame Blavatsky's first sketch of her doctrines (*Theosophist*, Oct., 1881) each point is to be found. "At death or before," the division of the individual into a good and a bad half takes place. The good half "can never again span the abyss that separates its state from ours." All that can come to the "séance room of the spiritualists are certain reliquæ of deceased human beings," "elementaries," "shells," the bad half of the dead individual which recovers life for a time, and by and by and dies out.

"In truth," say the article, "mediumship is a dangerous, too often a fatal capacity, and if we oppose spiritualism as we have ever consistently done, it is not because we question the reality of their phenomena . . . but because of the irreparable spiritual injury which the pursuit of spiritualism inevitably entails on nine-tenths of the mediums."

A letter that she wrote when she came to England in 1884, goes further than this. (*Pall Mall Gazette*, April 26th.) She says that the main object of theosophy was:—

1. To put down spiritualism.
2. To convert the materialists.
3. To prove the existence of the "Brothers."

In the year 1858, Madame Blavatsky having left Tibet, returned to Europe. She was fully impressed "with the magnitude of her mission," as Mr. Sinnett tells us. She now emerged from "apprenticeship to duty" ("Incidents, etc.," p. 157). In 1858, Madame Blavatsky returned to Russia. Her sister, Madame de Jelihowsky, now gives a picture of her.

This picture is a little astonishing, for the diary kept by Madame de Jelihowsky, at least the portions quoted by Mr. Sinnett in his "Incidents, etc.," describes the sister as nothing more or less than a "medium," and by this name the sister tells us that she was then called. Raps came and questions were answered. "One of the guests would be reciting the alphabet, another putting down the answers received."

Furniture was moved about without contact. Heavy tables were moved, and then rendered immovable. Change of weight in furniture and persons occurred at will. Prescriptions for different diseases were given in Latin.

"She was," says Madame de Jelihowsky, "what would be called in our days a 'good writing medium,' that is to say, she could write out the answers herself while talking to those around her." But the lady adds that the answers given were "not always in perfect accord with the facts."

The spirits were called "Helen's spirits," and also her "post-mortem visitors."

Madame de Jelihowsky says a little quaintly—

"From letters received by me from my sister I found that she had been dissatisfied with much that I had said of her in my 'Truth about H. P. Blavatsky.'"

This seems very natural, for it is now announced that the "post-mortem visitors" were no "ghosts of the deceased, but only the manifestations of her powerful friends in their astral envelopes" ("Incidents, etc.," p. 81).

On one occasion the alleged ghost of Pushkin, the poet, came and laboriously rapped out a dreary poem, stating that "he had one desire, and that was to rest on the bosom of Death, instead of which he was suffering in great darkness for his sins, tortured by devils, and had lost all hope of ever reaching the bliss of becoming a winged cherub."

Mr. Sinnett describes all this as a subtle comedy. Madame Blavatsky, full of the secrets of Tibet, pretended to be a medium, and the table-rapping and table-turning were the ordinary properties of the play. He fails to see how damaging all this is to the Russian lady. What were the tremendous secrets of the Mahatmas? Simply that all the appearances from ghostland, the Samuels, the Moseses, the Eliases of scripture, the Pitri of the Rig Veda, the "spirits" of Swedenborg and Mr. Stainton Moses were deceptions. Instead of proving a hereafter to man these spirits were malignant fiends, and intercourse with them the crucial danger of humanity. And yet she goes at once to her own home, and makes her father and her sister dabble with them day and night. Was there no danger in this of her sister becoming a medium?

But the danger with Madame Blavatsky seems to be that

she upsets the plea of her counsel before he has done speaking from his brief. Colonel Olcott lets out that she confessed in America in a letter which he quotes, that she knew nothing of spiritualism until she met Home the medium in Paris in 1858. "Home converted me to spiritualism" (*Theosophist*, August, 1892, p. 649). But if she knew nothing of spiritualism until 1858, how did she get a mission to put it down in 1856?



## CHAPTER III.

### THE SOCIÉTÉ SPIRITE.

IN 1871, Madame Blavatsky set up a spiritualistic society in Cairo. Mr. Sinnett calls it a "quasi spiritualistic" society, but Madame Blavatsky calls it a *Société Spirite*. Attached to one of the hotels, at this time, was an English-woman who afterwards married a M. Coulomb. *The Times* newspaper by and by published a number of letters professing to come from Madame Blavatsky to this lady. Of course any lady that betrays her friend is not the best of witnesses, but such as it is we give her account of this spiritualistic society. She was on intimate terms with Madame Blavatsky, and lent her money.

"In the year 1872, one day as I was walking through the street called 'Sekke el Ghamma el harmar'—'the street of the red mosque'—in Cairo, Egypt, I was roused from my pensive mood by something that brushed by me very swiftly. I looked up and saw a lady. 'Who is that lady?' I asked a passer-by. 'She is that Russian spiritist who calls the dead and makes them answer your questions.' This news was to me tidings of great joy, as I was just mourning for the death of my dear and only brother, whom I had recently lost. The idea of being able to hear his voice was for me heavenly delight. I was told that if I asked the secretary of her spiritualistic society to introduce me to her he would do so (he was a Greek gentleman of my acquaintance). I was introduced, and found her very interesting and very clever. My first essay at the spirits was not successful; I neither saw nor heard anything but a few raps. Having shown my disappointment to the secretary of the society, I was told that the spirits did not like to appear in a room which had not been purified and not exclusively used for the purpose, but if I would return in a few days I

would see wonders, as they were preparing a closet where nothing else but séances were to be done. I went to see the closet, and saw that it was lined with red cloth, all over the four sides and also the ceiling, with a space between the wall and the cloth of about three inches. I was so ignorant of these things at the time that I formed no malicious idea of it. I called again when the closet was ready, but what was my surprise when, instead of finding the kind spirits there to answer our questions, I found a room full of people, *all alive*, and using most offensive language towards the founder of the society, saying that she had taken their money and had left them only with this, pointing at the space between the wall and the cloth, where several pieces of twine were still hanging which had served to pull through the ceiling a long glove stuffed with cotton, which was to represent the materialized hand and arm of some spirit. I went away, leaving the crowd as red as fire, ready to knock her down when she came back. Later on I met her again, and I asked her how she came to do such a thing; to which she answered that it was Madame Sebiré's doings (this was a lady who lived with Madame Blavatsky), so I let this matter drop. I saw that she looked very unhappy. I called on her the next day, and on hearing that she was really in want I gave her pecuniary help, and continued doing so for some time. As she could not repay me, she granted me receipts, which I left in my boxes in Egypt when I came away. Our acquaintance continued all the while she remained in the country.

"This money was lent *cash*, no bill, no account, nothing but cash. To my knowledge Madame Blavatsky while in Cairo never lived in an hotel. I have known her in three different apartments. The first was in 'Sekke el Ghamma el harmar,' the second at 'Abdeen,' and the third at 'Kantara el dick.' In 'Abdeen' she had opened her apartment to the public, who went there to consult her spirits, and where the *fiasco* of the materialized hand and arm took place as I have already said, and this in the year 1872.

"She left Cairo for Russia, and I did not hear anything more about her until I traced her name in an article reproduced from an American newspaper, in which I learned that

she had started a society of a new kind ; this was not a spiritualistic society, but a theosophical one."

We will now give Madame Blavatsky's story cited by Mr. Sinnett :—

"The *Société Spirite* has not lasted a fortnight. It is a heap of ruins, majestic, but as suggestive as those of the Pharaoh's tombs.

"To wind up this comedy with a drama, I got nearly shot by a madman, who had been present at the only two public séances we held, and got possessed, I suppose, by some vile spook" (Sinnett, "Incidents, etc.," p. 159).

Mr. Sinnett tells us that in consequence of all this "slanders and scandals were set on foot." People "even went the length of maintaining that instead of paying the mediums and the expenses of the society, it was Madame Blavatsky, who had herself been paid and had attempted to pass off juggler tricks as genuine phenomena" ("Incidents, etc.," p. 161).

Into this great question we cannot enter. Our main inquiry is this—Is there any evidence that in these days Madame Blavatsky knew anything of the Brothers of Tibet and their crusade against the spiritualists? When a lady gets up even a "quasi spiritualistic" society, we should say that the evidence is rather the other way.

One small gleam of light falls on the period which precedes the foundation of the Cairo society. Professor Coues has a letter from Mr. Hodgson, announcing that Madame Coulomb had a secret against Madame Blavatsky which was in some way connected with one Metrovitch, whom Madame Blavatsky eventually married. They appeared, I believe, on platforms together, in a sort of "variety entertainment," to use the language of the music halls.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE "MIRACLE CLUB."

IN the month of July, 1874, a literary gentleman was sent by the editor of the *New York Sun* to write articles upon some strange spiritualistic phenomena that were occurring at Chittenden, under the mediumship of the brothers Eddy. This gentleman, whose name was Olcott, had served during the great war in the detective department of the military police, and had been rewarded with the honorary rank of colonel. His articles attracted attention, and in the month of September he went to Chittenden once more, this time with an artist, Mr. Kappes. There he met a strange lady:—

"I remember our first day's acquaintance as if it were yesterday; besides which, I have recorded the main facts in my Eddy book (*"People from the Other World,"* pp. 293 *et seq.*). It was a sunny day, and even the gloomy old farm-house looked cheerful. It stands amid a lovely landscape, in a valley bounded by grassy slopes that rise into mountains covered to their very crests with leafy groves. This was the time of the 'Indian summer,' when the whole country is covered with a faint bluish haze, like that which has given the 'Nilgiri' mountains their name, and the foliage of the beeches, elms and maples, touched by early frosts, has been turned from green into a mottling of gold and crimson that gives the landscape the appearance of being hung all over with royal tapestries. One must go to America to see this autumnal splendour in its full perfection.

"The dinner hour at Eddy's was noon, and it was from the entrance door of the bare and comfortless dining-room that Kappes and I first saw H.P.B. She had arrived shortly before noon with a French Canadian lady, and they were at table as we entered. My eye was first attracted by a

scarlet Garibaldian shirt the former wore, as being in vivid contrast with the dull colours around. Her hair was then a thick blonde mop, worn shorter than the shoulders, and it stood out from her head, silken, soft, and crinkled to the roots, like the fleece of a Cotswold ewe. This and the red shirt were what struck my attention before I took in the picture of her features. It was a massive Calmuck face, contrasting in its suggestion of power, culture and imperiousness, as strangely with the commonplace visages about the room, as her red garment did with the grey and white tones of the walls and woodwork, and the dull costumes of the rest of the guests. All sorts of cranky people were continually coming and going at Eddy's, to see the mediumistic phenomena, and it only struck me on seeing this eccentric lady that this was but one more of the sort. Pausing on the door-sill, I whispered to Kappes, 'Good gracious! look at *that* specimen, will you.' I went straight across and took a seat opposite her to indulge my favourite habit of character-study.<sup>1</sup> The two ladies conversed in French, making remarks of no consequence, but I saw at once from her accent and fluency of speech that, if not a Parisian, she must at least be a finished French scholar. Dinner over, the two went outside the house, and Madame Blavatsky rolled herself a cigarette, for which I gave her a light as a pretext to enter into conversation. My remark having been made in French, we fell at once into talk in that language. She asked me how long I had been there, and what I thought of the phenomena; saying that she herself was greatly interested in such things, and had been drawn to Chittenden by reading the letters in the *Daily Graphic*: the public were growing so interested in these that it was sometimes impossible to find a copy of the paper on the bookstalls an hour after publication, and she had paid a dollar (about 3 rupees) for a copy of the last issue.

<sup>1</sup> In a chain-shot crack at an American vituperator, she draws the following amusing portrait of herself: "An old woman—whether forty, fifty, sixty or ninety years old, it matters not; an old woman whose Kalmuco-Buddhisto-Tartaric features, even in youth, never made her appear pretty; a woman whose ungainly garb, uncouth manners and masculine habits are enough to frighten any bustling and corseted fine lady of fashionable society out of her wits" (*vide* her letter, "The Knout," to the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* of March 16, 1878).

'I hesitated before coming here,' she said, 'because I was afraid of meeting that Colonel Olcott.' 'Why should you be afraid of him, madame?' I rejoined. 'Oh! because I fear he might write about me in his paper.' I told her that she might make herself perfectly easy on that score, for I felt quite sure Colonel Olcott would not put her in his letters unless she wished it. And I introduced myself. We became friends at once. Each of us felt as if we were of the same social world, cosmopolitans, freethinkers, and not in close touch with the rest of the company, intelligent and very worthy as some of them were. It was the voice of common sympathy with the higher occult side of man and nature; the attraction of soul to soul, not that of sex to sex. Neither then, at the commencement, nor ever afterwards, had either of us the sense of the other being of the opposite sex. We were simply chums; so regarded each other, so called each other. Some base people from time to time dared to suggest that a closer tie bound us together, as they had heard that poor, malformed, persecuted H. P. B. had been the mistress of various other men, but no pure person could hold to such an opinion after passing any time in her company, and seeing how her every look, word, and action, proclaimed her sexlessness.

"Strolling along with my new acquaintance, we talked together about the Eddy phenomena and those of other lands. I found she had been a great traveller and had seen many occult things and adepts in occult science, but at first she did not give me any hint as to the existence of the Himalayan sages or of her own powers. She spoke of the materialistic tendency of American spiritualism, which was a sort of debauch of phenomena accompanied by comparative indifference to philosophy. Her manner was gracious and captivating, her criticisms upon men and things original and witty. She was particularly interested in drawing me out as to my own ideas about spiritual things, and expressed pleasure in finding that I had instinctively thought along the occult lines which she herself had pursued. It was not as an Eastern mystic, but rather as a *refined spiritualist*, she talked. For my part I knew nothing, or next to nothing, about Eastern philosophy, and at first she kept silent on that subject.

"The séances of William Eddy, the chief medium of the family, were held every evening in a large upstairs hall, in a wing of the house, over the dining-room and kitchen. He and a brother, Horatio, were hard-working farmers, Horatio attending to the out-door duties, and William, since visitors came pouring in upon them from all parts of the United States, doing the cooking for the household. They were poor, ill-educated, and prejudiced—sometimes surly to their unbidden guests. At the further end of the séance hall the deep chimney from the kitchen below passed through to the roof. Between it and the north wall was a narrow closet of the same width as the depth of the chimney, two feet seven inches, in which William Eddy would seat himself to wait for the phenomena. He had no seeming control over them, but merely sat and waited for them to sporadically occur. A blanket being hung across the doorway, the closet would be in perfect darkness. Shortly after William had entered the cabinet, the blanket would be pulled aside, and forth would step some figure of a dead man, woman, or child—an animate statue, so to say—temporarily solid and substantial, but the next minute resolved back into nothingness or invisibility. They would occasionally dissolve away while in full view of the spectators.

"Up to the time of H. P. B.'s appearance on the scene, the figures which had shown themselves were either Red Indians or Americans or Europeans akin to visitors. But on the first evening of her stay spooks of other nationalities came before us."

All this is from the *Theosophist* of March, 1892 (pp. 324-7). We will now turn to Colonel Olcott's "People from the Other World." For soon some of Madame Blavatsky's own "post-mortem visitors" appeared:—

"On the 14th of October Mademoiselle de Blavatsky reached Chittenden, and attended the séance that evening. Honto, as if to give the amplest opportunity for the artist and myself to test the correctness of the theory of 'personation,' that the 'investigator' previously alluded to had expounded to us, stood at the right of the cabinet, motioning us to observe her height, her feet, the bead trimming on her dress, and then unplaited her hair and shook it out over her shoulders. Santum came, too, and 'Wando' and



'Wasso'; and then the first of the Russian lady's spirit visitors made his appearance.

"He was a person of middle height, well shaped, dressed in a Georgian (Caucasian) jacket, with loose sleeves and long pointed oversleeves, an outer long coat, baggy trousers, leggings of yellow leather, and white skull-cap or fez, with tassel. She recognised him at once as Michalko Guegidze, late of Kutais, Georgia, a servant of Madame Witte, a relative, and who waited upon Mademoiselle de Blavatsky in Kutais.

"He was followed by the spirit of Abraham Alsbach, who spoke some sentences in German to his sister; and he, in turn, by M. Zephirin Boudreau, late of Canada, the father of a lady who accompanied Mademoiselle de Blavatsky to Chittenden, and who, of course, was attending her first séance. She addressed her questions to him in French, he responding by rapping with his hand against the door-frame, except in one instance, when he uttered the word 'Oui.' This gentleman stood so that I saw him in profile against the white wall. He had an aquiline nose, rather hollow cheeks, prominent cheek-bones, and an iron-grey beard upon his chin. It was a marked face, in short, of the pure Gallic type, one of the kind that Vergne calls 'numismatic faces,' for they seem as if made expressly for reproduction upon coins and medals. In stature he was tall, and in figure slim, and altogether had the air of a gentleman.

"A little girl spirit came after him, and conversed by raps with her mother, who spoke in the German language; and this brought William's circle to a close.

"After that we had a light circle—one of the kind in which, as the reader will remember, certain persons assert that the phenomena are *all* done by the hand of the medium. Among other things that occurred was the writing of Mademoiselle de Blavatsky's name upon a card by a spirit-hand *in Russian script*, which it will scarcely be said that Horatio could write with both hands free. Various detached hands were shown through the aperture in the shawls, and among the number that of the boy Michalko himself, which the lady recognised by some peculiarity, as well as *by a string of amber beads wound around the wrist*. Recollect that she had only arrived that afternoon,



had barely become acquainted with the medium, had had no conversation whatever with anybody about her former life, and then say how this Vermont farmer could have known:

"(1) Of the existence of Michalko Guegidze; (2) that he had any relations of any kind with his visitor; (3) that it is a custom among the Georgian peasants to wear a string of amber beads upon their arms; and then the sceptic will have to account for the possession of so unusual a thing as this kind of a rosary, by a family working a Green Mountain farm" (pp. 297-301).

In the same work Colonel Olcott gives further details about his new acquaintance:—

"This lady—Madame Helen P. de Blavatsky—has led a very eventful life, travelling in most of the lands of the Orient, searching for antiquities at the base of the Pyramids, witnessing the mysteries of Hindoo temples, and pushing with an armed escort far into the interior of Africa. The adventures she has encountered, the strange people she has seen, the perils by sea and land she has passed through, would make one of the most romantic stories ever told by a biographer. In the whole course of my experience, I never met with so interesting and, if I may say it without offence, eccentric a character."

Who paid for the armed escort? If it was Madame Blavatsky, why was she obliged to borrow money from a woman who, according to Mr. Sinnett, was a mere servant in a Cairo hotel? Colonel Olcott in the *Theosophist* (March, 1892) adds wonder to wonder:—

"While she was at Chittenden she told me many incidents of her past life, among others, her having been present, along with a number of other European ladies, with Garibaldi at the bloody battle at Mentana. In proof of her story she showed me where her left arm had been broken in two places by an Austrian sabrestroke, and made me feel in her right shoulder a musket bullet, still embedded in the muscle, and another in her leg. She also showed me a scar just below the heart where she had been stabbed with a stiletto. This wound re-opened a little while she was at Chittenden, and it was to consult me about it that she was led to show it to me. She told me many most curious tales of peril and

adventure, among them the story of the phantom African sorcerer with the oryx-horn coronet, whom she had seen in life doing phenomena in Upper Egypt, many years before."

But when the "Eddy Boys" are present we must not forget that we have come to see marvels:—

"The next evening, a new spirit, 'Hassan Agha,' came to Madame de Blavatsky. He was a wealthy merchant of Tiflis, whom she knew well. He had a sneaking fancy for the Black Art, as well as our own mediums, and sometimes obliged his acquaintance by divining for them with a set of conjuring stones, procured from Arabia at a great price. His method was to throw them upon the floor, beside his mat, and then, by the way they fell into groups, prophesy the future and read the past for his wondering visitors. He claimed that the stones possessed some magic property, by which and the muttering of certain Arabic sentences, the inner sight of the conjurer was opened, and all things hidden became clear. Hassan's dress was a long yellowish coat, Turkish trousers, a *bishmet*, or vest, and a black Astrakhan cap, *pappaha*, covered with the national *bashlik* or hood, with its long tasselled ends thrown over each shoulder" ("People from the Other World," p. 310).

The friendship thickens:—

"We became greater friends day by day, and by the time she was ready to leave Chittenden she had accepted from me the nick-name 'Jack,' and so signed herself in her letters to me from New York. Yet not a word was spoken at that time that could suggest the idea that she had any mission in America of a spiritual character in which *I* might or might not have a part to perform. When we parted it was simply as good friends likely to continue the acquaintance thus pleasantly begun" (p. 328).

But one event puzzled the good colonel, and he even "noted it as a suspicious circumstance." He wanted to hold the medium's hands, but the medium preferred Madame Blavatsky:—

"It is fair that I should say that the lady reported that he had not removed either hand from the gentleman's arm. Moreover, I must add that Madame de Blavatsky, who sat at the gentleman's right, declared that she felt one hand on her right shoulder (the one farthest from the medium) at

the same instant that the gentleman reported one on each of his shoulders. The guitar, two bells, and tambourine were played simultaneously, and hands of various sizes were shown. Among these, one was too peculiar to be passed over. It was a left hand, and upon the lower bone of the thumb a bony excrescence was growing, which Mme. de Blavatsky recognized, and said was caused by a gun-shot wound in one of Garibaldi's battles. The hand grasped a broken sword that had been lying upon a table behind the shawl. It was the hand of a Hungarian officer, an old friend of the madame's, named Dgiano Nallus" (page 317).

Then came a black spirit. This account is from "People from the Other World" (p. 328-331):—

"Madame de Blavatsky did not recognize him at first, but he stepped forward a pace or two, and she then saw before her the chief of a party of African jugglers whom she encountered once in Upper Egypt, at a celebration of the feast of 'The Ramazan.' The magical performances of his party upon that occasion make one of the most incredible stories in the history of either magic or spiritualism, and one feat deserves place in such a book of weird experiences as this. Madame says that, in full sight of a multitude, comprising several hundred Europeans and many thousand Egyptians and Africans, the juggler came out on a bare space of ground, leading a small boy, stark naked, by the hand, and carrying a huge roll of tape, that might be twelve or eighteen inches wide.

"After certain ceremonies, he whirled the roll about his head several times, and then flung it straight up into the air. Instead of falling back to earth after it had ascended a short distance, it kept on upward, unwinding and unwinding interminably from the stick, until it grew to be a mere speck, and finally passed out of sight. The juggler drove the pointed end of the stick into the ground, and then beckoned the boy to approach. Pointing upward, and talking in a strange jargon, he seemed to be ordering the little fellow to ascend the self-suspended tape, which by this time stood straight and stiff, as if it were a board whose end rested against some solid support up in mid-air. The boy bowed compliance, and began climbing, using his hands and feet as little 'All Right' does when climbing Satsuma's

balance-pole. The boy went higher and higher until he, too, seemed to pass into the clouds and disappear.

"The juggler waited five or ten minutes, and then, pretending to be impatient, shouted up to his assistant as if to order him down. No answer was heard, and no boy appeared; so, finally, as if carried away with rage, the juggler thrust a naked sword into his breech-cloth (the only garment upon his person), and climbed after the boy. Up and up and, hand over hand, and step by step, he ascended, until the straining eyes of the multitude saw him no more. There was a moment's pause, and then a wild shriek came down from the sky, and a bleeding arm, as if freshly cut from the boy's body, fell with a horrid thud upon the ground. Then came another, then the two legs, one after the other, then the dismembered trunk, and, last of all, the ghastly head, every part streaming with gore and covering the ground."

This astounding marvel was witnessed by Marco Polo, and also by the Emperor Jehangir. But until Madame Blavatsky saw this strange sight no one else had seen it in modern times. But greater marvels are coming. At one séance Madame Blavatsky saw her dead uncle :—

"He came to visit Madame de Blavatsky, and made her a profound obeisance; but she failed to recognize him. Nevertheless, she showed no such hesitancy about another of her visitors. The curtain was lifted, and out stepped a gentleman of so marked an appearance as to make it absurd to imagine that William Eddy could be attempting to personate a character in this instance. He was a portly personage, with an unmistakable air of high breeding, dressed in an evening suit of black cloth, with a frilled white shirt and frilled wristbands. About his neck he wore the Greek cross of St. Anne, attached to its appropriate ribbon. At first Madame de Blavatsky thought that her father stood before her, but, as the figure advanced another step or two towards her, thus bringing himself to within five or six feet of where she sat, the spirit greeted her in the Russian language, and said 'Djadja' (uncle). She then recognized the familiar features of her father's brother, to whom he bore a very strong resemblance in life. This was M. Gustave H. Hahn, late President of the Criminal Court

at Grodno, Russia, which dignified office he held for twelve years. This gentleman, who died in 1861, must not be confounded with his namesake and cousin, Count Gustave Hahn, the Senator, who is living in St. Petersburg at the present moment" (p. 360).

Greater marvels yet were coming:—

"The evening of October 24th was as bright as day with the light of the moon, and, while there was a good deal of moisture in the air, the atmospheric conditions would, I suppose, have been regarded as favourable for manifestations. In the dark circle, as soon as the light was extinguished, 'George Dix,' addressing Madame de Blavatsky, said: 'Madame, I am now about to give you a test of the genuineness of the manifestations in this circle, which I think will satisfy not only you, but a sceptical world beside. I shall place in your hands the buckle of a medal of honour worn in life by your brave father, and buried with his body in Russia. This has been brought to you by your uncle, whom you have seen materialised this evening.' Presently I heard the lady utter an exclamation, and a light being struck, we all saw Madame de Blavatsky holding in her hand a silver buckle of a most curious shape, which she regarded with speechless wonder.

"When she recovered herself a little, she announced that this buckle had, indeed, been worn by her father, with many other decorations, that she identified this particular article by the fact that the point of the pin had been carelessly broken off by herself many years ago; and that according to universal custom, this, with all his other medals and crosses, must have been buried with her father's body. The medal to which this buckle belongs was one granted by the late Czar to his officers, after the Turkish campaign of 1828. The medals were distributed at Bucharest, and a number of the officers had buckles similar to this made by the rude silversmiths of that city. Her father died July 15th, 1873, and she, being in this country, could not attend his obsequies. As to the authenticity of this present so mysteriously received, she possessed ample proof, in a photographic copy of her father's oil portrait, in which this very buckle appears, attached to its own ribbon and medal" (pp. 335, 336).

Colonel Olcott is very angry with Madame Coulomb for damaging the society with her false evidence. But it seems to me his own revelations are far more damaging. He makes it quite impossible that we can believe in the Mahatmas of Tibet.

Madame Blavatsky comes to America a steerage passenger without any funds. He, he tells us, supported her during the whole of her American visit. (*Theosophist*, vol. xiii, p. 49.) What was her proposed means of livelihood when she crossed the Atlantic?

But one answer seems possible. She proposed to figure as an ordinary professional "medium."

At starting she sees that a Colonel Olcott is the great authority in spiritualism in the American newspapers. She flies off to Chittenden where he is investigating the phenomena of the "Eddy Boys." She throws herself in his path-way with a little affected coyness.

"I hesitated before coming here because I was afraid of meeting that Colonel Olcott. He might put me in the papers."

But why should she be afraid of being put in an article about spiritualistic mediums, unless she was a spiritualistic medium herself?

Were the "Eddy Boys" cheats? Mr. Stainton Moses told me that they had since confessed their rogueries on public platforms. Mr. Coleman confirms this.

"That I am far from satisfied with the results attained at Chittenden is already known," says Colonel Olcott significantly. "The 'Boys,' he adds, refused him a 'fair chance' to apply tests." ("People from the Other World," p. 415.)

But this raises a delicate question. If "Wando," and "Wasso" were cheats dressed up, what about "Dgiano Nallus," and "Michalko Guegidze?" Madame Coulomb boldly affirms that they were dressed-up mortals likewise. She points significantly to the Russian dresses, medals of honour, the Tchicharda and the Zourna, that figured directly the Russian lady arrived. Familiar with certain similar dressings up in India, that good lady is perhaps over-suspicious.

Colonel Olcott lets out one very grave fact indeed. Madame Blavatsky told him that she had had for a familiar

John King for fourteen years. Fourteen from 1875 gives 1861.

Mr. Sinnett views all this pretence of being a medium as a pleasant comedy. One difficulty in this interpretation is the question of ways and means. Man, and woman also, must eat, drink, and sleep. More than that, they must pay for their food, drink, and lodging. A woman with private means might indulge in this rather thin comedy. A woman entirely without means could not. Then, too, if she actually knew all this time that none but fiends could communicate with mortals, it seems stretching a joke a little far to say that she recognised her father and uncle amongst these fiends. Why, too, did she send these filthy hobgoblins to profane the tomb of her father, and tear the medal of honour from his corpse?

But the question shortly will become much more complicated. In the year 1855 a thunderbolt fell from the blue. The celebrated Robert Dale Owen had taken up spiritualism, and had been much interested in the phenomena produced by Mr. and Mrs. Nelson Holmes. But suddenly American spiritualists were aghast. Mr. Robert Dale Owen produced one Eliza White who confessed that at the Holmes' séances she had personated the spirit "Katie King" in a "trick cabinet" (Olcott, "People from the Other World," p. 437). Spiritualism, as the colonel tells us, seemed to have received a death-blow.

What was the action of Madame Blavatsky when she found that the dream of the Mahatmas of Tibet had, it is true without much exertion on her side, come on earth. Will it be believed that she immediately wrote to the papers trying to set up the reputation of the Holmeses once more? Colonel Olcott gives extracts from her letter:—

"As it is, I have only done my duty: first towards spiritualism, that I have defended as well as I could from the attacks of imposture under the too transparent mask of science; then towards two helpless, slandered mediums. . . . But I am obliged to confess that I really do not believe in having done any good to spiritualism itself. . . . It is with a profound sadness in my heart that I acknowledge this fact, for I begin to think there is no help for it. For over fifteen years have I fought my battle for the blessed truth;



have travelled and preached it—though I never was born for a lecturer—from the snow-covered tops of the Caucasian Mountains, as well as from the sandy valleys of the Nile. I have proved the truth of it practically and by persuasion. For the sake of spiritualism I have left my home, an easy life amongst a civilised society, and have become a wanderer upon the face of the earth. I had already seen my hopes realised, beyond my most sanguine expectations, when my unlucky star brought me to America. Knowing this country to be the cradle of modern spiritualism I came over here from France with feelings not unlike those of a Mohammedan approaching the birthplace of his prophet," etc., etc. (Letter of H. P. B. to the *Spiritualist* of Dec. 13th, 1874).

This is strange language from a lady who had received from the Brothers of Tibet a mighty "mission," to put down spiritualism.

Then with Colonel Olcott she posted off to the séances of the Holmeses, and "John King" and "Katie King" came out of the cabinet time after time. Mr. Coleman at the Chicago Conference read a paper, since published in the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* (Sept. 16th, 1893), of which this is an extract:—

"It is evident that Madame Blavatsky and the Holmeses were in collusion in the production of spurious phenomena palmed off on Olcott as genuine. R. B. Westbrook, LL.D., one of the original officers of the Theosophical Society, stated in the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, Chicago, Sept. 14th, 1889, that Mrs. Holmes had admitted as much, and had stated that Madame Blavatsky proposed to her a partnership in the 'materialisation show business,' with Colonel Olcott as manager, claiming that she had already so 'psychologised him that he did not know his head from his heels.'"

Here is Colonel Olcott's account of it:—

"The first evening I spent in Philadelphia, I had a very long conversation through rappings with what purported to be the spirit who calls himself 'John King.' Whoever this person may be, whether he was the Buccaneer Morgan or Pontius Pilate, Columbus or Zoroaster, he has been the busiest and most powerful spirit, or what you please to call



it, connected with this whole modern spiritualism. In this country and Europe we read of his physical feats, his audible speaking, his legerdemain, his direct writing, his materialisations. He was with the Koons family in Ohio, the Davenports in New York, the Williams in London, and the mediums in France and Germany. Madame de Blavatsky encountered him fourteen years ago in Russia and Circassia, talked with and saw him in Egypt and India. I met him in London in 1870, and he seems able to converse in any language with equal ease. I have talked with him in English, French, German, Spanish, and Latin, and have heard others do the same in Greek, Russian, Italian, Georgian (Caucasus), and Turkish; his replies being always pertinent and satisfactory. His rap is peculiar and easily recognisable from others—a loud, sharp, crackling report. He objects to the application of tests, but after refusing them, will, at the most unexpected times, give such as are much more startling and conclusive than the ones proposed. He has done this with me, not once merely but dozens of times; and, really, it became the most difficult thing in the world for me to hesitate a moment longer in giving up all reserve and acknowledging myself a spiritualist *pur sang*.

"I went to Philadelphia without a theory as to the Holmes imbroglio; the newspaper accounts had been so confusing that I dismissed the whole subject from my mind, and determined to start at the very bottom and build up my belief by degrees. But at my first interview with 'John King,' he rapped out the whole secret history of the affair, telling me the parties concerned in the pretended exposure, their names, the agents they employed, the sums of money subscribed, who carried the purse, who disbursed the funds, and who received the spoils. I was amazed beyond description, for the information given was the farthest possible from what seemed credible" ("People from the Other World," pp. 454, 455).

Now let us listen to Madame Blavatsky, quoted by Colonel Olcott in his "Diary Leaves" (*Theosophist*, pp. 329, 330):—

"Yes, I am sorry to say that I had to identify myself, during that shameful exposure of the Holmes mediums, with the spiritualists. I had to save the situation, for I was sent from Paris to America on purpose to prove the pheno-

*mena and their reality, and show the fallacy of the spiritualistic theory of spirits.* But how could I do it best? I did not want people at large to know that I could *produce the same things AT WILL.* I had received orders to the contrary, and yet I had to keep alive the reality, the genuineness and *possibility* of such phenomena, in the hearts of those who, from materialists, had turned spiritualists, but now, owing to the exposure of several mediums, fell back again and returned to their scepticism. This is why, selecting a few of the faithful, I went to the Holmeses, and, helped by M. and his *power*, brought out the faces of John King and Katie King from the astral light, produced the phenomena of materialization, and allowed the spiritualists at large to believe it was done through the mediumship of Mrs. Holmes. She was terribly frightened herself, for she knew that *this once* the apparition was real. Did I do wrong? The world is not prepared yet to understand the philosophy of occult science; let them first assure themselves that there are beings in an invisible world, whether 'spirits' of the dead or elementals; and that there are hidden powers in man which are capable of making a *god* of him on earth.

"When I am dead and gone people will, perhaps, appreciate my disinterested motives. I have pledged my word to help people on to *Truth* while living, and I will keep my word. Let them abuse and revile me; let some call me a medium and a spiritualist, others an impostor. The day will come when posterity will learn to know me better. Oh, poor, foolish, credulous, wicked world!"

These séances must have been certainly very curious. At one moment an astral form of a "Brother" would issue from the "trick cabinet" and call himself "John King," hustling on his way back another "John King," in the person of Mr. Holmes, with black beard and white turban. But can we quite believe in the boasted transcendental wisdom and truth of these Mahatmas, if they resorted to these puerilities? "John King" and "Katie King" being imaginary persons, an astral presentment of these is as much a cheat as a dressed-up presentment. The Mahatmas propose, according to Mr. Sinnett, to give to the world for the first time a "block of absolute truth," and yet they

choose for their spokeswoman a lady who for nearly twenty years delivers the great message turned topsy-turvy.

But in *Light* (August 9th, 1884) the Russian lady published an explanation. I must say at once that her theory of these years and Mr. Sinnett's theory are diametrically opposed. He has exhausted his eloquence to show that on leaving the "Masters" in Tibet she had emerged from "Apprenticeship to Duty," that a solemn and transcendental "Mission" was now hers to overthrow spiritualism in the cause of "absolute truth."

She, on the other hand, boldly announces that absolute truth was at this time not quite her most prominent mind target, but merry comedy:—

"True it is I had told Colonel Olcott and many others that the form of a man, with a dark pale face, black beard, and white flowing garments and fettah, that some of them had met about the house and my room, was that of a John King, and I laughed heartily at the easy way the actual body of a living man could be mistaken for and accepted as a spirit."

Fourteen years is rather a long time to keep up the merriest little jest.

This ends the first period of Madame Blavatsky's stay in America.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE BROTHERS OF LUXOR.

MADAME BLAVATSKY'S attempt to get up what she called a "Miracle Club" and preach pure spiritualism proved a miserable failure. Colonel Olcott confesses this. (*Theosophist*, 1892, p. 335.) And so in the view of her hostile critics she had to attempt something else, and started the gospel of the Brothers of Luxor.

This secret doctrine is diametrically opposed to the secret doctrine of the Brothers of Tibet.

1. The Brothers of Luxor announced that all the phenomena of spiritualism were due not to "post-mortem visitors" but living visitors in their astral forms, super-excellent people, who personated the dead to spread spiritualism.

2. The Brothers of Tibet announced, on the contrary, that these phenomena were due to the bad halves of dead people, and that the great aim of the Brotherhood was to suppress these supremely wicked beings, and root up spiritualism.

Let us listen to Colonel Olcott ("People from the Other World," p. 452-4):—

"I reached Philadelphia, as before observed, on the 4th of January, and called upon Mr. Leslie, Dr. Child, Mr. Owen, Dr. Fellger and others. I took rooms at the private hotel of Mrs. Martin in Girard Street, where our friend Madame de Blavatsky was also quartered. My acquaintance with Madame de Blavatsky, begun under such interesting circumstances at Chittenden, has continued, and recently become more intimate in consequence of her having accepted the offer of M. Aksakow, the eminent St. Petersburg publisher, former tutor to the Czarowitch, to translate my Chittenden letters into the Russian language for republication in the capital of the Czar.

"I gradually discovered that this lady, whose brilliant

accomplishments and eminent virtues of character, no less than her exalted social position, entitle her to the highest respect, is one of the most remarkable mediums in the world. At the same time, her mediumship is totally different from that of any other person I ever met; for, instead of being controlled by spirits to do their will, it is she who seems to control them to do her bidding. Whatever may be the secret by which this power has been attained I cannot say, but that she possesses it I have had too many proofs to permit me to doubt the fact. Many years of her life have been passed in Oriental lands, where what we recognise as spiritualism has for years been regarded as the mere rudimental developments of a system which seems to have established such relations between mortals and the immortals as to enable certain of the former to have dominion over many of the latter. I pass by such of the mysteries of the Egyptian, Hindoo, and other priestly orders as may be ascribed to a knowledge of the natural sciences, and refer to those higher branches of that so-called white magic, which has been practised for countless centuries by the initiated.

"Whether Madame de Blavatsky has been admitted behind the veil or not can only be surmised, for she is very reticent upon the subject, but her startling gifts seem impossible of explanation upon any other hypothesis. She wears upon her bosom the mystic jewelled emblem of an Eastern Brotherhood, and is probably the only representative in this country of this fraternity, 'who,' as Bulwer remarks, 'in an earlier age boasted of secrets of which the philosopher's stone was but the least; who considered themselves the heirs of all that the Chaldeans, the Magi, the Gymnosophists, and the Platonists had taught; and who differed from all the darker sons of magic in the virtue of their lives, the purity of their doctrines and their insisting, as the foundation of all wisdom, on the subjugation of the senses, and the intensity of religious faith.'

"After knowing this remarkable lady, and seeing the wonders that occur in her presence so constantly that they actually excited at length but a passing emotion of surprise, I am almost tempted to believe that the stories of Eastern fables are but simple narratives of fact; and that

this very American outbreak of spiritualistic phenomena is *under the control of an Order, which, while depending for its results upon unseen agents, has its existence upon Earth among men.*"

It seems very plain from this last paragraph that the idea of the "Order" came in the first instance from Colonel Olcott himself. Here is another passage from his ("Diary Leaves") p. 647-9 :—

"As already explained, the self-advertising attack of the late Dr. George M. Beard—an electropathic physician of New York City—upon the Eddys, and his wild and false assertion that he could imitate the form-apparitions with 'three dollars worth of drapery,' lashed H. P. B. into the Berserker writing-rage, and made her send the *Graphic* that caustic reply, covering a bet of 500 dollars that he could not make good his boast, which first acquainted the American public with her existence and name. Naturally, people took sides; the friends of spiritualism and the mediums siding with H. P. B., while the opponents, especially the materialistically inclined scientists, ranged themselves in the cohort of Dr. Beard's supporters. The one who profited by the dispute was Beard, whose ruse—worthy of Pears, Beecham, or Siegel—advertised him and his electricity beyond his expectations. Profiting by the chance, he gave a thoroughly well-advertised lecture on this subject, and another, if I remember aright, upon mesmerism and thought-reading, at the New York Academy of Music. The *Banner of Light*, the *R. P. Journal*, and other papers, commenting upon H. P. B.'s anti-Beard letter, she replied, and so very speedily found herself with her hands full of controversy. As I said before, she took up the attitude of an out-and-out spiritualist, who not only believed, but *knew*, that the powers behind the mediums, which wrote, produced physical phenomena, talked in air-formed voices, and even showed their entire forms or disconnected faces, hands, feet, or other members, were the earth-haunting spirits of the dead; neither more nor less. In a previous chapter I quoted passages from her published letters, and in articles going to prove this, and in her very first letter to me, written from New York within a week after she left me at Chittenden (October, 1874) addressing me as 'Dear Friend,'

and signing herself 'Jack,' and in her second one, dated six days later, and signed 'Jack Blavatsky,' she entreats me not to praise the mediumistic musical performance of one Jesse Sheppard, whose pretence to having sung before the Czar, and other boasts, she had discovered to be absolutely false; as such a course on my part would 'injure spiritualism more than anything else in the world.' 'I speak to you,' she tells me, 'as a true friend to yourself and (as a) spiritualist anxious to save spiritualism from a danger.' In the same letter, referring to a promise given her by 'Mayflower' and 'George Dix,' two of the alleged spirit-controls of Horatio Eddy, that they would help her by influencing the judge before whom was pending her lawsuit to recover the money put into the Long Island market-garden co-partnership, she says: 'Mayflower was right, judge . . . came in with another decision in my favour.' Did she believe, then, that medium-controlling spirits could and would influence justices? If not, what does her language imply? Either she was a spiritualist, or so represented herself for the time being, with the ulterior design of gradually shifting spiritualists from the Western to the Eastern platform of belief in regard to the mediumistic phenomena. In her anti-Beard letter (*N. Y. Daily Graphic*, Nov. 13th, 1874), she says,—speaking of the incident of the bringing to her by the 'spirits' of Horatio Eddy, of a decoration-buckle that had been buried with her father's body at Stavropol—'I deem it my duty as a spiritualist to,' etc., etc. Later on, she told me that the outburst of mediumistic phenomena had been caused by the Brotherhood of Adepts as an evolutionary agency, and I embodied this idea in a phrase in my book ("P. O. W.," p. 454, top), suggesting the thinkable hypothesis that such might be the fact. But then, in that case, the spiritualistic outbreak could not be regarded as absolutely maleficent, as some extremists have depicted it; for it is inconceivable—at least to me, who know them—that those elder brothers of humanity would ever employ, even for the ultimate good of the race, an agency in itself absolutely bad. The Jesuit motto, *Finis coronat opus*, is not written on the temple walls of the Fraternity.

"In the same number of the *Daily Graphic* to which she



contributed her anti-Beard letter was published her biography, from notes furnished by herself. She says, 'In 1858, I returned to Paris and made the acquaintance of Daniel Home, the spiritualist . . . Home converted me to spiritualism . . . After this I went to Russia. I converted my father to spiritualism.' In an article defending the Holmes mediums from the treacherous attack of their ex-partner and show-manager, Dr. Child, she speaks of spiritualism as 'our belief' and 'our cause'; and again, 'the whole belief of us spiritualists'; still further, 'If we spiritualists are to be laughed at, and scoffed, and ridiculed, and sneered at, we ought to know, at least, the reason why.' Certainly; and some of her surviving colleagues might profitably keep it in mind. In the *Spiritual Scientist* of March 8th, 1875, she says that a certain thing would 'go towards showing that notwithstanding the divine truth of our faith (spiritualism), and the teachings of our invisible guardians (the spirits of the circles), some spiritualists have not profited by them, to learn impartiality and justice.'"

Colonel Olcott becomes a Chela :—

"Little by little H. P. B. let me know of the existence of Eastern adepts and their powers, and gave me, as above stated, the proofs of her own control over the occult forces of nature by a multitude of phenomena. At first, as I have remarked, she ascribed them to 'John King,' and it was through his alleged friendliness that I first came into personal correspondence with the Masters. Most of their letters I have preserved with my own endorsement of the dates of their reception. For years, and until shortly before I left New York for India, I was connected in pupilage with the African section of the Occult Brotherhood; but later, when a certain wonderful thing of a psycho-physiological nature happened to H. P. B., that I am not at liberty to speak about, and that nobody has up to the present suspected, although enjoying her intimacy and confidence, as they fancy, I was transferred to the Indian section and a different group of masters" ("Diary Leaves," p. 331).

The initiation was by "precipitated" letters, as in the case of Mrs. Besant and Mr. Sinnett. But at this point we are met with a difficulty. Here is one of the letters :—

"The time is come to let you know who I am. I am not



a disembodied spirit, Brother ; I am a living man, gifted with such powers by our Lodge as are in store for yourself some day. I cannot be with you otherwise than in spirit, for thousands of miles separate us at present. Be patient, of good cheer, untiring labourer of the Sacred Brotherhood. Work on and toil too for yourself, for self-reliance is the most powerful factor of success. Help your needy brother and you will be helped yourself in virtue of the never-failing and ever-active Law of Compensation."

Does it not seem from this that the "Committee of Seven—the Brothers of Luxor" at first preached open spiritualism. "The time has come to let you know that I am a living man." Plainly the first precipitated letters professed to come from dead men.

"And yet," says the bewildered colonel, "in spite of the above, I was made to believe that we worked in collaboration with at least one disincarnate entity. He was a great Platonist." Plainly the "Committee of Seven" were not very clear in their own minds about the "Secret Doctrine."

But a still more strange event occurred. The bad half of Paracelsus came across the ages to greet the colonel.

"While we lived in West Thirty-fourth Street, H. P. B. and I were standing in the passage between the front and back rooms, when her manner and voice suddenly changed. She took my hand, as if to express friendship, and asked :

"Will you have Theophrastus for a friend, Henry?"

This shows, at any rate, that dead ghosts are not too ceremonious.

I now come to the first miracle of the Brothers of Luxor, the famous "Committee of Seven." It is given by Colonel Olcott in his "Diary Leaves" in the *Theosophist* (pp. 330, 331):—

"I wish I could recall to memory the first phenomenon done by her confessedly as by an exercise of her own will power, but I cannot. It must have been just after she began writing 'Isis Unveiled,' and possibly it was the following: After leaving 16 Irving Place and making a visit to friends in the country, she occupied rooms for a time in another house in Irving Place, a few doors from the Lotus Club, and on the same side of the street. It was there that later the informal gathering of friends was held, at which I

proposed the formation of what afterwards became the Theosophical Society. Among her callers was an Italian artist, a Signor B., formerly a Carbonaro. I was sitting alone with her in her drawing-room when he made his first visit. They talked of Italian affairs, and he suddenly pronounced the name of one of the greatest of the adepts. She started as if she had received an electric shock, looked him straight in the eyes, and said (in Italian), 'What is it? I am ready.' He passed it off carelessly, but thenceforward the talk was all about magic, magicians, and adepts. It was a cold, snowy winter evening, but Signor B. went and opened one of the French windows, made some beckoning passes towards the outer air, and presently a pure white butterfly came into the room and went flying about near the ceiling. H. P. B. laughed in a cheerful way, and said, 'That is pretty, but I can also do it!' She, too, opened the window, made similar beckoning passes, and presently a second white butterfly came fluttering in. It mounted to the ceiling, chased the other around the room, played with it now and then, with it flew to a corner, and, presto! both disappeared at once while we were looking at them. 'What does that mean?' I asked. 'Only this, that Signor B. can make an elemental turn itself into a butterfly, and so can I.'

But here comes a puzzle. A very conscientious man, an English barrister, Mr. Massey, read this, and at once sent the following letter to *Light* (July 16th, 1892).

#### "MADAME BLAVATSKY AND THE BUTTERFLIES.

"SIR,—As I was (on another occasion) witness of the butterfly phenomenon described by Colonel Olcott in his notes on Madame Blavatsky, it occurs to me that a contemporary record of an independent observation may not be without interest in point of evidence. I extract from a diary I began on arrival at New York, September 6th, 1875, so much as relates to the incident in question:—'Called on Colonel Olcott, and was taken by him in the evening to Madame Blavatsky's. Present: Mr. S. [I suppress names as Colonel Olcott does so], an Englishman (editor of the *American Bibliophile*), Signor B. (an Italian artist,

formerly secretary to Mazzini), Colonel O., Madame Blavatsky, and myself. . . . Signor B. asked me if I thought spirits could materialise themselves into butterflies. There were none visible to me in the room then, but the windows were wide open. About a quarter of an hour after, in came a butterfly fluttering about the room. "Let us have another," said Madame B., and looked towards the window as if summoning one. Almost directly another one came in. Then they were required to disappear. One of them did, but not the other for some time, when it got behind the valence of the curtain. I thought little of this, though it impressed Olcott, because they did not fly to the candles, after the nature of moths (and they were nothing but large moths).'

"However, I find it added that on the next night I saw one of these large moths there, which did go to the candle, 'so I think they must be frequent visitors, and that no magic is required to account for them.' Then further: 'Olcott told me he had seen [Signor] B. bring clouds over the moon on a clear, cloudless night—but twenty minutes intervened between the summons and the appearance—time enough for a light cloud to arise naturally, and in a city the horizon is not seen.' This gentleman favoured me with another slight display of his powers of mystification, but I seem to have subjected the performance to a very sceptical criticism."

This again makes a complication, because if a number of butterflies are flying about, it is difficult to tell which is a "Brother of Luxor," and which only an ordinary butterfly. It is sad to think that after all the new society had reason to be dissatisfied with the Italian "Signor B."

"I had seen him on the best of terms with H. P. B., talking in the most friendly and unreserved way about Italy, Garibaldi, Mazzini, the Carbonari, the Eastern and Western adepts, etc., and matching phenomena, like the trick of the white butterflies, and I certainly had reason to be amazed when, putting on an air of mystery, he warned me to break off my intimacy with her. He said she was a very wicked and dangerous woman, and would bring some terrible calamity upon me if I allowed myself to fall under

her malign spell. This, he said, he was ordered by the great master whose name I had heard him pronounce to H. P. B., to tell me. I looked at the man to see if I could detect the concealed meaning of this preposterous speech, and finally said, 'Well, signor, I know that the personage you mention exists; I have every reason, after seeing your phenomena, to suspect that you have relations with him or with the Brotherhood; I am ready, even to the sacrifice of my life, to obey his behests; and now I demand that you give me a certain sign by which I shall know, positively and without room for the least doubt, that Madame Blavatsky is the devil you depict, and that the Master's will is that my acquaintance with her shall cease.' The Italian hesitated, stammered out something incoherent, and turned the conversation. Though he could draw inky clouds out of the moon, he could not throw black doubt into my heart about my new friend and guide through the mazy intricacies of occult science. The next time I saw H. P. B. I told her about B.'s warning, whereupon she smiled, said I had nicely passed through that little test, and wrote a note to Signor B. to 'forget the way to her door,' which he did" ("Diary Leaves," p. 589).

Another miracle of these Brothers was called in question:—

"H. P. B. (at a signal, I suppose, received by her privately from 'John King' or some other invisible co-worker) would cease painting the flower she was at work upon, lay down her brush, cover the picture with a cloth, and step back with me to the other side of the room or go out; presently she would return, remove the cloth, and there we would find one of these exquisite, sylph-like forms or some other detail of drawing that was not there the moment before. These sylphs were not drawn in outline as an artist, like Retsch, say, who was a master in this branch of art, would have sketched them, but they were formed by *simply omitting the blue background* and letting the white satin cloth under the painting show through. Does the reader understand? No brush or pencil tracing formed the figure's outlines, it was an objectivated thought, the visible projection of a painter's thought image: outside the boundary lines of the body rolled blue clouds and masses of vapour,

inside them existed the graceful shape of an air-born sylph, the articulation of her lovely limbs indicated, in the style of Retsch, by single lines. To my somewhat trained artistic eye it was but too evident that the same hand which drew and painted the cabbage-sized roses and mammoth rosebuds at the foot of the balustrade, could not have introduced those floating sprites, the artistic embodiments of grace and of true anatomical proportion. And even now, after reading my letter, which gives the facts, I cannot understand how the misproportioned human figure, the balustrade, and wreaths could have been done by thought precipitation: it looks more as if H. P. B.'s hand had drawn them and she had forgotten the fact when writing to General Lippitt. Still, it may be the bad drawing was in her mind, not in her hand" ("Diary Leaves," p. 522).

But here Mr. Coleman, in the lecture already cited, chimes in:—

"Early in 1875 Madame Blavatsky sent to General F. J. Lippitt a picture which she said had been painted for the General by the spirit John King himself. In *Mind and Matter*, Philadelphia, November 27th, 1880, was published conclusive evidence, found in Madame Blavatsky's room in Philadelphia, that she had herself painted this picture except certain flowers, etc., which were already on the satin when she procured it. Madame Blavatsky is known to have had fair skill as a painter. Further, Mrs. Hannah M. Wolff, of Washington, D.C., in a published account of her experience with Madame Blavatsky in 1874, has stated that Madame Blavatsky having claimed that certain pictures were painted by spiritual power direct, she was watched by three journalists residing in the same house, and they saw Madame Blavatsky get up in the night and paint them herself."

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

WE now come to the "Theosophical Society." Madame Blavatsky in her "Caves and Jungles of Hindustan," p. 21, calls it "*La Société des Malcontents du Spiritisme.*" Will it be believed that this was in the first instance as much a spiritualistic society as the *Société Spirite* at Cairo! The first paper read before the society went to show that in ancient Egypt communion with the dead was "reduced to a positive science." This paper was read by a Mr. Felt in the "parlours of Madame Blavatsky." Colonel Olcott in the *Banner of Light* announced that "Occultism does not rob spiritualism of one of its comforting features, nor abate one jot of its importance as an argument for immortality. It denies the identity of no real human spirit that ever has or ever will approach an inquirer."

Mrs. Hardinge Britten, an original member of the society, gives these details in her work, "Nineteenth Century Miracles" (p. 440). The society was started September 7th, 1875.

But this great Theosophical Society in its early stages was nothing at all like the society that we know so well. It still had an eye on the "Secret Doctrine" of the Brothers of Luxor, or perhaps really called these imaginary Brothers into being. Its moving spirit was a Mr. Felt, who had visited Egypt and studied its antiquities. He was a student also of the Kabala; and he had a somewhat eccentric theory that the dog-headed and hawk-headed figures painted on the Egyptian monuments were not mere symbols, but accurate portraits of the "Elementals." He professed to be able to evoke and control them. He announced that he had discovered the secret "formularies" of the old Egyptian magicians. Plainly the Theosophical Society at starting was an *Egyptian* school of occultism. Indeed Colonel

Olcott, who furnishes these details ("Diary Leaves" in the *Theosophist*, November to December, 1892), lets out that the first title suggested was the "Egyptological Society."

In point of fact it is quite plain from the "Diary Leaves" of the somewhat too candid colonel that theosophy, instead of springing at once like Minerva from Jove's head, was a growth, an evolution. Madame Blavatsky (or her spooks) was very quick to take hints. Colonel Olcott, as we have seen, suggested an "Order" of Secret Brothers. She immediately assimilated it. Mr. Felt announced that he knew the formularies which could evoke and control the "Elementals." Madame Blavatsky soon announced a similar power, though at this time, according to the colonel, she had read little, and had a very vague idea what an "Elemental" meant.

"In point of fact both of us used to call the spirits of the elements 'elementaries,' thus causing much confusion, but when 'Isis' was being written I suggested that we should employ the distinctive terms 'elemental,' 'elementary,' in the connection they have ever since had" (*Theosophist*, August, 1892).

After writing all this I have suddenly come across a chapter of the "Diary Leaves" that has fairly taken my breath away. Colonel Olcott himself is much exercised with the amazing differences between the Secret Doctrine of the "Brothers of Luxor" and the Secret Doctrine of the Brothers of Tibet. He gives some of the differences. Thus re-incarnation, the "strong foundation stone of the ancient occult philosophy," is announced in "Isis Unveiled" to be "as rare as the teratological phenomenon of a two-headed infant" ("Isis," vol. i., p. 351).

"This," says Colonel Olcott justly, "was the sum and substance of our teaching at that time, and shows how infinitely far away from believing in re-incarnation H. P. B. and I were then" (*Theosophist*, August, 1893).

But a still "stronger foundation stone" was kept out of the early building, namely the "Seven Principles of Man." All know the importance attached to this great revelation in the "Secret Doctrine," and other theosophical treatises. Folks write of them as if a cabman or a policeman in Piccadilly, if he had these seven principles read out to him,



could at once transmute metals. It seems quite certain that Madame Blavatsky copied them out of a life of Paracelsus :

The "Seven Principles of Man" (Paracelsus).	The "Seven Principles of Man" (Blavatsky).
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The animal body.</li> <li>2. The archæus (vital force).</li> <li>3. The sidereal body.</li> <li>4. The animal soul.</li> <li>5. The rational soul.</li> <li>6. The spiritual soul.</li> <li>7. The man of the new Olympus.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The animal body (Rupa).</li> <li>2. Vitality (Jiva).</li> <li>3. The astral body (linga sarira).</li> <li>4. The animal soul (kama rupa).</li> <li>5. Intellect (manas).</li> <li>6. The spiritual soul (Buddhi).</li> <li>7. Spirit (Atma).</li> </ol>

But if once more we get her power of assimilation we get also her confusion of ideas. Paracelsus was a Kabalist, and he was hampered with the doctrine of the resurrection of the body at the day of judgment:—

"The natural man possesses the elements of the Earth, and the Earth is his mother, and he re-enters into her and loses his natural flesh, but the real man will be re-born at the day of the resurrection into another spiritual and glorified body" (Hartmann, "Paracelsus," p. 68).

Thus he held that only four out of the seven principles were immortal. Madame Blavatsky had to adapt her seven principles to quite a different teaching, namely the Indian doctrine of the metempsychosis. In consequence she confuses all through two distinct ideas, seven principles (that which man has a *principio*), and seven stages of spiritual progress.

But here again the Brothers of Luxor differ from the Brothers of Tibet. Colonel Olcott quotes a letter from Madame Blavatsky to the *Revue Spirite* of Paris (June 1st, 1879), in which she announces that man has *four* principles, not seven.

"Yes, for the theosophists of New York man is a trinity and not a duality, for by adding the physical body, man is a *Tetraktis* or quaternary."

When Mahatmas give two secret doctrines, diametrically opposed the one to the other, what is to be said?



Colonel Olcott is plainly puzzled. He gives three theories, but seems little enamoured of any one of them.

1. The Mahatmas and Madame Blavatsky knew all about re-incarnation and the "Seven Principles" as early as 1857, but the laws of occult obscurantism required that these great truths should be not only obscured but falsely stated for some twenty-one years. "She used constantly to write and say that it was not permissible to prematurely give out the details of Eastern occultism, and that is very reasonable and easily grasped. But I have never been able to formulate any theory of ethics or honourable policy which required the opposite of the truth to be taught as true. Silence I can cheerfully concede, but not misrepresentation" (p. 642).

The colonel emphasises the fact that the wrong doctrine of re-incarnation was given as *distinctly coming from a "Brother."*

2. Not liking his first theory, the colonel goes off to a second, which was that the Mahatma himself was misinformed at first, in fact that he got for transmission what Mr. Sinnett calls the "block of absolute truth" after 1856. But if a Mahatma can give us an absolute truth turned topsy-turvy, whom can we trust?

3. The third theory of Colonel Olcott seems so astounding that I think that we ought to hand it over to Mr. Myers and the Society for Psychical Research. They have gone into the subject of "multiplex personality." "I have," says the colonel, "sometimes been tempted to suspect that none of us, her colleagues, know the normal H. P. B. at all."

The Russian lady, he thinks, was killed at the battle of Mentana, and a mighty Mahatma who wanted to give a block of absolute truth to the world revived it by a magical process.

This "suspicion" of his in a later chapter seems to have become more definite in his mind. The Mahatmas distinctly told him at last that the body of H. P. B. was a "shell" occupied by one of themselves (*Theosophist*, Aug., 1893).

This feat, called Avesá, is often done in India, the colonel tells us, and he goes on to quote from the "*Pāncharātra Padmasambhitā Charyāpada*" (c. xxiv, vv. 131-140) full instructions for performing this rite:—

"I now tell thee, O Lotus-born, the method by which to

enter another's body. The corpse to be occupied should be fresh, pure, of middle age, endued with all good qualities and free from the awful diseases resulting from sin (*viz.*, syphilis, leprosy, etc.). The body should be that of a Brahmin or even of a Kshatriya. It should be laid out in some secluded place (where there is no risk of interruption during the ceremonial process), with its face turned towards the sky and its legs straightened out. Beside its legs, shouldst thou seat thyself in a posture of yoga, but previously, O four-faced one, shouldst thou with fixed mental concentration, have long exercised this yoga power. The *jīva* is located in the solar plexus, is of itself radiant as the sun and of the form of *hamsa* (a bird), and it moves along the *Idā* and *Pīngalā nādis* (two alleged channels of psychic circulation). Having been concentrated as *hamsa* (by yoga), it will pass out through the nostrils, and, like a bird, dart through space. Thou shouldst accustom thyself to this exercise, sending out the *Prāna* to the height of a palm-tree, and causing it to travel a mile, or five miles or more, and then re-attracting it into thy body, which it must re-enter as it left it, through the nostrils, and restore it to its natural centre in the solar plexus. This must be practised daily until perfection be reached.

"Then, having acquired the requisite skill, the Yogi may attempt the experiment of psychical transfer, and, seated as above described, he will be able to withdraw his *Prāna-jīva* from his own body, and introduce it into the chosen corpse, by the path of the nostrils, until it reaches the empty solar-plexus, there establishes its residence, re-animates the deceased person, and causes him to be seen as though 'risen from the dead.'"

But this arrangement created difficulties that could not have been quite anticipated. The body of the dead Russian lady was still a power. It appears that when this lady was alive she had a blemish—she did not always speak the truth. This blemish stuck to her "shell." In spite of all the transcendental power of the Mahatma, the fibbing could not be quenched. The colonel proves this:—

"I have heard her tell the most conflicting stories about herself," he says in one passage.

Here is another:—

"So as to her age she told all sorts of stories, making herself twenty, forty, and even sixty years older than she really was. We have in our scrap-books certain of these tales reported by successive interviewers." But when a lady's age is concerned the *Rupa* might be expected to be too strong for the *Atma*.

Here is a graver fib.

Just before she arrived in India she announced that the Theosophical Society "counts some thousands of Europeans and Americans in its ranks." "At this time," says Colonel Olcott, "it was composed of perhaps a hundred members," (p. 645).

"No more difficult work," says Mrs. Besant ("Theosophy," p. 2), could be proposed, perhaps, to any body of people, than the understanding of theosophy."

If Colonel Olcott's authoritative statement, backed up as it is by the Mahatmas, be true, I quite agree with this; and a small table of dates will make clear its astounding complications:—

Blavatsky born	...	...	...	...	...	...	1831
Married	...	...	...	...	...	...	1848
First trip to India	...	...	...	...	...	...	1855
Initiated by Mahatmas in Tibet, and commissioned to overthrow spiritualism,	...	...	...	...	...	...	1857
Learns what spiritualism is from Home the medium	...	...	...	...	...	...	1858
First has John King for a control	...	...	...	...	...	...	1861
BATTLE OF MENTANA, November 3rd	...	...	...	...	...	...	1867
Société Spirite, Cairo	...	...	...	...	...	...	1871-2
America	...	...	...	...	...	...	1875
Bombay	...	...	...	...	...	...	1879
Publishes the great revelation of the Mahatmas	...	...	...	...	...	...	1881

1. If any Tibetan initiate did not come across the Russian lady until November 3rd, 1867, it is plain that all her previous occult history, the seven years' initiation in Tibet, the visit to the underground crypts, the copying out of the Book of Dzyan, her mighty "Mission" to overthrow spiritualism, all these things are simple specimens of her genius for fibs.

2. But how does the truthful Mahatma come out of it all? In "Isis" and "The Secret Doctrine," he gravely recounts all these matters as if they were true. He an-

nounces in America that he has a mission to support spiritualism. He announces in India that he has a mission to overthrow it. He announces that the dead return, and that he himself is a dead man. He announces that the dead can never return. He goes through the difficult process of Avesá to overthrow the doctrine of re-incarnation, then makes it the keystone of his "Theosophy."

When a report got abroad that Mr. Felt was going to evoke a quantity of dog-headed and hawk-headed "Elementals" at a certain meeting of the Theosophical Society, folks crowded to enrol their names. But Mr. Felt made himself scarce; and Madame Blavatsky, although she also could evoke and control elementals (which at this date were dog-headed) refused to do so. Ordinary spiritualistic "mediums" had to be chartered, as the new society was rapidly dying.

To this dearth of marvels there is an exception recorded by Mr. Coleman in the paper already noticed that he read at Chicago.

"A woman, strangely attired, and veiled, came into the doctor's (Dr. Westbrook's) house during a meeting there, at which the Rev. W. R. Algar, Olcott, and H. P. Blavatsky were present, and handed the latter a letter purporting to come from the 'Brothers,' the messenger being presumed to be an 'Elementary.' A few months afterwards Dr. Westbrook discovered that the presumed elementary was an Irish servant girl to whom Madame Blavatsky had promised to pay five dollars for the personation of the messenger of the 'Brothers.' Having failed to get her pay, she confessed the fraud."

But the dying society suddenly made a brilliant rally. An eccentric Baron de Palm, who had joined it, sickened and died. He was "the seignior of the castles of Old and New Wartensee on Lake Constance," the "presumable owner of 20,000 acres of land in Wisconsin, forty town lots in Chicago," etc. He was a Knight Grand Cross, Commander of the Sovereign Order of the Holy Sepulchre, Prince of the Roman Empire, Chamberlain to H. M. the King of Bavaria. By will he left all his property to Colonel Olcott in trust for the exclusive benefit of the Theosophical Society,

Here was a windfall, £20,000 at least. So said the sympathisers who crowded round to congratulate the "President Founder." Madame Blavatsky, rich in the knowledge of variety entertainments, at once projected a magnificent "pagan funeral." A "masonic temple" was prepared. The "casket was of rosewood, trimmed with silver." On it, and on "each side of it were placed Oriental symbols of the faith of the dead man." Seven candles of different colours burned upon the coffin, and these, with a brazier of incense, signified fire worship. Upon the right stood a cross with a serpent about it, the cross typifying the creative principle of nature, the serpent the principle of evolution. Triangular black tickets of admission were prepared, also "Orphic hymns." Seven members of the Theosophical Society, clad in black robes, carried in their hands "twigs of palm" to ward off evil spirits (E. Hardinge Britten, "Nineteenth Century Miracles," p. 442.)

A journal of the day, the *New York World*, gives further details. I do not know whether the Orphic hymns are quite authentic:—

"'All right,' said the colonel, 'go ahead and make out your programme, but leave everybody out but the members of the society, for the Masons won't have anything to do with it.'"

"Two hours were then spent in making out an order of march, and a programme of exercises after the procession reaches the temple, and the following is the result. The procession will move in the following order—

"Colonel Olcott as high priest, wearing a leopard skin, and carrying a roll of papyrus (brown card-board).

"Mr. Cobb as sacred scribe, with style and tablet.

"Egyptian mummy-case, borne upon a sledge drawn by four oxen. (Also a slave bearing a pot of lubricating oil.)

"Madame Blavatsky as chief mourner, and also bearer of the sistrum. (She will wear a long linen garment extending to the feet, and a girdle about the waist.)

"Coloured boy, carrying three Abyssinian geese (Philadelphia chickens) to place upon the bier.

"Vice-President Felt, with the eye of Osiris painted on his left breast, and carrying an asp (bought at a toy store on Eighth Avenue).

"Dr. Pancoast, singing an ancient Theban dirge,

"Isis and Nephtys, beginning and end ;  
One more victim to Amenti we send,  
Pay we the fare, and let us not tarry,  
Cross the Styx by the Roosevelt Street ferry.

"Slaves in mourning gowns, carrying the offerings and libations, to consist of early potatoes, asparagus, roast beef, French pancakes, bock beer, and New Jersey cider.

"Treasurer Newton as chief of the musicians, playing the double pipe.

"Other musicians, performing on eight-stringed harps, tom-toms, etc.

"Boys carrying a large lotus (sun-flower).

"Librarian Fassit, who will alternate with music by repeating the lines beginning :

"Here Horus comes, I see the boat,  
Friends, stay your flowing tears ;  
The soul of man goes through a goat  
In just three thousand years.

"At the temple the ceremony will be short and simple. The oxen will be left standing on the side-walk, with a boy near by to prevent them goring the passers-by. Besides the Theurgic hymn, printed above in full, the Coptic national anthem will be sung, translated and adapted to the occasion as follows :

"Sitting Cynocephalus, up in a tree,  
I see you, and you see me.  
River full of crocodile, see his long snout !  
Hoist up the shadoof and pull him right out."

Colonel Olcott made a splendid speech on the occasion, but, as he says, it cost him £2000 a year. The "pagan funeral" attracted a great deal of attention, and all his clients deserted him. He was a solicitor as well as a journalist, and the vast fortune of the Baron de Palm turned out to be quite imaginary.

"Our first shock came when we opened his trunk at the

hospital. It contained two of my own shirts, from which the stitched name-mark had been picked out."

It is asserted by some that one portion of the baron's legacy was more valuable. Professor Coues and M. Papus, the leader of the French occultists, declare that "*Isis Unveiled*" was fabricated out of the MSS. left by the eccentric but impecunious baron. Mrs. Hardinge Britten, who was an original member of the Theosophical Society, supports this view. Colonel Olcott, on the other hand, tells us that that great work was due partly to collaborateurs and partly to automatic writing with Madame Blavatsky for the prophetess. I do not see that the question at issue is very important.

The "Miracle Club" having failed, and the "Brothers of Luxor" having missed fire, the wonderful Russian lady conceived new projects. She wrote to India proposing to come there with Colonel Olcott. The wreck of the Theosophical Society was to be joined to the *Ârya Samâj*.

## CHAPTER VII.

### ĀRYA SAMĀJ.

In 1 Chronicles xvii, 16, we read "And David sat before the Lord."

THE Old and New Testaments are studied very carefully in England, and the Indian religions are scarcely studied at all, and yet the latter throw much light on the former. Palestine was an Asiatic civilisation. India is an Asiatic civilisation. All traces of the Palestine of Ezra and Moses have passed away, but in India, as in the days of Aaron, the priest of Siva throws ashes in the air to bring a malediction on his foemen, the maidens of Krishna weep for the Indian Tammuz, the departed god of summer. In India the robbers still dig into the walls of houses as in the days of Job. In India the long-haired man of god sits under the juniper tree of Elias. The oak of enchantments (see Stanley, "Sinai and Palestine," p. 141) has not yet been cut down.

The early stone-using man many thousand years ago conceived an unseen being. Like the Tsui Goab of the modern Australians, his first god was an ancestor, and as the ancestor in life loved human flesh, bull's flesh, a superior wigwam, much flattery and much homage, religion began to consist of meat-offerings and drink-offerings, a palace for the god and an elaborate system of court ceremonial.

But by and by, on the banks of the Ganges, a great advance was made. It was judged that instead of trying to conceive God from the externals of humanity, it would be more wise to look for hints of Him into man's soul. And as some men seemed more spiritual than others, and as this state of spirituality seemed to advance as the entanglements of the lower life diminished, it began to be judged that by deadening or "mortifying" the flesh, the spirit would be-



come lucid. Hence yoga in India, and eremites (from erema, the desert) in Christianity.

As early as the date of the Atharva Veda, or say, roughly, a thousand years before Christ, the Rishi Angiras informed the wealthy householder, Saunaka, that there were two sorts of knowledge, the "superior knowledge" and the "inferior knowledge."

"Know Brahma alone!" was the motto of the superior knowledge.

An extract from the "Mundaka Upanishad" of the Atharva Veda may here throw light on Brahma and union with him:

"He is great and incomprehensible by the senses, and consequently his nature is beyond human conception. He, though more subtle than vacuum itself, shines in various ways. From those who do not know him he is at a greater distance than the limits of space, and to those who acquire a knowledge of him he is near. Whilst residing in animate creatures he is perceived, although obscurely, by those who apply their thoughts to him. He is not perceptible by the human sight, nor is he describable by means of speech, neither can he be the object of any of the organs of sense, nor can he be conceived by the help of austerities and religious rites. But one whose mind is purified by the light of true knowledge, through incessant contemplation, perceives him, the most pure god. Such is the invisible Supreme Being. He should be seen in the heart wherein breath, consisting of five species, rests. The mind being perfectly freed from impurity, god, who spreads over the mind and all the senses, imparts a knowledge of himself to the heart."

The mystics of all lands sought this union, by extasia, by contemplation. Yoga, the word for Indian magic, means simply "union." Sangha, the third person of the Buddhist Trinity, also means "union." The divine man Purusha was the result of an union between Buddha, spirit, and Dharma, matter. Thomas à Kempis, in his "Soliloquy of the Soul," has a chapter headed, "On the Union of the Soul with God" (chap. xiii.). St. Theresa had her *oraison d'union*. St. Augustine based all his mysticism on the text (John xiv. 23), "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me he will keep my words; and my Father will love him,

and we will come unto him and make our abode with him." Clement of Alexandria sketches the end to be kept in view by the "Christian Gnostic": "Dwelling with the Lord he will continue his familiar friend, sharing the same hearth according to the spirit" (*"Miscellany,"* p. 60). Dr. Vaughan, in his *"Hours with the Mystics,"* shows that the motto of the Neo-Platonist was: "Withdraw into thyself; and the adytum of thine own soul will reveal to thee profounder secrets than the cave of Mithras" (vol. i., p. 22).

In the India to which Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott are now hastening, there was at this date a Hindoo, the leader of a movement to which the Theosophical Society proposed a junction. Dayānanda Sarasvatī seemed an old Vedic Rishi dropped down through thirty centuries on to the India of Mr. Rudyard Kipling. He had travelled everywhere, and read all the Sanskrit books. He had gone through all the rigours of the genuine yoga. He was a mystic, a religious enthusiast. He believed the Vedas to be the one inspired scripture, and his aim was to bring back the Hindoo religion to that simpler faith. His disciples he called the *Ārya Samāj*.

But can oil and water mingle? The true "Secret Doctrine" of the Theosophists, according to Mr. Sinnett, was known to Madame Blavatsky as early as 1857. The main teaching was that all intercourse with the world of ghosts was confined to the bad halves of mortals, who, at death, were cut in two. There was another prominent doctrine, atheism. Dr. Wyld, at one time President of the London Lodge, has published a book, *"Theosophy, or Spiritual Dynamics,"* in which he announces that he left the society when Madame Blavatsky proclaimed that "there is no god personal or impersonal." Says Mr. Sinnett, "They (the Mahatmas) never occupy themselves with any conception remotely resembling the god of churches and creeds" (*"Esoteric Buddhism,"* p. 177).

Since the days of Henry Colebrooke it is scarcely necessary to descant upon the fine deism of the Rig Veda, the oldest book in the world. At a bound it sprang from the rude worship of storms, and fire, and thunder, to the conception of the philosophical Indian trinity.

"The deities invoked appear, on a cursory inspection of

the Veda, to be as various as the authors of the prayers addressed to them, but according to the most ancient annotations of the Indian scripture, those numerous names of persons and things are all resolvable into different titles of three deities and ultimately of one god" (Colebrooke, "Essays," vol. i., p. 25).

This trinity might be accepted by Professor Huxley or Mr. Herbert Spencer. It consists of an inconceivable god, **THAT ONE** (Tad) of the hymn already quoted, and which may be paraphrased thus :—

There was no breath, no sky, but water only,  
Death was not yet unwombed nor day nor night,  
The unimagined **THAT ONE**, veiled and lonely,  
Sate through the centuries devoid of light.

Then from his impulse Love came into being,  
And through the ebon darkness flung his gleams,  
That Love which, say our men of mystic seeing,  
Bridges the world of fact and world of dreams.

Oh tell us how this universe was fashioned,  
Ere shining gods appeared to man below,  
He knows that shrouded **THAT ONE**, unimpassioned,  
Or even he perchance can never know.

This hymn finely states the crucial mystery that perplexes man, without the rashness to attempt to solve it. He dwells in a world encircled by millions of stars, and warmed by the great orb that gives light and life. Using these as symbols he advances a step. The inconceivable god may be partly thought out. Let us imagine that by the aid of Aditi, the Mother, the Infinite, as Max Muller puts it, matter (matra Sansk.) he parented an active conceivable god, Yama, Mitra, the Godman, the sun, and we have the triad.

This is a version by Sir Monier Williams of a passage in the "Isa Upanishad" :—

"Whate'er exists within this universe  
Is all to be regarded as enveloped  
By the great Lord, as if wrapped with a vesture.  
There is one only Being who exists  
Unmoved, yet moving swifter than the wind ;

Who far outstrips the senses, though as gods  
 They strive to reach him ; who himself at rest  
 Transcends the fleetest flight of other beings ;  
 Who, like the air, supports all the vital action.  
 He moves, yet moves not ; he is far, yet near ;  
 He is within the universe. Whoe'er beholds  
 All living creatures as in him and him—  
 The universal Spirit—as in all,  
 Henceforth regards no creature with contempt."

This does not look like atheism.

We will now see if Vedism proclaimed that none but wicked "shells" could span the abyss that separates their state from ours." To ignore Colebrooke, Max Muller, Burnouf, and to call this the "Indian Teaching," the "Eastern Wisdom," must appear amusing to all who have dipped into the subject. From an early date to modern times India has had a religion singularly like modern spiritualism, the *S'raddha* or intercourse with ghosts. Creed-maker after creed-maker has appeared and told the Hindoo that his dead relations are whirling about in the metempsychosis, or in Moksha, or in Nirvâna. He has been assured that they are annihilated. He has been told that they are in Christian or Mussulman hells, but as in Vedic days he still offers his food to them, and believes they are near.

Here is a sketch of these rites:—

"The ancestors having attended and taken their seats, they are furnished with water to drink, with water for purification, with water for bathing. They are also clothed. The food is then presented (through the fire), and they are thus addressed—

" 'Ancestors, rejoice! take your respective shares, and be strong as bulls.'

"Nor was it from any portion of the hand that they would accept their food; it had to be presented by the part between the thumb and the forefinger, which afterwards, in Cheiromancy, was known as 'the line of life,' and which, consequently, was designated *Pitrya*.

"After they have fed, the performer of the sacrifices dismisses them with the same honours with which they had been received, and thus addresses them—

" 'Fathers, to whom food belongs, guard our food, and the other things offered by us; venerable and immortal as ye

are, and conversant with holy truths; quaff the sweet essence, be cheerful, and depart contented by the paths which gods travel.'

"The ceremony, however, did not solely consist in feeding the ancestors; their honour required the distribution of food to the living, and chiefly to the indigent and destitute; it was equally furnished to animals and men: thus the connexion of the living child with the dead parent was used to inculcate practices of charity. In process of time the Brahmans were not neglected, and this seems to have constituted a chief source of their sustenance; arrogating to themselves the office of fire, what was given to them, satisfied the ancestors.

"The Pitris had, however, effectual means of control over their descendants. If they could blast and curse, they could also bless and cause to fructify. To them imploration was made for success in every enterprise, and acknowledgments offered in return for good fortune. Vows were paid to them for fame, wealth, power, length of days, or increase of happiness. They are applied to as *intercessors*, both for men on earth and for departed spirits, and they stood in the relation to men, of saints and of gods, linked to them by the ties of blood, so that each race of mortals on earth became part of a dynasty in heaven; the gods were not brought down to the level of the Pitris, but these were raised to the rank of divinities. As fire was worshipped as their messenger, so was the moon as their abode.

" 'May this oblation to fire, which conveys offerings to the manes, be efficacious.' "

I am aware that Madame Blavatsky has tried to get rid of these awkward Pitri by asserting that they were Kosmic artificers that had not been on earth for millions of years.

A hymn of the Rig Veda quite disproves this:—

"Honour by our sacrifice the son of Vivaswan, the Royal Yama, who passes the mighty spaces. He is the pathway of the nations and their goal.

"Yama was the first to show us the road which we all must follow. Our fathers have gone before. We are born to leave our footprints upon it.

"Yama, come to the altar of sacrifice with the Pitris, the

sons of Angiras. O King, may the prayers of the Rishis attract thee.

"We have amongst us the sons of Angiras (Angirases) the Navagwas (a section of the Angirases) the Atharwans, the Bhrigus. May we obtain their kind thoughts, their happy protection.

"O dead man (the corpse), come hither. Come by the ancient pathways that our fathers have traversed. See these two Kings Yama and the divine Varuna, who rejoice in our sacrifice. Come with the Pitris, come with Yama to the seat that our worship has set up. Thou has cast off all impurity. Enter and don a body of brilliance."

It is plain here that amongst the Pitris was a man whose funeral obsequies were not yet performed.

Here is another passage :—

"Burn not this corpse, O Agni. Tear not his skin, his body, O Jâtavedas. If thou delightest in our offerings with the Pitri, help him.

"If thou lovest our offerings, O Jâtavedas, surround him with the fathers. He comes to obtain the body that shall transport his soul. . .

"Give to heaven and earth that which belongs to them; give to the waters and plants those portions of his body that are their due.

"But there is in him an immortal portion. Warm it with thy rays. Kindle it with thy fire. O Jâtavedas, in the blessed body formed by thee transport him to the world of the saints" ("Rig Veda," vii., 6. 11).

I have gone at some length into the religion of the Vedas, because when Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott became disciples of Dayânanda Sarasvatî, it is difficult to conceive that the Russian lady had in her mind a teaching that was diametrically opposed to it. Here was the actual religion of the Mahatma. Angiras was a Mahatma. Bhrigu was a Mahatma. It will be seen from our scanty quotations that this religion knew nothing of the metempsychosis, annihilation as the reward of the just man made perfect, or atheism and "shells." Here is an extract from Madame Blavatsky's "Caves and Jungles of Hindustan":—

"For more than two years before we left America we were in constant correspondence with a certain learned Brahman,

whose glory is great at present (1879) all over India. We came to India to study, under his guidance, the ancient country of the Aryas, the *Vedas*, and their difficult language. His name is Dayânand Saraswatî Swami. Swami is the name of the learned anchorites who are initiated into many mysteries unattainable by common mortals. They are monks who never marry, but are quite different from other mendicant brotherhoods, the so-called Sannyâsi and Hossein. This Pandit is considered the greatest Sanskritist of modern India, and is an absolute enigma to everyone" (p. 15).

It is to be remarked that the Theosophical Society came to India to *study* not to teach.

On the 16th February, 1879, Madame Blavatsky, Colonel Olcott, and two other members of the Theosophical Society, landed in Bombay, and repaired to the bungalow that had been prepared for their reception.

"The first thing that we were struck with," says Madame Blavatsky, "was the millions of crows and vultures. The first are, so to speak, the county council of the town, whose duty it is to clean the streets, and to kill one of them is not only forbidden by the police, but would be very dangerous. By killing one you would rouse the vengeance of every Hindu."

Here is another passage:—

"When, some time ago, the wife of the Madras governor thought of passing a law that should induce native women to cover their breasts, the place was actually threatened with a revolution. A kind of jacket is worn only by dancing girls. The Government recognised that it would be unreasonable to irritate women, who, very often, are more dangerous than their husbands and brothers, and the custom, based on the law of Manu, and sanctified by three thousand years' observance, remained unchanged."

This fact must be new to most Anglo-Indians. The wives of Madras governors do not generally think of passing laws.

The Swami being at the other end of India, the "American Mission," as it was called, made tourist trips, escorted by the natives.

"We were living in India, unlike English people, who are only surrounded by India at a certain distance. We were



enabled to study her character and customs, her religion, superstitions and rites, to learn her legends—in fact, live among Hindus” (p. 13).

But this “study” was not without its difficulties. They were invited to dine with a Hindu gentleman:—

“At last, having examined the family chapel, full of idols, flowers, rich vases with burning incense, lamps hanging from its ceiling, and aromatic herbs covering its floor, we decided to get ready for dinner. We carefully washed ourselves, but this was not enough, we were requested to take off our shoes. This was a somewhat disagreeable surprise, but a real Brahmanical supper was worth the trouble.

“However, a truly amazing surprise was still in store for us.

“On entering the dining-room we stopped short at the entrance—both our European companions were dressed, or rather undressed, exactly like Hindus! For the sake of decency they kept on a kind of sleeveless knitted vest, but they were barefooted, wore the snow-white Hindu *dhutis* (*sic*) (a piece of muslin wrapped round to the waist and forming a petticoat), and looked like something between white Hindus and Constantinople *garçons de bains*. Both were undescribably funny; I never saw anything funnier. To the great discomfiture of the men, and the scandal of the grave ladies of the house, I could not restrain myself, but burst out laughing. Miss X— blushed violently and followed my example” (p. 149).

“Having entered the ‘refectory,’ we immediately noticed what were the Hindu precautions against their being polluted by our presence. The stone floor of the hall was divided into two equal parts. This division consisted of a line traced in chalk, with Kabalistic signs at either end. One part was destined for the host’s party and the guests belonging to the same caste, the other for ourselves. On our side of the hall there was yet a third square to contain Hindus of a different caste. The furniture of the two bigger squares was exactly similar” (p. 151).

“We all sat down, the Hindus calm and stately, as if preparing for some mystic celebration, we ourselves feeling awkward and uneasy, fearing to prove guilty of some un-



pardonable blunder. An invisible choir of women's voices chanted a monotonous hymn, celebrating the glory of the gods. These were half-a-dozen nautch-girls from a neighbouring pagoda. To this accompaniment we began satisfying our appetites. Thanks to the Babu's instructions, we took great care to eat only with our right hands. This was somewhat difficult, because we were hungry and hasty, but quite necessary. Had we only so much as touched the rice with our left hands whole hosts of Rakshasas (demons) would have been attracted to take part in the festivity that very moment, which, of course, would send all the Hindus out of the room. It is hardly necessary to say that there were no traces of forks, knives, or spoons. That I might run no risk of breaking the rule I put my left hand in my pocket and held on to my pocket-handkerchief all the time the dinner lasted " (p. 153).

"Thanks to this solemn silence, I was at liberty to notice everything that was going on with great attention. Now and again, whenever I caught sight of the colonel or Mr. Y—, I had all the difficulty in the world to preserve my gravity. Fits of foolish laughter would take possession of me when I observed them sitting erect with such comical solemnity and working so awkwardly with their elbows and hands. The long beard of the one was white with grains of rice, as if silvered with hoar-frost, the chin of the other was yellow with liquid saffron. But unsatisfied curiosity happily came to my rescue, and I went on watching the quaint proceedings of the Hindus.

"Each of them, having sat down with his legstwisted under him, poured some water with his left hand out of the jug brought by the servant, first into his cup, then into the palm of his right hand. Then he slowly and carefully sprinkled the water round the dish with all kinds of dainties, which stood by itself, and was destined, as we learned afterwards, for the gods. During this procedure each Hindu repeated a Vedic mantram. Filling his right hand with rice, he pronounced a new series of couplets, then, having stored five pinches of rice on the right side of his own plate, he once more washed his hands to avert the evil eye, sprinkled more water, and pouring a few drops of it into his right palm, slowly drank it. After this he swallowed six pinches

of rice, one after the other, murmuring prayers all the while, and wetted both his eyes with the middle finger of his left hand. All this done, he finally hid his left hand behind his back, and began eating with the right hand. All this took only a few minutes, but was performed very solemnly" (p. 154).

The costume of the European branch of *Ârya Samâj* seems to have excited attention at the railway stations during their travels:—

"This evening we dined at the refreshment rooms of the railway station. Our arrival caused an evident sensation. Our party occupied the whole end of a table, at which were dining many first-class passengers, who all stared at us with undisguised astonishment. Europeans on an equal footing with Hindus! Hindus who condescended to dine with Europeans! These two were rare and wonderful sights indeed. The subdued whispers grew into loud exclamations. Two officers who happened to know the Thakur took him aside, and having shaken hands with him, began a very animated conversation, as if discussing some matter of business; but as we learned afterwards, they simply wanted to gratify their curiosity about us.

"Here we learned, for the first time, that we were under police supervision, the police being represented by an individual clad in a suit of white clothes, and possessing a very fresh complexion, and a pair of long moustaches. He was an agent of the secret police, and had followed us from Bombay. On learning this flattering piece of news, the colonel burst into a loud laugh; which only made us still more suspicious in the eyes of all these Anglo-Indians, enjoying a quiet and dignified meal. As to me, I was very disagreeably impressed by this bit of news, I must confess, and wished this unpleasant dinner was over" (p. 311).

I purposely pass over this incident. Mr. Hodgson and Professor Cones regard Madame Blavatsky as a Russian agent who used her "*Theosophy*" as a simple blind. This seems to me going too far, but as to the general question nothing but surmise is possible.

The union between the Theosophical Society and the *Ârya Samâj* did not last very long. Colonel Olcott calls the Indian teacher a "humbug." Mr. Coleman at the

Chicago Conference (*Religio-Philosophical Journal*, Sept. 16th, 1893) announced that on his side, Dayānanda Sarasvatī "denounced Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott as tricksters, saying that the phenomena produced by them in India were due to mesmerism, pre-arrangement and clever conjuring."

Professor Max Muller gives one curious fact ("Biographical Essays," p. 177). Dayānanda Sarasvatī once tried to find the Mahatmas in Upper India but failed. Madame Blavatsky took a hint. Her mind, as we have shown, was adaptive rather than original. She took spiritualism from Home, the Brothers of Luxor from Colonel Olcott, the notion of controlling "Elementals" from Mr. Felt. And hearing for the first time about these Mahatmas from Dayānanda Sarasvatī she promptly assimilated them likewise.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE "PIONEER."

ONE more of Madame Blavatsky's projects seemed to have failed. "Theosophy" was to all appearances as dead as the "Miracle Club." And yet it was on the eve of an astounding success. The deliverer was at hand.

For at this time there was published at Allahabad a newspaper called the *Pioneer*. It was the organ of the Bengal Civil Service, and in point of fact the leading journal of India. Its editor was Mr. Sinnett, a gentleman who had dabbled a little in spiritualism. There was also living at Allahabad a gentleman who had an appointment in the Board of Revenue, N. W. Provinces. This was Mr. A. O. Hume, son of the famous reformer, Joseph Hume. The theosophists got into correspondence with the *Pioneer*, and in due course Madame Blavatsky received an invitation to come and stay with the Sinnetts.

Evidently they were a little astonished when she did come, and a "rough old hippopotamus of a woman" waddled in, wearing a red flannel dressing-gown, and smoking perpetual cigarettes. Her tantrums at times were awful, "and if anything annoyed her she would vent her impatience by vehement tirade, directed in a loud voice against Col. Olcott." Her language also at times was awful, including "words that we should all have preferred her not to make use of."

"I will not say," writes Mr. Sinnett, "that our new friends made a favourable impression all round." But it was plain to the lenient editor of the *Pioneer* that her disregard of conventionalities was the result of a deliberate rebellion against, not ignorance of, the customs of refined society. Some folks took her up, and Mr. Hume presided at a theosophical meeting and made a clever speech. This gentleman was perhaps the most able of all the converts that theosophy ever made. His abilities earned for him the distinguished

post of Secretary to the Government of India. It was arranged at one time that he was to write "Esoteric Buddhism." But he, by and by, got disgusted with the obscurantism and direct fraud conspicuous in the movement, and retired. Says Mr. Coleman, in the article already cited :—

"Mr. Hume, in a letter in 1883 to Madame Blavatsky, the original of which is in my possession, told her that he knew she wrote all the Morya letters, and some, at least, of those signed 'K. H.'"

Mr. Sinnett alludes to this visit in his "Occult World" :

"It has been through my connection with the Theosophical Society and my acquaintance with Madame Blavatsky that I have obtained experiences in connection with occultism, which have prompted me to undertake my present task. The first problem I had to solve was whether Madame Blavatsky really did, as I heard, possess the power of producing abnormal phenomena. And it may be imagined that, on the assumption of the reality of her phenomena, nothing would have been simpler than to obtain such satisfaction when once I had formed her acquaintance. It is, however, an illustration of the embarrassments which surround all inquiries of this nature—embarrassments with which so many people grow impatient, to the end that they cast inquiry altogether aside and remain wholly ignorant of the truth for the rest of their lives—that although on the first occasion of my making Madame Blavatsky's acquaintance she became a guest at my house at Allahabad, and remained there for six weeks, the harvest of satisfaction I was enabled to obtain during this time was exceedingly small. Of course I heard a great deal from her during the time mentioned about occultism and the Brothers, but while she was most anxious that I should understand the situation thoroughly, and I was most anxious to get at the truth, the difficulties to be overcome were almost insuperable. For the Brothers, as already described, have an unconquerable objection to showing off. That the person who wishes them to show off is an earnest seeker of truth, and not governed by mere idle curiosity, is nothing to the purpose. They do not want to attract candidates for initiation by an exhibition of wonders. Wonders have a very spirit-stirring effect on the history of every religion

founded on miracles, but occultism is not a pursuit which people can safely take up in obedience to the impulse of enthusiasm created by witnessing a display of extraordinary power. There is no absolute rule to forbid the exhibition of powers in presence of the outsider; but it is clearly disapproved of by the higher authorities of occultism on principle, and it is practically impossible for less exalted proficients to go against this disapproval. It was only the very slightest of all imaginable phenomena that, during her first visit to my house, Madame Blavatsky was thus permitted to exhibit freely. She was allowed to show that 'raps' like those which spiritualists attribute to spirit agency could be produced at will. This was something, and *faute de mieux* we paid great attention to raps."

As Madame Blavatsky was an "Adept," according to Mr. Sinnett, these "raps" were certainly disappointing. They often come after a day or two to the merest tyro in table-turning.

But greater marvels are preparing, for Madame Blavatsky has been joined by her old friend Madame Coulomb. We will let that lady tell her story. She wrote to Madame Blavatsky from Ceylon and got an answer:—

"Madame Blavatsky said that she lived in Odessa one year, and thence went to India, where she remained for over eight months, then returning by Odessa to Europe, went to Paris, and from there proceeded to America. 'My lodge in India,' she says, 'of which I may have spoken to you, had decided that, as the society established by myself and old Sebiré was a failure, I had to go to America and establish one on a larger scale.' (I know nothing about her lodge in India; nor did she ever mention it to me; all I can affirm is that the society she tried to establish in Egypt was nothing else but a spiritualistic society.) 'This, as you see, is far from being a failure.' She concludes her letter with speaking of her 'Isis Unveiled' and the society she had founded, and of its progress, giving the names of some of the members of it, such as Mr. Wyld, Mr. Crookes, Mr. Wallace, and other Fellows of the Royal Society, who had joined it, and of Mr. Herbert Spencer and Mr. Varley, who, she says, had applied also. This was all very fine, but did not open my way to get out of trouble. So, some time

after, I wrote to her again, and explained to her clearly our situation, and asked her to send us some money. To this letter she answered as follows: That she was as poor as a church rat, and had incurred many expenses in travelling, building a library, and starting a journal, etc., etc. She goes on to say that the whole of her income from a sum of money (or rather the remainder of it) left to her by her father gives her something not exceeding 100 rupees a month, and that with the exception of President Olcott, 'who could be rich, if he is not,' none of them are overflowing with money. 'Knowing this we joined,' she says, 'our capital together, and placing it in New York in a secure house, derive from it each of us about 100 rupees monthly. This belongs to the community, money which none of us can touch, for it is for the expenses of the house, and it is not much, I can assure you.' Then she goes on to say that her name as conducting the paper appears, to be sure! 'but it is only a figure-head, as I am so well known in Europe and America; but the property is not mine, nor the control. I sincerely think that it will be to your advantage in more ways than one to identify yourselves as fellows. Now it so happens that President Olcott, who is the best of men, is a fanatic in matters upon the Theosophical Society. He will take off his skin for a fellow, but do nothing for an outsider.'

"Having thus been invited to join the society, and hoping by this means to be able to settle down and get a quiet living, I immediately set to work to raise the money necessary for our journey from Galle (Ceylon) to Bombay. This took a very long time, and we were not able to leave before the 24th March, 1880, arriving at Bombay by a P. and O. steamer on the 28th of the same month, that is, after four days' sail. In the evening, as soon as we arrived, we landed, and, after having taken a room and our dinner in the hotel, we drove in a tram-cart up to the terminus of Girgaum, where we asked a gentleman who was in the same cart with us to show us the way to Girgaum Back Road, to the headquarters of the Theosophical Society. He did so, and we went. As soon as Madame Blavatsky saw me she gave a loud cry of joy, and instantly asked us to take up our abode at the headquarters. I need not here say how this offer consoled my afflicted heart. I really thanked Providence



for having given me the opportunity of doing her some good when in Egypt, which caused me to form an acquaintance which now was so useful to me. That evening we slept at the hotel, and the next day at noon we moved into the headquarters of the Theosophical Society. The first few days we were very happy indeed; the company was very agreeable, and we thought ourselves in heaven. On the 5th of April of the same year, that is, seven days after our arrival at the headquarters, Colonel Olcott came into my room and asked me if I would undertake to direct the domestic affairs, as the lady who looked after them did not wish to do so any more. I accepted with great pleasure this charge, as it gave me the chance of making myself useful. We had already been initiated and had joined the society. The pleasure we had of being in company with a person whom we had known in better days, the gentlemanly and kind behaviour of Colonel Olcott towards us, made us really desirous to do all that lay in our power to show our gratitude and contentment. There was not a thing that we were asked to do that we did not do with the greatest pleasure.

"Madame Blavatsky, seeing our earnest desire to please her in everything, one evening, taking hold of my arm and walking up and down in the library compound, all of a sudden said: 'Look here, run and tell the colonel that you have seen a figure in the garden.'—'Where is the figure?' I asked. 'Never mind,' she said, 'run and tell him so; we shall have some fun.' Thinking this to be a joke, I ran to him and told him. As the colonel came up madame began to laugh, saying: 'See, she has been afraid of an apparition,' and so they both went on laughing, and going up to the other bungalow, related the story to the rest of the people who were there. I must conscientiously say that I did not know what they meant by this joke. A little later on, one day she asked me to embroider some names on some handkerchiefs. I embroidered three names. One handkerchief had the name of H. P. Blavatsky, the second Wijeratnee, and the third Dies; in this last I made a mistake; instead of Dias, the real way of spelling, I put Dies; at this madame said, 'It is all the better.' These names were worked in silk of several colours, red, yellow, blue, etc.



Perhaps Mr. Dias, Inspector of Police, and Mr. Wijeratnee, Deputy Coroner, both of Galle (Ceylon), whom I know well, could say whether it is true or not that they received through Madame Blavatsky these handkerchiefs in an occult manner. On another occasion, after we removed from the room we occupied in the library compound to a room above Colonel Olcott's bedroom, Madame Blavatsky came upstairs and asked me to try and make a hole, pointing to the place where it was to be made. From this hole, by stretching the arm full length into it, one could touch the ceiling cloth of Colonel Olcott's office, which was adjoining to his bedroom. She gave me an envelope containing a portrait. I made a slit in the ceiling cloth with a penknife and afterwards slipped it through.

"Here I report the phenomenon as described by Colonel Olcott in 'Hints on Esoteric Theosophy,' No. 1, second edition, page 83, which runs as follows:—

"I had still another picture, that remarkable portrait of a Yogi about which so much was said in the papers. It, too, disappeared in New York, but one evening tumbled down through the air before our very eyes, as H. P. B., Damodar and I were conversing in my office at Bombay with (if I remember aright) the Dewan Sankariah of Cochin."

"As Colonel Olcott mentions this gentleman, here I must say that a little later on, a visiting card of Madame Blavatsky was sent through the same hole and in the same occult manner as the portrait; as will be seen by referring to page 107 of the above-mentioned book.

"My readers will think that I did not show much gratitude to the colonel for his kindness to me by helping madame to perform such tricks and thus impose on his *bona fides*. In order to justify my apparent bad behaviour, I must say that madame had told me that she did all these things to divert the colonel's mind from certain painful occurrences that he had experienced while in America, and that if she had not got over him by these means he certainly would have destroyed himself, and also she added that she had prevented him from doing so by climbing through a window into his room when she found him with a revolver in his hands, ready to commit suicide."

"About the beginning of September, 1880," says Mr. Sinnett, "Madame Blavatsky came to Simla as our guest, and in the course of the following six weeks various phenomena occurred which became the talk of all Anglo-India for a time."

Here is one of them :—

"On Sunday, the 3rd of October, at Mr. Hume's house at Simla, there were present at dinner Mr. and Mrs. Hume, Mr. and Mrs. Sinnett, Mrs. Gordon, Mr. F. Hogg, Captain P. J. Maitland, Mr. Beatson, Mr. Davidson, Colonel Olcott, and Madame Blavatsky. Most of the persons present having recently seen many remarkable occurrences in Madame Blavatsky's presence, conversation turned on occult phenomena, and in the course of this Madame Blavatsky asked Mrs. Hume if there was anything she particularly wished for; Mrs. Hume at first hesitated, but in a short time said that there was something she would particularly like to have brought to her, namely, a small article of jewellery that she had formerly possessed, but had given away to a person who had allowed it to pass out of her possession. Madame Blavatsky then said if she would fix the image of the article in question very definitely in her mind, she, Madame Blavatsky, would endeavour to procure it. Mrs. Hume then said that she vividly remembered the article, and described it as an old-fashioned breast-brooch set round with pearls, with glass at the front, and the back made to contain hair. She then, on being asked, drew a rough sketch of the brooch. Madame Blavatsky then wrapped up a coin attached to her watch-chain in two cigarette-papers, and put it in her dress, and said that she hoped the brooch might be obtained in the course of the evening. At the close of dinner she said to Mr. Hume that the paper in which the coin had been wrapped was gone. A little later in the drawing-room she said that the brooch would not be brought into the house, but that it must be looked for in the garden; and then, as the party went out, accompanying her, she said she had clairvoyantly seen the brooch fall into a star-shaped bed of flowers. Mr. Hume led the way to such a bed in a distant part of the garden. A prolonged and careful search was made with lanterns, and eventually a small paper packet,

consisting of two cigarette-papers, was found amongst the leaves by Mrs. Sinnett. This being opened on the spot was found to contain a brooch exactly corresponding to the previous description, and which Mrs. Hume identified as that which she had originally lost. None of the party, except Mr. and Mrs. Hume had ever seen or heard of the brooch. Mr. Hume had not thought of it for years. Mrs. Hume had never spoken of it to any one since she parted with it, nor had she for long even thought of it. She herself stated, after it was found, that it was only when Madame asked her whether there was anything she would like to have, that the remembrance of this brooch, the gift of her mother, flashed across her mind.

"Mrs. Hume is not a spiritualist, and up to the time of the occurrence described was no believer either in occult phenomena or in Madame Blavatsky's powers. The conviction of all present was that the occurrence was of an absolutely unimpeachable character as an evidence of the truth of the possibility of occult phenomena. The brooch is unquestionably the one which Mrs. Hume lost. Even supposing, which is practically impossible, that the article, lost months before Mrs. Hume ever heard of Madame Blavatsky, and bearing no letters or other indication of original ownership, could have passed in a natural way into Madame Blavatsky's possession, even then she could not possibly have foreseen that it would be asked for, as Mrs. Hume herself had not given it a thought for months."

This narrative, read over to the party, is signed by—

A. O. Hume.

M. A. Hume.

Fred Hogg.

A. P. Sinnett.

Patience Sinnett.

Alice Gordon.

P. G. Maitland.

Wm. Davidson.

Stuart Beatson.

In Mr. Hodgson's Report (vol. iii., "Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research," p. 267) we learn that Mr. Hume is now convinced that this phenomenon was due to mental suggestion and cheating. The brooch was amongst some presents of jewellery, some of which are admitted by Colonel Olcott to have passed through his hands. Mr. Hormusji, a jeweller, deposes that he received, from the

hands of Madame Blavatsky, a brooch very like this brooch for repairs. The first recipient of the brooch was encamped in the compound of Madame Blavatsky's bungalow for some weeks before he left for England.

I will give two other marvels. They are cited with comments from Madame Coulomb in "My Intercourse with Madame Blavatsky" (p. 25).

"Let me begin by an insignificant phenomenon, the first of the three mentioned in the article. Here is what the *Pioneer* says concerning it:—

"About ten days or a fortnight ago my wife accompanied our theosophists one afternoon to the top of Prospect Hill. When there, Madame Blavatsky asked her in a joking way what was her heart's desire. She said at random, and on the spur of the moment, "to get a note from one of the 'Brothers.'" "The Brothers," I should explain, are the superior adepts. Madame Blavatsky took from her pocket a piece of blank pink paper that had been torn off a note she had received that day. Folding this up into a small compass, she took it to the edge of the hill, held it up for a moment or two between her hands, and returned, saying that it had gone. She presently, after communicating mentally by her own occult methods with the distant "Brother," said he asked where my wife would have the letter. After some conversation it was decided that she should search for the note in a particular tree. Getting up a little way into this, she looked all about for a time and could not find any note, but presently, turning back her face to a branch right before her, at which she had looked a few moments before, she perceived a pink three-cornered note stuck on a stalk of a leaf where no such note had previously been. The leaf, that must have belonged to the stalk, must have been freshly torn off, because the stalk was still green and moist—not withered, as it would naturally have become if its leaf had been removed for any length of time. The note was found to contain these few words: "I have been asked to have a note here for you. What can I do for you?" signed by some Tibetan characters. Neither Madame Blavatsky nor Colonel Olcott had approached during my wife's search for the note. The pink paper, on which it was written, appeared to be the same that my wife had

seen, blank, in Madame Blavatsky's hand shortly before.'

"I shall not review this," says Madame Coulomb, "but will only say how I would perform this phenomenon if I had the misfortune of having to entertain the public by these tricks for the sake of obtaining fame and renown. First of all, it would be necessary that I should have under my orders a faithful person (even a servant properly trained would do); when this was secured, I would proceed to take a bit of pink paper from the store of the many coloured papers I have, and would write my note upon it as follows: 'I have been asked to have a note here for you. What can I do for you?' This done, I would give it to my servant, telling him to be attentive to what particular tree they wished the note to be placed; and giving him all instructions beforehand, I would accompany the party to the top of a hill. When there, I would play the comedy of drawing the conversation to the point by asking what was the lady's heart's desire, and on receiving the answer, I would take out of my pocket a piece of paper of the exact quality, size, and colour of the one on which the note was written. I would fold it up in a small compass, as the other was folded, and in order to give the thing an occult appearance, I would go to the edge of the hill, showing mental communication with the Brothers. This is the way in which I would do it, but I am no adept.

"It is not surprising that Mrs. Sinnett did not find the note on first inspecting the tree; the leaves might have covered the small-sized note, and on her turning back she may have perceived it; but this does not make the phenomenon real, and indeed I think Mr. Sinnett himself was not quite sure that the paper was the same, because at the end of this narrative we find these words: 'The pink paper on which it was written *appeared* to be the same.'

"Now let me tell you about the second phenomenon, known under the name of the cup phenomenon. This, I am glad to say, is already explained in the article, and in order that my readers may understand it I shall have to report the whole of the proceedings as given in the same issue of the *Pioneer*.

"A few days after this, Madame Blavatsky accompanied

a few friends one morning on a little pic-nic in the direction of the waterfalls. There were originally to have been six persons present, including myself, but a seventh joined the party just as it was starting. When a place had been chosen in the wood near the upper waterfall for the breakfast, the things brought were spread out on the ground. It turned out that there were only six cups and saucers for seven people. Through some joking about this deficiency, or through someone professing to be very thirsty, and to think the cups would be too small—I cannot feel sure how the idea arose, but it does not matter—one of the party laughingly asked Madame Blavatsky to create another cup. There was no serious idea in the proposal at first, but when Madame Blavatsky said it would be very difficult, but that, if we liked, she would try, the notion was taken up in earnest. Madame Blavatsky, as usual, held mental conversation with "the Brother," and then wandered a little about in the immediate neighbourhood of where we were sitting, and asked one of the gentlemen with us to bring a knife. She marked a spot on the ground, and asked him to dig with the knife. The place so chosen was the edge of a little slope covered with thick weeds and grass, and shrubby undergrowth. The gentleman with the knife tore up these in the first instance with some difficulty, as their roots were tough and closely interlaced. Cutting, then, into the matted roots and earth with the knife, and pulling away the *debris* with his hand, he came at last on the edge of something white, which turned out, as it was completely excavated, to be the required cup. The saucer was also found after a little more digging. The cup and saucer both corresponded exactly, as regards their pattern, with those that had been brought to the pic-nic, and constituted a seventh cup and saucer when brought back to the place where we were to have breakfast. At first all the party appeared to be entirely satisfied with the *bona fides* of this phenomenon, and were greatly struck by it; but in the course of the morning someone conceived that it was not scientifically perfect, because it was theoretically possible that by means of some excavation below the place where the cups and saucers were exhumed, they might have been thrust up into the place where we found them by ordinary

means. Everyone knew that the surface of the ground where we dug had certainly not been disturbed, nor were any signs of excavation discoverable anywhere in the neighbourhood; but it was contended that the earth we had ourselves thrown about in digging for the cup might have obliterated the traces of these. I mention the objection raised, not because it is otherwise than preposterous as an hypothesis, but because three of the persons who were at the pic-nic have since considered that the flaw described spoilt the phenomenon as a test phenomenon."

Now for Madame Coulomb.

"As I said, the explanation was already given. I must here draw your attention to the wording of this paragraph. 'At first all the party appeared to be entirely satisfied with the *bona fides* of this phenomenon, and were greatly struck by it; but in the course of the morning someone conceived that it was not scientifically perfect, *because it was theoretically possible that by means of some excavation below the place where the cup and saucer were exhumed, they might have been thrust up into the place where we found them by ordinary means,*' etc.

"The opinion of these gentlemen with regard to the possibility of the cup and saucer being thrust up into the hole made for the purpose is perfectly correct, *because this is exactly the way in which he who put the cup and the saucer there explained it to me.*"

Madame Coulomb alludes to a boy named Baboula, who had been the confederate of a professional conjurer before he entered the Russian lady's service.

Here is another marvel recorded by Mr. Sinnett:—

"We were bound on another pic-nic to the top of Prospect Hill. Just before starting, I received a short note from my correspondent. It told me that something would be given to my wife on the hill as a sign from him. While we were having our lunch, Madame Blavatsky said the Brother directed her to ask what was the most unlikely place we could think of in which we would like to find a note from him, and the object which he proposed to send us. After a little talk on the subject, I and my wife selected the inside of her jampan cushion, against which she was then leaning. This is a strong cushion of velvet



and worsted work that we have had some years. We were shortly told that the cushion would do. My wife was directed to put it under her rug for a little while. This she did inside her jampan for perhaps half a minute, and then we were directed to cut the cushion open. This we found a task of some difficulty, as the edges were all very tightly sewn; but a penknife conquered them in a little while. I should add that while I was ripping at the cushion Madame Blavatsky said there was no hurry, that the letter was only then being written and was not quite finished. When we got the velvet and the worsted-work cover cut open, we found the inner cushion containing the feathers sewn up in a case of its own. This, in turn, had to be cut open; and then, buried in the feathers, my wife found a note addressed to me and a brooch—an old familiar brooch, which she had had for many years, and which, she tells me, she remembers having picked up off her dressing-table that morning while getting ready to go out, though she afterwards put it down again, and chose another instead. The note to me ran as follows:—‘My dear Brother,—This brooch, No. 2, is placed in the very strange place, simply to show to you how very easily a real phenomenon is produced, and how still easier it is to suspect its genuineness. Make of it what you like, even to classing me with confederates. The difficulty you spoke of last night with respect to the interchange of our letters, I will try to remove . . . . An address will be sent to you, which you can always use—unless, indeed, you really would prefer corresponding through pillows. Please to remark that the present is not dated from a ‘Lodge,’ but from a Kashmir Valley.’ The allusions in this note have reference to various remarks I made in the course of conversation during dinner the preceding evening.

“Madame Blavatsky, you will observe, claims no more in connection with this phenomenon than having been the occult messenger between ourselves and the Brother in Kashmir, who, you will observe, appears to have written the letter in Kashmir within a few moments of the time at which we found it inside our cushion. That persons having these extraordinary powers could produce even more sensational effects if they chose, you will naturally argue.



Why, then, play tricks which, however conclusive for the one or two people who may define their conditions, can hardly be so regarded by others, while the public generally will be apt to suppose the persons who relate them liars or lunatics, rather than believe that anything can take place in nature except with the permission and approval of the Royal Society? Well, I think I perceive some of the reasons why they refrain, but these would take too long to tell. Still longer would it take to answer by serious argument the nonsense which the publication of the brooch incident No. 1 has evoked all over India."

"I have reported this supposed phenomenon," says Madame Coulomb, "in order that my readers may judge for themselves; as for me, I see no science in it. All I find is the theoretical possibility of some one sewing it in the cushion beforehand. I do not agree with the opinion of the writer of this article as to the distance of the Brother—*viz.*, Kashmir; I think the Brother, through whom Madame Blavatsky performed the phenomenon, must have been quite close by."

One point has not been noticed either by Madame Coulomb or Mr. Hodgson, and that is that Madame Blavatsky had again made a change of front. Inspired by Colonel Olcott, as we have seen, she announced that all her miracles were due to the Brothers of Luxor. Then seduced by the fascinating theories of Mr. Felt, she proclaimed that all these miracles were performed by the dog-headed and hawk-headed architects of the universe, the mighty "Elementals," whom by proper incantations she could bend to her will. One of these statements might be true, but not both. How was it that Madame Blavatsky now returned to the theories of Colonel Olcott?

This I believe to be the solution:—

Madame Coulomb asserts that at starting Madame Blavatsky, far from being flush of cash, as Mr. Sinnett always describes her to be, was badly off when she came to India. In a letter quoted she says she is as "poor as a church rat," her sole income being derived from the remainder of a sum of money left to her by her father. She states further that she and Colonel Olcott "joined our capital together, and placing it in New York in a secure house, derive from it each of us about 100 Rs. monthly" (£6 10s. now, but more at that date).

Madame Coulomb shows that from the first the great Theosophical Society had to pinch. The cost of printing its organ, the *Theosophist*, pressed upon it; and it soon had a largish staff of dupes and confederates all of whom had to be fed and lodged, and it was found that the Rajahs and wealthy natives were very tepid about "Buddhism," though a Rajah in India has spent as much as ten thousand pounds in presents to the Brahmins during a holy pilgrimage to cure a crooked joint in his son, or an abscess in the liver of his favourite wife. And even with the aid of the mighty dog-headed architects of the universe the Russian lady found it difficult to compete with the Indian performers of basket and mango tricks. Thus, the theory of Colonel Olcott was re-gilt and re-christened, and the Mahatmas emerged from the Brothers of Luxor. The atheism was, perhaps, also a necessity, for the gods of Baal had to be taken away from the priests of Baal.

An adventure with the Rajah of Wudhwan throws a light on all this:—"We arrived safe at Wudhwan," says Madame Coulomb, "and found His Highness the Rajah, escorted by his bodyguard, at the station. He gave Madame a very cordial welcome; and, indeed, he was very kind to us all—I mean Dr. Hartmann, Mr. Mohini, and myself. We drove to a palace, which had been fitted up and decorated for the occasion. I must say that His Highness was really liberal; he gave orders that we should be provided with everything we might require, and indeed we had more than we wanted. Many details of this visit, which would not interest the public, I shall not describe. But what I must not omit is the phenomenon performed on this occasion. His Highness received a small note, which was found inside a miniature metal needle (Cleopatra's needle), which stood on a corner shelf; this note contained half a silver coin in the shape of a crescent. This phenomenon was very simple indeed. Madame wrote a note, wrapped the silver coin in it, and put the small packet inside the needle, which was hollow, and then set the needle again in its place. When His Highness came, we all sat in the room, and Madame Blavatsky began, as usual, to say that she felt that the Brother was near, and finally assured the company that she could see a paper flutter in the space. 'Oh, there,

there! I am sure it is on that corner-shelf.' She got up and looked on it, opened every box that was on it, and finally came back to her seat, pretending that she did not know in which of these objects that were on the what-not the desired message could be. A gentleman of the company rose, went to the corner, and said, 'I think I know where it can be.' So saying, he took the needle in his hand, and gave it to madame, who passed it on to His Highness, who looked inside it, but could not find the slip of paper. 'Break it! break it! Never mind we can find another,' said the gentleman to Madame Blavatsky, who now had it in her hands; she broke the top of it, and drew out the note. She was obliged to do so, because she had introduced it through the pedestal up to the narrow part of the needle so tightly that, even by knocking it, it could not slip down.

"I am happy to say that news came that His Highness had not lent faith to the occurrence above described. I say happy, because this shows me that he is a man of sense. But whether this information was the direct cause of madame's change of temper, or something else, I cannot say; but what is certain, she did change, and began soliloquising as follows:—'What did he want me here for? I shall go away to Bombay to-morrow. Here is a lot of money gone for nothing. I shall not have enough to go to Europe.' And so she went on for a long time; at last, after this storm came a calm; she, breaking into one of those charming moods, which oblige one to do anything for her, said, 'Try, my dear, and speak with Mr. Unwala, and tell him that you know that I have not enough money to go to Europe, and ask him if he can get me 1,000 Rs. from His Highness.' I did as I was told, and Mr. Unwala obtained 500 Rs.; this money His Highness gave himself to madame through the carriage-window as the train was leaving for Varel, where we were going on a visit to Mr. Hurrisingjee Rupsinjee."

It is plain here that Madame Blavatsky, *sans mécanique*, found herself unable to compete in Hindoo estimation with the Indian jugglers. She had another disappointment with the celebrated Holkar.

"POONA, Mercredi.

"MA CHÈRE MARQUISE,—Holkar—fiasco. Tant mieux, il m'envoie 200 rupees pour mes dépenses; aura eu peur de quelque sacré official bigot. Damn him,"

Here is another letter :—

"Now dear, let us change the programme. Whether *something* succeeds or not, I must try. Jacob Sassoon, the happy proprietor of a crore of rupees, with whose family I dined last night, is anxious to become a Theosophist. He is ready to give 10,000 rupees, to buy and repair the headquarters, he said to Colonel (Ezekiel, his cousin, arranged all this), if only he saw a little phenomenon, got the assurance that the *Mahatmas* could hear what was said, or gave him some *other sign of their existence* (? !!). Well, this letter will reach you the 26th (Friday); will you go up to the shrine and ask K. H. to send me a telegram that would reach me about four or five in the afternoon, same day, worded thus :—

"Your conversation with Mr. Jacob Sassoon reached Master just now. Were the latter even to satisfy him, still the doubter would hardly find the moral courage to connect himself with the society. RAMALINGA DEB."

"If this reaches me on the 26th, even in the evening, it will still produce a tremendous impression. Address, care of N. Kandalawala, Judge, POONA. JE FERAI LE RESTE. Cela coutera quatre ou cinq roupies. *Cela ne fait rien.*

"H. P. B."

"K. H." is of course Koot Hoomi, and Ramalinga Deb another Mahatma. We have anticipated a bit to show why Mahatmas were necessary.

We continue the narrative of Madame Coulomb :—

"While the *élite* of the society at Simla was thus amused, orders from there were sent to headquarters that a new bungalow should be chosen. The orders were, of course, given by letter. Here is the letter written by madame to me :—

"MA CHÈRE MAD. COULOMB,

"Je vous prie de veiller à tout dans notre déménagement. Choisissez bien la maison. Qu'elle soit utile; que la vostra camera si trova sopra la testa d'un certo Signore Pres, a—altra roba."

"MY DEAR MAD. COULOMB,

"I beg you to take care of everything in the removal. Choose a good house. *Let it be useful.* Let your room be above that of a certain Mr. President. —"Edaltraroba." You know the rest."

"I am obliged to mention these seeming trifles, because later on in my story they will be very important. After a great deal of trouble, we finally found a nice bungalow on the range of hills called Cumballah. The bungalow is known under the name of Crow's Nest. We removed into it in Madame Blavatsky's absence, and when she came back she said that it was quite to her taste, and considered it very well adapted for the performing of phenomena.

"For a few months from this time we were engaged in getting the house ready, and here I can say for the truth that we worked incessantly, and very often we used to go to bed so tired that we could not sleep. But this, although considered necessary and right, yet it did not fully satisfy madame's theosophical object; she wanted work of another kind, but did not dare to express her wish in so many words. So she used to get cross, despise everything, and hate everybody; and as we could not understand what she really wanted, she vented her rage on us by forbidding that a sufficient quantity of bread should be brought into the house, saying that if we wanted more we were to buy it with our own money—and this, after we had worked like slaves for her!

"Sometimes when awake in bed, I used to torture my brain to find out what I could do to please her—for, bad as the place was, yet it was better than none; and although she was unjust, yet at times she used to have a good fit for two or three days, at which times she was more tractable, which made up for the past, and we pushed on. In one of these good moods she called me up and told me: 'See if you can make a head of human size and place it on that divan,' pointing to a sofa in her room, 'and merely put a sheet round it; it would have a magic effect by moonlight.' What can this mean? I wondered. But knowing how disagreeable she could make herself if she was stroked on the wrong side, I complied with her wish. She cut a paper pattern of the face I was to make, which I still have; on this I cut the precious lineaments of the beloved Master, but, to my shame, I must say that, after all my trouble of cutting, sewing, and stuffing, madame said that it looked like an old Jew—I suppose she meant Shylock. Madame, with a graceful touch here and there of her painting brush, gave

it a little better appearance. But this was only a head, without bust, and could not very well be used, so I made a jacket, which I doubled, and between the two cloths I placed stuffing, to form the shoulders and chest; the arms were only to the elbow, because, when the thing was tried on, we found the long arm would be in the way of him who had to carry it. This beauty finished, made madame quite another person. Now the philosopher's stone was found! Let us see what I can do with it, thought I to myself, and, if it is only this she wants, and this is to assure us a home, she shall certainly have as many as she likes.

"However, this was not all. A trap was the next thing madame desired to have; it was made, fixed, and ready for use. Oh! a trap this time, what can she mean? This is no saloon trick! And the glove business in Cairo came vividly to my mind again. Can this be a new attempt at spiritualism? Let us watch and see what it is before we speak; with this decision I went on. To this I must add that my thorough ignorance in everything of this kind kept back every conclusion I might have arrived at. And again my curiosity was excited; I wanted to know, to learn, to understand. I learned and understood more than I cared for.

"Now let us see for what purpose trap and doll had been made. The arrival of Mr. A. P. Sinnett, ex-editor of the *Pioneer*, at the headquarters of the Theosophical Society, made the trap very useful, and it was instrumental in aiding to spread the theosophical fame in Bombay. This occurrence I report here from the *Theosophist* for August, 1881 (see supplement):—

"Mr. Sinnett was then requested by some of the fellows present to give the society some particulars about his new book—"The Occult World," which many of the Mofussil members would not perhaps have a chance to read. To this he answered that it would take a long time to recapitulate the contents of the book; but he would explain how he was led into writing it, and gave a general idea of its purport. He then gave an account of the manner in which his correspondence with one of the Brothers of the First Section sprang up, how it grew and developed, and how he was at last struck with the idea of publishing extracts from

his correspondent's letters for the benefit of the world at large. He also stated his reasons for *affirming most positively* that these letters were written by a person quite different from Madame Blavatsky—a foolish suspicion entertained by some sceptics. It was *physically impossible*, he said, that this could be the case; and there were other valid reasons for asserting that not only was she not their author, but even most of the time knew nothing of the contents. Foremost among these stood the fact that their style was absolutely different from that in which Madame Blavatsky wrote, and for anyone who could appreciate the niceties of literary style, there is as much individuality in style as in handwriting. Apart from this consideration, however, Mr. Sinnett drew attention to some incidents more fully described in the book itself, which showed that a telegram for him was handed into the telegraph office at Jhelum for transmission to him at Allahabad, in the handwriting of the celebrated letters. This telegram was an answer to a letter from him to the "Brother," which he had enclosed to Madame Blavatsky, then at Amritsur. It was despatched within an hour or two of the time at which the letter was delivered at Amritsur (as the post-mark on the envelope, which was afterwards returned to him, conclusively showed). A complete chain of proof was thus afforded to show that the handwriting in which all the Brother's letters were written was certainly the production of some person who *was not* Madame Blavatsky. He went on to explain that a final and absolutely convincing proof, not only of the fact that the letters were the work of a person other than Madame Blavatsky, but also of the wonderful control of generally unknown natural laws which that person exercised, had been afforded to him on the very morning of the day in which he was speaking. He had been expecting a reply to a recent letter to his illustrious friend Koot Hoomi, and after breakfast, while he was sitting at a table in the full light of day, the expected answer was suddenly dropped, out of nothing, on the table before him. He explained all the circumstances under which this had occurred, circumstances which not only precluded the idea that Madame Blavatsky—and no other person was present in the flesh at the time—could



have been instrumental in causing the letter to appear, but made the mere hypothesis of any fraud in the matter contemptibly absurd.

"Mr. Sinnett then concluded by saying that he would leave further proofs to those who would read his book."

Now for Mr. Sinnett's critic:—

"This phenomenon is so much more important because, according to Mr. Sinnett's declaration, it leaves no room for doubt, and because he does not admit the possibility of anyone but his illustrious friend having written the said letter. To this I shall say for the truth that Madame Blavatsky wrote before me the *latter* part of the letter, that I saw it addressed and given into the hands of Mr. Coulomb, telling him to put it in *Astral Post Office*. Concerning the way in which the letter reached Mr. Sinnett, which he assumes to have dropped out of nothing, I must say that he is mistaken there, because it was done in the following manner: An ingeniously and well-combined trap was fixed on the floor of the garret above Mr. Sinnett's room; the floor was a boarded one, and between the boards was a space sufficiently wide to permit a thick letter to slip through easily. The aperture of the *trap* met with that of the boards, so that once the letter was freed from the arrangement which retained it, it slipped down, and, being heavy, did not flutter in the space, but fell right on the table before him.

"In order that you may easily understand how the letter slipped through, I shall have to tell you that the opening of the trap was performed by the pulling of a string, which, after running from the trap, where it was fastened, all along the garret above Mr. Sinnett's room to that part of the garret above Madame Blavatsky's bedroom, passed through a hole and hung down behind the door and the curtain of her room, which was adjoining to that of Mr. Sinnett.

"If Mr. Sinnett had investigated first, and believed after—if he had considered the probabilities and the improbabilities—if he had inspected the rooms, he would not have been taken in so easily. I really think that we ought to consider it our duty to make sure of things before we give them out to the world as truth; and this in a special manner with regard to a new doctrine, for, if it is worth our while accepting it, it is certainly worth our while to look into it



minutely. And in this case, nothing must come in the way to stop our investigations; we must have no regard to persons or anything else; we must practically go to work until we find the truth. And I am sure that these precautions were not taken by Mr. Sinnett, or he would have found out that the letter did not drop out of nothing, but out of a trap through the ceiling above his head.

"As to writing in a style absolutely different to that of Madame Blavatsky, it is not likely that the said lady would make use of her own epistolary style for a subject which had as object the reformation of the human mind, the destruction of a long-established belief, and the edification of a doctrine which was founded on a mysterious basis as yet unknown to the greater part of the world; the style must be adapted to what it treated of. But I think the illustration given to Mr. C. C. Massey ought to open the eyes of all blind believers, and from that fact they should arrive at the conclusion that similar practices have often been repeated before, and that it is very plausible that such correspondence as mentioned in the article may have had the same origin.

"Now that the use of the trap has been explained, let us see for what purpose the doll was made. This was to give a convincing and material proof of the existence of the Brothers, as their (*said*) invisible presence did not fully satisfy the truth-seekers.

"Among the many apparitions to which this doll has been instrumental, I will choose one seen by Mr. Ramaswamier, in December, 1881, for of this I can bring personal evidence, and also, because it is doubly interesting, inasmuch as it bears a manifest proof of the power of deception; but, as an important part of it is recorded in connection with another instance, I shall make only one narrative of the two. In the *Theosophist* for December, 1882, page 67, is reported an article, under the heading, 'How a Chela found his Guru.' In order to be able to make my readers thoroughly understand, I ought to report the whole of this article, commenting as I go along, but that truly would be too tiresome, and perhaps not interesting in its details. So I shall begin at page 68, second column, last paragraph, and continue to page 69, to the end of the same paragraph.

"It was, I think, between 8 and 9 a.m., and I was following the road to the town of Sikkim, whence I was assured by the people I met on the road I could cross over to Tibet easily in my pilgrim's garb, when I suddenly saw a solitary horseman galloping towards me from the opposite direction. From his tall stature, and the expert way he managed the animal, I thought he was some military officer of the Sikkim Rajah. Now, I thought, am I caught! He will ask me for my pass, and what business I have on the independent territory of Sikkim, and, perhaps, have me arrested and sent back, if not worse, but, as he recognised me, he reined the steed. I looked at and approached him instantly. . . . I was in the awful presence of him, of the same Mahatma, my own revered Guru whom I had seen before in his astral body, on the balcony of the Theosophical headquarters! It was he, the "Himalayan Brother" of the ever-memorable night of December last, who had so kindly dropped a letter in answer to one I had given in a sealed envelope to Madame Blavatsky, whom I had never for a moment during the interval lost sight of—but an hour or so before."

"Here we have a most distinct evidence of what these apparitions are. The happy 'Chela,' Mr. Ramaswamier, says that he looked up and recognised the very Mahatma, his own revered 'Guru,' whom he had seen in the astral body on the balcony, etc. If Mr. Ramaswamier really saw the *very identical* Mahatma, then *indeed* we must say for the truth that this phenomenon is a real one. Because the Mahatma he saw in his astral body on the balcony at the headquarters of the Theosophical Society in Bombay, on the memorable night of December, 1881, was no one else than Monsieur Coulomb, with the doll's head on his own. It was *he* who dropped the letter in answer to the one sent through Madame Blavatsky to the Mahatma, as already mentioned, and which letter in answer had been handed to Mr. Coulomb by Madame Blavatsky, with instructions to drop it as the carriage drove back under the portico.

"Now please hear what Mr. Ramaswamier says in the article under the heading of 'A Chela's Reply,' page 76 of the same number, second column, last paragraph of the article, which runs as follows: he says, 'After this, it would seem but natural that whenever I hear a doubter or

a scoffer denying the existence of our Himalayan Mahatmas, I should simply smile in pity, and regard the doubter as a poor deluded sceptic indeed."

"So Mr. Ramaswamier was convinced. But what convinced him? Was it the appearance of the same Mahatma whom he had recognised to be the one he had seen in his astral body at the headquarters of the Theosophical Society, Bombay? But this was Mr. Coulomb, as I said. Then, after sifting this famous phenomenon, what truth is there left of it? That Mr. Ramaswamier met a man on horseback, who spoke to him in his mother-tongue. Is this all we have? If so, I think it is a very poor foundation whereupon to edify such a colossal enterprise as the formation of a new belief."

Of Mr. Ramaswamier and of these appearances of the Mahatmas Madame Coulomb has more to tell. She introduces a new character, Mr. Deb, who by and by changed his name in a mysterious manner to "Babajee."

"On the 16th June, 1882, Madame Blavatsky left the Crow's Nest to go to Baroda. About this time Mr. Dharbagiri Nath (another title for Mr. Babajee or Deb) was sent on a 'mission' to the Northern Provinces. He was to make his first appearance dressed in an elegant Thibetan costume—it consisted of a pair of blue trousers, a blue figured silk jacket, lined and bordered with deerskin fur, a waistcoat of blue satin, almond checked, with little flowers in the middle, and all ornamented with little buttons, a yellow cotton satin blouse, with very wide sleeves all buttoned up, which he wore under the jacket, a small round cap of figured orange silk, bordered with the same fur, and a pair of boots, Hungarian fashion, all laced up. In this attire Mr. Deb started for his mission to the Northern Provinces; here I leave him, and will pick him up again by and by.

"Now Madame Blavatsky, considering it necessary (I suppose) to revive the sinking faith of her votaries, decided upon leaving for Darjeeling, there to try 'to make the world talk,' as she expresses herself sometimes; so after some preparations she started, accompanied by Mr. R. Casava Pillai, of Nellore. This gentleman was employed in the police of Nellore (I think he was an inspector). Before he

left he had his costume made, consisting of a yellow cotton satin blouse, a cap of the same shape as that of Mr. Deb, a pair of top-boots, and a pair of very thick cloth trousers—when all was ready they started very quietly, and Madame begged us not to say to anyone that she had left; this was to give the thing a mysterious appearance as usual.

"Shortly after Madame had left Bombay, Mr. Ramaswamier, the happy *Chela* who found his *Guru*, and of whom we have already spoken at length, arrived at headquarters; he also had his pilgrim's garb made by the same tailor, and started to join Madame. There is nothing interesting in all these details, but I have given them for the sake of exactitude, and because some one in the Northern Provinces may at that very date have received some mysterious visitor dressed in blue silk, etc., according to the description, and giving himself as a *Chela* come from the Masters. I mention Mr. R. Casava Pillai, because he is to be traced later, and Mr. Ramaswamier I mention, because I hope to be soon able to smell the aura of the Mahatma he met on horseback on the territory of Sikkim. Both on the way, and on her arrival at Darjeeling, Madame Blavatsky had to meet with difficulties and trouble, and the greatest of all was the illness of her faithful servant Baboula; had it not been so we would have heard more astounding feats from there; however, Mr. Ramaswamier's finding his *Guru* was no small thing.

"Here I think we may pick up Mr. Deb, whom after his mission was over, the blessed Mahatmas transformed into somebody else; he stayed at Darjeeling with the company of pilgrims, and used to go with Mr. Casava Pillai to drink the water of the stream at the foot of the mountain. So Mr. Deb and Mr. Casava Pillai were friends; Mr. Deb soon left the party and came to headquarters. When I saw him, I cheerfully went to shake hands, as I had always done, and he withdrew, pretending that he did not know who I was. What this meant I need not say; necessity obliged him to be somebody else, so from Deb he has since been called Babajee, and the comedy which he had played me of being somebody else, he played with others afterwards—both natives and Europeans.

"The band of pilgrims left Darjeeling, accompanying

Madame Blavatsky home, and the new orders fresh from the Himalayan Brothers were, that those who had been of the party were not to shake hands with anybody except madame. All these foolish eccentricities disgusted us so much that we decided to remain in Bombay, where we had some very good friends, who kindly offered to help us and give us a home—but Madame Blavatsky and colonel insisted that we should go to Madras. Madame told me: 'Come, do not be foolish, come to Madras, there you will be very well; you can have dogs, chickens, ducks, horses—all the animals in creation if you like; there is a beautiful river, Mr. Coulomb can fish and amuse himself—you will not be well at——; I am sure you would soon wish to leave, and then another thing, I am in want of you.' So with all this we allowed ourselves to be persuaded, and started with them for Madras."

## CHAPTER IX.

### "THE SHRINE."

THE proposed change of quarters from the Crow's Nest in Bombay to the bungalow of Adyar was duly carried out. A certain preparation of the house is necessary on these occasions, as Colonel Olcott ("Hints on Esoteric Theosophy" No. 1, p. 96) assures us:—

"The Brothers mainly appear where we are, simply because *there* they have the necessary conditions. Our houses, wherever we make a headquarters, are certainly prepared not with machinery, but with a special magnetism. The first thing the Brothers do when we take up a new residence is to prepare it thus, and we never take a new house without their approval; they examine all we think of taking, and pick out the one most favourable. Sometimes they send every one of us out of the house if they desire to especially magnetise the place."

Madame Coulomb gives an account of this magnetism:—

"We left Bombay on the 17th December, 1882, and arrived here in Madras on the 19th. The bungalow answered madame's description, the river was there, and the fish too; animals were granted me, to my great satisfaction, and I thought I might try and be happy. But there is no peace for the wicked, says Isaiah, no more there was any for the Coulombs!

"Although the main bungalow was very spacious, yet the apartment that madame had chosen on the upper storey had only one large room, a bathroom, and the rest above the bungalow was left as terrace.

"As madame found this accommodation too small for her, she asked Mr. Muttuswamy Chettier's sons to get masons to build a small room, which is at present known as the occult room; this was built on part of the terrace, which faced

Baboula's sleeping-place; and while this work was going on, madame thought of all the contrivances that might prove useful for the occultism, such as how to utilise the windows, now rendered useless by the new arrangement. The one which gave light to Baboula's sleeping-place and passage was to be turned into a bookshelf, which is the present one with the looking-glass door. One of the two windows of the large room, which before looked on the terrace, was bricked up; the other was turned into the door through which they now go from madame's dining-room into the occult one. I beg my readers to take notice of the window which had been bricked up in the large room because it is from this that the Mahatmas were pleased to show a great many instances of their power. This done, madame's energetic and never-resting mind began to think what might be done to establish a permanent apparatus for the transmission of the occult correspondence, more expeditious and less troublesome than the ladder and the trap. At first she thought of utilising a cabinet made by Mr. Wimbridge; and indeed for a short time she did use it. She lined it with yellow satin, put the two pictures of the alleged Mahatmas inside it, with some other ornaments; but as at the back of this there was no possibility of making a hole, and the panels were not made to slide, but fixed, madame decided upon making a new one, and to have it placed in the new room at the back of the window which had been bricked up. To carry out her plans, she asked me if I would drive into town to Mr. Deschamps and order a nice cabinet made of black wood, or at least black varnished. She gave me a plan of it, which had been drawn by her and Mr. Coulomb. I went to Mr. Deschamps and ordered the cabinet, which took about eighteen days to make. This was not of black wood (*i.e.*, ebony), but cedar-wood black-lacked.

"Madame was in this great hurry because Mr. Sinnett was expected to come and spend a short time at headquarters, in company with his wife and child, on their way to England.

"As soon as Mr. Deschamps sent the cabinet, which is known under the name of 'shrine,' it was measured on the spot where it was intended to remain. Now this shrine had three sliding panels at the back, made on purpose to be



taken out and slid back when necessity demanded it; the middle one of these panels was pulled out of its groove and sawn into two, because by pulling the panel up all one piece it would have shown, notwithstanding the many folds of muslin which hung in festoons over the shrine. After sawing this panel as I said, the lower part was put back into its groove, and to the top piece was nailed a bit of leather, by which the servant could have a strong hold to pull it up easily. This done, it was placed against the wall once more, the half-panel was lifted up, and the measure of the hole into the wall was taken; a few knocks with a hammer and chisel made a small breach of about seven or eight inches in length and five or six in breadth, quite sufficient to permit an arm to pass; this done, the shrine was finally fixed. At the back of this cabinet, against the wall of the bricked window already mentioned, was placed the *armoire à glace* (glass almirah) which madame brought with her from Bombay. In this almirah sliding-panels were made corresponding with the hole, so that when the panel of the shrine and that of the almirah were both pulled open, one could see from madame's present dining-room through the hole into the occult room—the doors of the shrine being, of course, opened.

"I shall not tire my readers by mentioning what kind of correspondence was transmitted through this channel at the time of Mr. Sinnett's stay at the headquarters, because neither myself nor my husband lent a hand in such transmission on that occasion; but I shall have to speak of the apparition which Mr. Sinnett saw on the terrace of Colonel Olcott's bungalow, and for precision's sake it behoves me to give here a short description of what took place on the arrival of Mr. Sinnett at headquarters. I do not know what the previous conversation can have been between this gentleman and Madame Blavatsky, but the result was that madame told me: 'What are we to do now? Mr. Sinnett wants to go and sleep in colonel's bungalow.' To this I answered that I was very sorry, because I knew that colonel did not like anyone to occupy his rooms; but madame said, 'He wants to go there because he expects a visit from the Mahatma.' I shrugged my shoulders, and told the servant to remove the trunks in the said bungalow.



A little later in the day she asked me to go upstairs. I went. 'Come here,' she said. 'See, Mr. Sinnett would go into the colonel's bungalow to sleep, because, as I told you, he expects a visit from the Mahatma. Do you think it would be possible for Mr. Coulomb to go quietly in the night, and through the window close to his bed pass a letter and go away, or even show himself at a distance? Mr. Sinnett would never dare to move if I tell him not.' I answered that I would ask my husband, but that I was sure he would not do it, because Mr. Sinnett was not a simpleton: he might go after the apparition and find out what it was, and then what would become of her? I told my husband, and he refused point-blank, saying that he would not do it. Whether anyone else did it, instead, or not, this I could not say; but what I can affirm is, that Mr. Sinnett did not stay very long in the bungalow, and I heard him say that it was no use staying there any longer. A few days after this, madame asked to have Koot Hoomi shown on colonel's bungalow. Baboula, madame's servant, took the Christofolo, all wrapped up in a shawl, and with Mr. Coulomb went all along the compound on the side of the swimming-bath to the end of the *pasture*, returning in a straight line back to colonel's bungalow up to the terrace, where it was lifted up and lowered down to give it a vapoury appearance. I went up to madame to say that all was ready, and found her at the window, in company with Mr. and Mrs. Sinnett, looking through an opera-glass; I was very much annoyed that she should be so imprudent, but this is her nature. Another day, she asked that the Mahatma should be taken on the island in the middle of the river opposite the main bungalow. It was found impossible to oblige her this time, because the tide was high and the moonlight as bright as day, so that the servant, who had to carry the bundle, could not cross the river: consequently, the apparition did not take place, to madame's great annoyance, because she had already invited Mr. and Mrs. Sinnett to go up and see. Some time after they had left for England, Madame Blavatsky, with a view to remove any suspicion that might have arisen in her visitors at seeing letters, flowers, foliage, etc., appear always through the same channel, namely, the shrine—ordered other sliding panels to

be made in the same occult room. The window in the passage was now turned into a cupboard, the glass door of the almirah was taken away and placed as door to it, as it can be still seen, I suppose, and is the very identical one through which Colonel Olcott received the two Chinese vases in the way explained later on. I must here say that this cupboard has a double back. The one which is seen in the passage immediately at the top of the stairs facing Baboula's sleeping-place, which is simple shutters painted grey. The inner back, or double one, inside the cupboard in the occult room, is of teak-wood, not painted and not varnished, but planed. In this are the sliding panels, which admit not only a hand but even a person to go through if opened wide. It is very complicated, because, besides sliding a little in the frame, it works on hinges, thus leaving a larger aperture.

"Now, returning to the shrine where so much occult correspondence was going on, I shall say that a little later on Madame Blavatsky, fearing to be asked by some one to have the almirah removed to inspect the back of it, devised means which she said would do away with all danger of being discovered. So she asked my husband to give orders to the carpenters to make a sham door of solid boards of teak-wood, composed of four panels, one of which, when unfastened, could be slid off about ten inches, through which the hand and arm could easily pass, and this was of course in a straight line with the hole in the wall and the sliding panel at the back of the shrine. This apparatus of the sham door served very well for some time, and many astounding phenomena were performed through it.

"About this epoch, General and Mrs. Morgan had given madame an invitation to go to Ooty, as she was suffering very much from the heat in Madras. Before leaving, she devised the plan that a phenomenon should take place in her absence. This was that in presence of Mr. R. R. D. B. a saucer should fall from the shrine and break, and that a second one should appear through the occult channel already described. She took also the precaution to say, 'that if I wrote to her on the subject, I was to be careful of what I said.' She started for Ooty, and when there she sent the following letter:—

"13 Juillet.

"CHER MARQUIS,

"Montrez ou envoyez lui le papier ou le slip (le petit sacristipas le grand, car ce dernier doit aller se coucher près de son auteur dans le temple mural) avec l'ordre de vous les fournir. J'ai reçu une lettre qui a forcé notre maître cheri K. H. d'écrire ses ordres aussi à Mr. Damodar et autres. Que la Marquise les lise. Cela suffira je vous l'assure. Ah, si je pouvais avoir ici mon Christofolo chéri!

"Cber Marquis—Je vous livre le destin de *mes enfants*. Prenez en soin et faites leur faire des miracles. Peut être il serait mieux de faire tomber celui-ci sur la tête?

"H. P. B.

"*Cachetez l'enfant après l'avoir lu.*

"Enregistrez vos lettres s'il s'y trouve quelque chose—autrement non."

"After the perusal of this letter my readers will, I am sure, consider any comment on its contents quite useless, for by this it is clearly seen how the occult letters, which were her children, were wont to be transmitted, and how she missed her dear Christofolo—*alias* K. H.

"I shall produce several letters, all of which are chiefly to prove how the phenomena were performed, and the correspondence transmitted. There is one which refers to the projected phenomenon of the saucer.

"13th July.

"DEAR MARQUIS,

"Show or send him [Damodar] the paper, *i.e.*, the *slip* (the small one, not the large one, for this latter must go and lie near its author in the mural temple), with order to supply you with them. I have received a letter which has obliged our dear master K. H. to write his orders also to Mr. Damodar and the others. Let the Marquise read them. That will be enough I assure you. Ah, if I could only have my dear Christofolo here!

"Dear Marquis—I leave the fate of *my children* in your hands. Take care of them and make them work miracles. Perhaps it would be better to make this one fall on his head? H. P. B.

"*Seal the child after reading it.*

"Register your letters if there is anything within—otherwise, never mind."

" 'MA BIEN CHÈRE AMIE,

" 'Vous n'avez pas besoin d'attendre l'homme "Punch." Pourvu que cela soit fait en présence de personnes qui sont respectables *besides* our own familiar *muffs*. Je vous supplie de le faire à la première occasion.

" 'Tell Damodar please, the "Holy" whistle breeches, and St. Poulvice that they do not perfume enough with incense the *inner* shrine. It is very damp, and it ought to be well incensed.

.....

" 'H. P. BLAVATSKY.'

"This also speaks for itself, and it is a distinct proof that the phenomena did not take place in an occult way, but by the help of friends.

"The following is with reference to a slip of paper which was to be placed in the saucer which was to appear as if repaired by the Mahatma:—

" 'CHER MONSIEUR COULOMB,

" 'C'est jecrois cela que vous devez avoir. Tâchez donc si vous croyez que cela va réussir d'avoir plus d'audience que nos *imbéciles domestiques* seulement. Cela mérite la peine, car la soucoupe d'Adyar pourrait devenir historique, comme la tasse de Simla. Soubaya ici et je n'ai guère le temps d'écrire à mon aise. A vous mes honneurs et remerciments.

" '(Signed) H. P. B.'

" 'MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

" 'You need not wait for the man "Punch." Provided the thing takes place in the presence of respectable persons *besides* our own familiar *muffs*. I beg you to do it the first opportunity."

" 'DEAR MONSIEUR COULOMB,

" 'This is what I think you ought to have. Try if you think that it is going to be a success to have a larger audience than our *domestic imbeciles* only. It is well worth the trouble, for the Adyar saucer might become historical, like the Simla cup. Soubaya is present, and I have hardly time to write at my ease. My Salaams and thanks to you.

" 'H. P. B.'

"In order to be exact, let me report the contents of the slip of paper above-mentioned, which is worded as follows :

"To the small audience present as witness. Now Madame Coulomb has occasion to assure herself that the devil is neither as black nor as wicked as he is generally represented. The mischief is easily repaired.—K. H."

"The phenomenon Madame Blavatsky so anxiously desired to be performed, the beloved Master seems to have reserved for the very earnest theosophist, General Morgan of Ooty ; because really no one came to headquarters before this gentleman's visit was announced by the following letter, so it was done for his edification ; here is the letter :—

"Vendredi.

"Friday.

"MES CHÈRE MADAME COULOMB ET MARQUIS,

"MY DEAR MADAME COULOMB AND MARQUIS.

"Voici le moment de nous montrer ne nous cachons pas. Le général part pour affaires à Madras et y sera lundi et y passera deux jours. Il est Président de la Société ici et veut voir le shrine. C'est probable qu'il fasse une question quelconque et peut être se bornera-t-il à regarder. Mais il est sûr qu'il s'attend à un phénomène car il me l'a dit. Dans le premier cas suppliez K. H. que vous voyez tous les jours ou Cristofolo de soutenir l'honneur de famille. Dites lui donc qu'une fleur suffirait, et que si le pot de chambre cassait sous le poids de la curiosité il serait bon de le remplacer *en ce moment*. Damn les autres celui là vaut son pesant d'or. Per l'amor del Dio—ou de qui vous voudrez—*ne manquez pas cette*

"This is the moment for us to come out—do not let us hide ourselves. The General is leaving this for Madras on business. He will be there on Monday, and will remain there two days. He is President of the Society here, and wishes to see the shrine. It is probable that he will put some question, or perhaps he may be contented with looking. But it is certain that he expects a phenomenon, for he told me so. In the first case beg K. H., whom you see every day, or Christofolo, to keep up the honour of the family. Tell him that a flower will be sufficient, and that *if the pot breaks* under its load of curiosity it would be well to replace it *at once*. The others he damned ; this is worth its weight in gold.

*occasion, car elle ne se répètera plus. Je ne suis pas là, et c'est cela qui est beau. Je me fie à vous, et je vous supplie de ne pas me décevoir, car tous mes projets et mon avenir avec vous tous —(car je vais avoir une maison ici pour passer les six mois de l'année et elle sera à moi à la société et vous ne souffrirez plus de la chaleur comme vous le faites, si j'y réussis).*

.....  
 "Voici le moment de faire quelque-chose. Tournez lui la tête au général et il fera tout pour vous surtout si vous êtes avec lui au moment du Christophe. Je vous envoie *un en cas*—e vi saluto. Le colonel vient ici du 20 au 25. Je reviendrai vers le milieu de Septembre.

"À vous de cœur,

"LUNA MELANCONICA.

"J'ai dîné chez le Gouverneur et son 1<sup>er</sup> Aide-de-Camp. Je dîne ce soir chez les Carmichaels. Elle est folle pour moi. Que le ciel m'aide !'

For the love of God—or of anyone you please—do not miss this opportunity, for we shall never have another. I am not there, and that is the beauty of the thing. I rely on you, and beg you not to disappoint me, for all my projects and my future depend on you—for I am going to have a house here, where I can spend six months of the year, and it shall be *mine* for the society, and you shall no longer suffer from the heat, as you do now, but this if I succeed).

.....  
 "This is the proper time to do something. Turn the General's head and he will do anything for you, especially if you are with him at the same time as Christophe. I send you a possible requisite [*lit.* an "in case of"—a letter from the Mahatma, in case the General should want a reply]. I wish you good-bye. The Colonel will be here from the 20th to the 25th. I shall return about the middle of September.

"Heartily yours,

"LUNA MELANCONICA.

"I have dined with the Governor and his principal Aide-de-Camp. This evening I shall dine with the Carmichaels. *She is mad after me. May heaven help me !'*

"Here I report the '*en cas*' mentioned at the end of this letter, which was meant to be put in the shrine in answer to any letter the General might have placed in it:—

"I can say nothing *now*—and will let you know at Ooty.

"(Signed) K. H.

"General Morgan."

"As soon as the phenomenon took place, General Morgan signed his name, as witness, on the slip of paper which was found in the saucer which had been replaced through the hole; then I followed the advice which madame had given to me before leaving—that is, to be prudent as to what I wrote concerning the matter. Here is what my letter contained:—

"ADYAR, 13th August, 1883.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"I verily believe I shall go silly if I stop with you. Now let me tell you what has happened. On my arrival home I found General Morgan sitting down in that beautiful office of ours, talking with Damodar and Mr. Coulomb. After exchanging a few words I asked whether he would wish to see the "Shrine," and, on his answering in the affirmative, we went upstairs, pausing, on the outside, on account of the furniture of your sitting-room being heaped up to block the doors and prevent thieves breaking in. The General found the portraits admirable, but I wished I had never gone up, because, on my opening the "Shrine," I, Madame Coulomb, who never care either to see or to have anything to do in these matters, as you well know, must needs go and open the "Shrine," and see before my eyes, and through my fingers pass, the pretty saucer you so much cared for. It fell down and broke in twenty pieces. Damodar looked at me, as much as to say, "Well, you are a fine guardian." I, trying to conceal my sorrow, on account of General Morgan's presence, took the *debris* of the cup and put them in a piece of cloth, which I tied up, and placed it behind the silver bowl. On second consideration, I thought I had better take it down again, and reduce it in powder this time. So I asked Damodar to reach it for me, and, to our unutterable surprise, the cup was as perfect as though



it had never been broken, and more, there was the enclosed note :—

““To the small audience present as witnesses. Now Madame Coulomb has occasion to assure herself that the devil is neither as black nor as wicked as he is generally represented. The mischief is easily repaired.—K. H.””

Round this group of facts there has raged a fierce controversy between the “Theosophists” and the “Society for Psychical Research,” who sent out to India a gentleman, named Hodgson, who has since published a report accusing Madame Blavatsky of cheating.

I will deal first of all with the facts that are conceded by both disputants :—

1. Madame Blavatsky took a large house in Adyar, with a flat roof, on which was an airy bedchamber.

2. Adjoining this she had an “occult room” constructed on the roof.

3. A window connecting the two was bricked up.

4. A handsome shrine of cedar wood was bought and placed against the bricked-up window.

5. Exactly on the other side of this bricked-up window an *armoire à glace* was placed.

Now, here we have at least five-sixths of the apparatus of fraud confessed. What was denied is that the back of the shrine was pierced until Madame Blavatsky went to England.

But how injudicious seem the proceedings of the Russian lady if she is innocent.

The society was hard up. Why did she go to the expense of an “occult room?” If such a room was wanted surely the isolated bedroom on the top of the house would have done admirably, and Madame Blavatsky would have been far more comfortable in a sleeping apartment below. Bricked-up windows and constantly closed curtains are considered oppressive by most Europeans in an Indian climate. Some may ask, too, why the “shrine” and the wardrobe were so accurately *dos à dos*?

Mr. Hodgson’s report is given in the “Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research,” vol. iii., pp. 219 *et seq.* He arrived in Madras, December 18th, 1884. He applied to see

the shrine, and Damodar refused to let him see it. Two days later Madame Blavatsky arrived at Adyar, and she professed a complete ignorance of the matter, saying "she had been unable to discover what had been done with the shrine." Mr. Damodar and Dr. Hartmann both denied having any knowledge of it, and "it was only after repeated and urgent requests to be told what had happened that I learned from the halting account given by Mr. Damodar and Dr. Hartmann that the shrine had been moved from the 'occult room' into Mr. Damodar's room about mid-day of September 20th, that on the following morning at nine o'clock they found the shrine had been taken away, and they had not seen it since. They threw out suggestions that the Coulombs or the missionaries might have stolen it."

Mr. Hodgson practically confirms all that Madame Coulomb has said about the occult room. A recess capable of admitting a boy as small as Baboula allowed the latter to pass letters and objects from Madame Blavatsky's close-curtained bedroom into the shrine. Mr. Hodgson examined the books of the general dealer who sold Madame Coulomb the two saucers, and found them duly registered.

"The theosophists contended that the structures for trickery revealed by the Coulombs, who had had exclusive charge of Madame Blavatsky's rooms during her absence, had been made after she had left; that they never had been and could not be used in the production of phenomena, that the hollow space and the aperture leading to it were too small to be utilised in any connection with the shrine; and, moreover, that Mr. Coulomb's work was interrupted before he had time to make a hole through the wall." But Mr. Hodgson points out one damaging fact, and that is that with the exception of Madame Blavatsky and the Coulombs and the boy Baboula and Colonel Olcott (whose statement on this point Mr. Hodgson gives "reasons for distrusting"), none of the witnesses who testified to the unpierced wall "ever removed the shrine from the wall or saw it removed after it was placed there; further, that no such examination was ever made on the east side of the party wall as would have sufficed to discover the sliding panels and apertures." Mr. Hodgson found out at last that

the shrine was destroyed because Mr. Judge was too curious about it. Dr. Hartmann admitted to Mr. Hodgson that he had discovered that the back of the shrine could be removed, and that he kept back the "discovery" for fear of injuring Madame Blavatsky. "Everywhere," says Mr. Hodgson, "was malobservation, equivocation, absolute dishonesty."

A word here. Mrs. Besant in her Autobiography alludes to these Indian exposures. She contrasts the "frank and free nature" of Madame Blavatsky with the "foul and loathsome deceiver" her accuser. "Everything," she says, "turns upon the veracity of the Coulombs."

But does this state the complete case? Madame Coulomb has produced several dozen letters in support of her charges. This is the real evidence. They are pronounced to be in Madame Blavatsky's handwriting, by the experts Sims and Netherclift, and no attempt has been made on the part of the theosophists to prove them forgeries. It is difficult to produce one letter which will stand the test of a scientific examination. To produce say two dozen forged letters would be quite impossible.

Another point strikes one. The meaning of a forged document is generally quite on the surface, "Pay to the bearer thirty-seven pounds." This tells its story. But in the Blavatsky letters, all is hint—innuendo—nickname. Mons. Coulomb is "The Marquis," Madame Blavatsky is "Luna Melanconica." Madame Coulomb "The Marquise," Colonel Olcott "Pres," and the members of the Theosophical Society "our own familiar muffs." Scarcely any letter tells its story without an interpreter.

This is generally considered the most compromising document of all :—

"Oh, mon pauvre Christofolo ! Il est donc mort, et vous l'avez tué ? Oh, ma chère amie, si vous saviez comme je voudrais le voir revivre ! .....

"Ma bénédiction à mon pauvre Christofolo. Toujours à vous,  
H. P. B."

"Christofolo" was the nickname behind the scenes for the doll that represented Koot Hoomi. Mr. Coulomb first

worked this dummy for the edification of Mr. Sinnett. Hence perhaps "Coulomb," by a play of fancy, would be changed to "Christophe Colomb," and eventually into "Cristofolo," in Madame Blavatsky's polyglot tongue. The meaning of the letter is that Madame Coulomb in a fit of anger had destroyed the dummy Mahatma.

But singularly enough a very important argument has been overlooked by both disputants. The theory of the theosophists is that there is a real Koot Hoomi and that his miracles were genuine. But if so, Madame Coulomb must have thoroughly believed in his powers. Would she have dared to brave the might of this astounding personage, especially as without miracle he might have come forward as a witness and had her locked up in an Indian jail as a perjurer.

One letter, it seems to me, could not possibly be a forgery, but a few words of explanation are necessary:—

Early in 1884 Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott, with Baboula and another native named Mohini, sailed for England. This last gentleman was being brought home to testify, as an eye-witness, to the existence of the Mahatmas. He has since left the society and announced that the Mahatmas are a myth.

It was a hazardous step on the part of the Russian lady this English trip, but she left orders in writing that her bedroom and the shrine were to be left in the sole charge of the Coulombs; and an effort was made to close up the passage between the *armoire à glace* and the shrine in part. A "Board of Control" was pompously constituted. It consisted of an English traveller, and some natives. It was evidently intended to be a dummy board. But the Russian lady here was a little too clever. Natives of the lower class when invested with a little authority like to use it. Money was short, owing to the sum taken by the travellers in the steamer; and, perhaps, some of these natives had a grudge against their old housekeeper. Soon they cavilled at her small expenses, sold her pet dogs, and by-and-by made her and her husband eat off plantain leaves like native servants. Imagine a lady, vexed with prickly heat, mosquitoes, and other Eastern irritations, and then treated thus. No wonder that a great question of revenge soon surged up.

But a greater trial was in store. Madame Coulomb seems to have nourished a special animosity against the masked dummy, Koot Hoomi, which she made herself. Colonel Olcott was always prosing about this Mahatma, and his prosing used to drive her quite wild. But Madame Blavatsky had rather foolishly left the "astral post office," as it was called, in charge of one of the Board of Control. In consequence, at every crisis letters were produced from the "Mahatma on duty," and it was natural that these letters should decide each small turn of the squabble against the Coulombs. The worthy lady who knew accurately who had written them, now began to use threats of strange disclosures. Madame Blavatsky, in Europe, was in consternation. Either the following letter is by her, or Madame Coulomb is the greatest master of refined mockery that has appeared since Voltaire.

"PARIS, 1st April, 1884,

"46 Rue Notre Dame des Champs.

"MY DEAR MONSIEUR AND MADAME COULOMB,

"I address this letter to you both, because I think it well that you should lay your heads together and think seriously about it. I have not been able to write to you before—I have been too ill for that. I will first transcribe certain passages from several letters which I have just received from the Adyar. These extracts will be lengthy. I will not dwell upon what is there said respecting Madame Coulomb and Mr. Brown, 'who (Madame Coulomb), in his case, as she did in that of —, *tries her best to undermine the power of the Society by talking to him as she does against it.*' All that may or may not be serious. Neither is what Mr. Lane-Fox says in his letter; but see what is added! 'She opposes *everything* that is intended for the benefit of the Society. But these are perhaps trifling things which might be counteracted. More serious is the fact that she says she lent you money in Egypt.' (That I have never hidden, I have told it to everybody; and at the time of the Wimbridge-Bates tragedy, I announced publicly that I was under obligation to you, since, when no one would aid me—me, a stranger in Cairo—you alone and M. Coulomb helped

me, gave me hospitality, loans of money, etc.; I have always said *more even than you really did*. Well, I continue my copying)—'she says the money was never repaid; that *M. Coulomb has been constructing secret trap-doors for the producing of occult phenomena*, that she could tell—the Lord knows what—if she wanted to; and, lastly, her foolish assertion that the Theosophical Society was founded to overthrow British rule in India.....Madame Coulomb, ever since I knew her, expressed it to be her highest wish to get sufficient money to go to some other place, and for this object she begged 2,000 Rupees from Hurrusingjee. She has told me many times that if she had only 2,000 Rupees she would go like a shot. Mr. Lane-Fox has offered to give her the 2,000 Rupees, or provide for her in any way she wishes; but now she suddenly changes her attitude, and insists on staying; saying that she has a paper from Colonel Olcott, in which he offers her a home for life in Adyar, and that she has positive orders from you (orders!!?) not only to remain here during your absence, but also to help herself from the funds of the Society whenever she should want any money to buy dresses, etc.' Is it, then, because I have really said and repeated to you, before Olcott and others, that you both, being Theosophists and friends, had a right to spend the money of the Society for your dress and necessary expenses, that you are saying to them that *M. Coulomb has constructed secret trap-doors, etc.!!* Oh, Madame Coulomb! what, then, have I done to you, that you should try to ruin me in this way? Is it because for four years we lived together, helping each other to meet the troubles of life, and because I have left everything in the house in your hands, saying to you continually, 'Take what money you need,' that you seek to ruin me for life in the minds of those who, when they turn their back on me, will turn their back on you first, and although you will gain nothing but the loss of friends, who would otherwise always have aided you? How can I believe that Madame Coulomb will so dishonour her husband and herself? Those who write to me and the Colonel also say as follows:—'Her object in doing so looks as though she wanted to get money from Mr. Fox and remain here, and'—but I am unwilling to transcribe more. I am keeping the letters, and *if ever we*

meet again you shall see them. They add:—‘Furthermore, we have sufficient evidence, *through herself*, that she is made use of by black magicians, not only to interfere with the welfare of the Society, but especially to exert a poisonous and detrimental influence on Damodar. As to her being an enemy of the Society, she does not even attempt to deny it.’ Further on it is said that M. Coulomb says the same things as *his wife*. I DO NOT BELIEVE IT. You are too honest a man, too proud, to do such a thing. You are ready to kill a man when you are in a rage. *You will never lay an accusation against him!* You would not accuse him *in secret* before his friends. And if Madame Coulomb, who would not do an injury to a fly—who has so much love for the very beasts—has done so, *it is because she is sick*, and does not know what she says, and does not think of the frightful harm she is doing to those who have never done anything to her, and the harm that she does to herself and to all. Why does she hate me? What have I done to her? I know that I am bad-tempered, violent, that without intending it I have perhaps offended her more than once. But what evil have I ever done to her? Since our arrival at Adyar I have truly and sincerely loved her, and since my departure I have thought only of buying her something at Paris which she needed, and of how I could put you in the possession of 2,000 or 3,000 Rs. in order that she might go and reside for the summer at Ootacamund, or settle elsewhere and keep a boarding-house, or indeed do anything for herself and you. I have never been ungrateful, never a traitor, my dear M. Coulomb. And you, Madame Coulomb, do not say that you have never said this, as in the case of Hurrusingjee, for see again what that poor boy, Damodar, says, who has written a despairing letter. I copy again:—‘I am between the horns of a dilemma,.....Master tells me that Madame Coulomb must be treated with consideration and respect, and on the other hand she tells me, and has been saying to everyone, *that you are a fraud*—performing phenomena by means of secret spring trap-doors, probably constructed by M. Coulomb. This she did not assert to me, but only insinuated,’ etc. And further on:—‘..... I entirely agree with the facts introduced in —’s letters to you. Madame C. has been, according to *her confession*,



exercising an influence prejudicial to the interests of the Society.'

"Well now, what do you say to all that? *What end* do you expect to gain, Madame Coulomb, by allowing people to believe of you *that which you are incapable of doing*, i.e., of (employing) black magic against a Society which protects you, which works for you, if you have worked for it (and God knows the obligations which we owe entirely to you, M. Coulomb, for all that you have done for us since we came to Adyar). That you have worked for us I say aloud, and that, working, you have a right to our gratitude, and to your clothing and food, and to live at the cost of the Society as far as its funds allow—I say it again. But what purpose have you in going and vilifying me secretly to those who love me, and who believe in me? What (cause of) vengeance have you against me? What have I done to you, I ask again? What you do will *never ruin the Society*, only me alone, at the most, in the estimation of my friends. The public has always looked upon me as a *fraud and an impostor*. By talking and acting as you do you will only gain one end, that is, people will say that you are also '*a fraud*'; and worse than that, that you have done *for your own interests* what I have not done for myself, since I give all that I have to the Society, for I spend my life for it. They will say that you and M. Coulomb have helped me, *not for the sake of friendship* (for you prove by your accusations and denunciations that for some reason unknown to me you hate me), but in the hope of '*blackmailing*,' as one of the letters to Olcott puts it. But that is dreadful! You are truly sick; you must be so to do as foolishly as you are doing! Understand, then, that you cannot at this hour of day injure anyone. That it is too late. That similar phenomena, and more marvellous still (letters from the Mahatma Koot Hoomi and from our Master), have happened when I was a thousand leagues away. That Mr. Hume at Simla, Col. Strange in Kashmir, Sinnett in London, Queensbury in New York, and Gilbert in Australia, have received the same day and the same hour a circular letter in the writing of the Mahatma *when all were alone in their rooms*. Where then were the *trap-doors* constructed by M. Coulomb? Find one out really, and it will reflect at most on you, the

principal actors, and on poor me. People who have seen the Mahatma before them in Australia and London as at the Adyar, who have received from him letters *in his handwriting* in reply to their letters written two hours before, *will not believe you*, nor could they believe you; and remember that if I was twenty thousand times *exposed, detected, and convicted* of imposture, like the *mediums*, all that would indeed be nothing to the cause, to truth. So then if by accusing myself publicly, and proclaiming myself a *fraud* in all the papers, I can thus do good to the Society and make the veneration for the Mahatmas still greater—I shall do it without a moment's hesitation. I will spend myself for that *cause* which you hate so much. And who then has been the *fraud* when (I being a thousand leagues away) Hurrusingjee has a reply to his letter which he had put into the *shrine*, and Srinavas Rao also, as they have written to me from the Adyar? Is it you who have written in the handwriting of the Mahatma, and you also who have taken advantage of a *trap-door*? All the evil proved will be that you have never wished to believe that there were *true* 'Mahatmas' behind the curtain. That you do not believe the phenomena real, and that is why you see *tricks in everything*. Ah, well! (I commit myself) to the grace of God. Accuse me, denounce me, ruin H. P. Blavatsky, who has never hated or betrayed you, who almost ruined the Society at its first appearance in Bombay, in order to sustain and protect you in opposition to all—even the Colonel; and that when she was [not] able to do it without danger to herself. Do it, my good friend. But remember, you who speak so much of God and of Christ, that if there be a God, He will assuredly not reward you for the evil which you try to do to those who have never done anything to you. You may say what you please, but a living person is always more than a dog or a beast in the economy of nature. Mr. Lane-Fox and the Board of Trustees appear to have made changes in the house—sending away the coolies and the dogs, too! And it seems to me that Madame Coulomb attributes all that to me! Ah well! you are altogether wrong. All *that*, the Board of Trustees arranged the last day at Bombay, when, having received the news of the death of my uncle, I *took no part*.

I did not even know what they had done. It was the Colonel, Dr. Hartmann, and Mr. Lane-Fox who arranged and carried out everything. It is only to-day that I have made the Colonel explain the thing to me. I have even asked that they should nominate M. Coulomb as one of the trustees, so much do I need him to build a room. The Colonel has not answered me either yes or no. And to-day he reproached me again with having, along with M. Coulomb, spent all the money for my rooms, etc. Do you know what he said respecting the letters from which I have copied extracts? If Madame Coulomb—who has 'undeniably helped you in some phenomena, for she told this to me herself—were to proclaim it on the top of the roof, it would change nothing *in my knowledge* and that of Dr. Hartmann, Brown, Sinnett, Hume, and so many others in the appreciation of Theosophy and their veneration for the Brothers. You alone would suffer. For *if even you yourself were to tell me that the Mahatmas do not exist, and that you have tricked in every phenomenon produced by you, I would answer you that YOU LIE; for we know the Mahatmas, and know that you could not—no more than fly on the moon—have produced certain of the best of your phenomena.*' See there! Conclude from this what the truth is, and what he thinks.

"If I have not done more for you than I have, it is because I had not the means. Absorbed *altogether* in the cause as I was, and still am, I think of nobody. May I *perish*, but may the cause flourish! If you compromise me before Lane-Fox, Hartmann, and the others—all well! I shall never return to the Adyar, but will remain here or in London, where I will prove by phenomena more marvellous still that they are true, and that our Mahatmas exist, *for there is one here at Paris, and there will be also in London.* And when I shall have proved this, where will the *trap-doors* be then? Who will make them? Why do you wish to make the Colonel hate you, and set him against you, as you have put *all* at Adyar against you? Why not quietly remain friends and wait for better days, helping us to put the Society on a firm basis, having large funds, of which all theosophists who have need of protection and help in money would reap the benefit? Why not

accept the 2,000 Rs. which Mr. Lane-Fox offered you, and spend the hot months at Ooty, and the cool months with us, as in the past? It appears that Damodar has not a cash left. He asks money from us—from us! And we who spend, spend, and shall soon have no more, for it is no longer coming in; and you—you wish to alienate from the cause the only man who is able to help it, the only one who is rich. Instead of becoming friends with him you are setting him horribly against you. Ah, my dear friend, how miserable and foolish is all this! Come, I have no ill-will against you. I am so much accustomed to terror and suffering that nothing astonishes me. But what truly astonishes me is to see you, who are such an intelligent woman, doing evil for its own sake, and running the risk of being swallowed up in the pit which you have digged—yourself the first (victim)! Pshaw! Believe, both of you, that it is a friend who speaks. I love M. Coulomb well, and until he himself says to me that I am mistaken respecting him, that he has left you to speak and talk of trap-doors without contradicting you, I will never believe such tales respecting him. He is incapable of it. Undo then the evil which you have unwittingly done. I am sure of this—(you are) carried away by your nerves, your sickness, your sufferings, and the anger which you have roused in the Board of Trustees, who annoy me more than they annoy you. But if you choose to go on disgracing me for no good to yourself—do it; *and may your Christ and God repay you!*

“After all, I sign myself, with anguish of heart which you can never comprehend—for ever your friend,

“H. P. BLAVATSKY.”

Now it seems to me that Thackeray or Daudet could not have imagined this splendid, wheedling, menacing, puzzle-headed, pathetic, contradictory letter. “I am innocent,” it says. “I am guilty. You can ruin me! I laugh at you! There are trap-doors! There are no trap-doors!” And then in the middle of this grotesque inconsequence suddenly shines out the seeress! Who else, in 1884, would have dared prophesy that four years after the Coulomb disclosures the Theosophical Society would be more flourishing than ever!

Some of this letter Madame Coulomb could not have written. The most reckless forger would scarcely sit down and write, out of her own head, long imaginary extracts from the letters of known people like Mr. Lane-Fox, who could at once come forward and convict her. And the letter defends Madame Blavatsky instead of incriminating her, which is rather against the theosophical theory.

I will conclude this chapter with an extract from a strange letter which has been published by Professor Coues of America. He announces that he possesses the original:—

"MY DEAR —

"What I mean was to keep the details of phenomena, and everything coming from and connected with the Master, very secret, yet to make no secret of the phenomena as before going on (else the public would say that since the *exposé* by the Psychic R. S. we were tamed, and that the humbug has ceased, which would be fatal to us).

"We are surrounded by pitfalls, whirlpools, and traitors. We have to fight them fearlessly and openly with the weapons of philosophy, not those of phenomena, as we would soon get worsted again. Let it be known that phenomena (*sic*) goes on as before, but do not let anyone know what it is, and the great secrecy will be the best punishment for the howling, doubting, and profane public. If Olcott had not courted exposure and scandal by his stupid invitation of the S. P. R. to come and see, there would be nothing of all that happened, but now we are in, and have to do the best we can.

"H. P. BLAVATSKY."

## CHAPTER X.

ANNA KINGSFORD.

I THINK we have now established that the Mahatmas of the Tibetan mountains are as unsubstantial as the mist-spectres of the Brocken. My task seems done; in reality it now begins. For we have to account not for the failure of Madame Blavatsky, but for her conspicuous success. How is it that a fibbing, cheating, variety performer, with her dressed-up dolls and gummed envelopes, obtained subjection over minds like those of Mr. Maitland, Mr. Hume, Dr. Wyld, Mr. Sinnett, Mr. Myers? How could third-rate conjuring tricks vanquish Dr. Anna Kingsford and Mrs. Besant?

Progress, it has been well observed, proceeds more by reaction than by action. The eighteenth century, without much evidence, believed in a spirit world. In the nineteenth century, the full swing of the pendulum has carried us far away from this idea. Our God is Darwin and evolution. But suddenly, on the top of this full-flavoured materialism, came the tapping tables; and folks of the highest fashion wildly consulted dead grandmamas and dead sporting uncles about their matrimonial or their Derby projects. But of these investigators, all were not equally frivolous. To some minds the new spiritualism presented the gravest problems, some scientific, some religious.

This gives us the two groups that Madame Blavatsky was able to influence—the mystics and the scientists. It must be remembered that at first very exaggerated accounts were in circulation regarding the Blavatsky miracles. Some of these stories were very astounding indeed, and when folks learnt that the chaos of the séance rooms had been reduced to order, and that a mighty adept was in existence who could control the turbulent spirits, they were naturally inclined to learn something of her methods. Dr. Wyld,

the first President of the London Lodge, has assured me that all the theosophists that joined the society in his time, did so in the hope of mastering the secrets of magic. Each wished to be an Apollonius of Tyana. Then her theory that the phenomena were not due to spirits at all found much favour with the Society for Psychical Research, as they were trying to establish the same conclusion.

But a vulgar love of marvel, although it be dignified with the name of science, will never spread Europe, Asia, Africa, and America with "lodges" and "branch associations." The Magus is of two patterns. There is the Cagliastro Magus, and the Saint Martin. By and by Dr. Anna Kingsford joined the society, and was elected president of the London lodge. A sketch of this lady and her work may let us into some of the secrets of Madame Blavatsky's influence.

Anna Bonus was born in 1846. In youth she had the misfortune, or fortune, to have unsympathetic surroundings. This caused all soul growth to sprout inwardly rather than in the conventional channels. Also like St. Theresa from an early age she was of those who see visions and dream dreams. She married a gentleman named Kingsford, who subsequently took orders. She grew dissatisfied with Anglicanism, and sought a refuge in the Roman Catholic Church. But she soon found that the career of a new Madame Guyon was impossible in that petrified establishment. Then, lo and behold, one day a mighty "gospel" was revealed to her. Among her heavenly visitants appeared an old gentleman in the costume of the last century. Consulting old prints, she came upon the same face. It was Swedenborg. Certainly, in one sense at least, it was the spirit of Swedenborg, for it promptly announced that the literal interpretation of the Bible was irrational. The Christ was without doubt born of the "Virgin" and the "Father," but the "Christ" was not the man Jesus, but the new Adam that can be born in each of us according to the express statement of St. Paul:—

"My little children of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you." (*Gal. iv. 19.*)

Also the Virgin Mary was not the literal mundane mother.



Her gospel was thus summed up by Mr. Maitland:—

"There is no enlightenment from without. The secret of things is revealed from within.

"From without cometh no divine revelation, but the spirit within beareth witness."

Mr. Maitland is the author of "The Pilgrim and the Shrine." This work attracted the attention of Mrs. Kingsford, and she wrote to the author. In consequence a warm friendship sprang up, and they wrote an elaborate treatise in collaboration, the "Perfect Way." Each had trials in life, transcending as each believed the trials of others. Mr. Maitland considers that this ministry of pain is the secret of spirit growth.

"By the bruising of the outer the inner is set free."

"Man is alive only so far as he has felt."

For a lucid account of Anna Kingsford, and her visions and projects, see Mr. Maitland's "Story of the New Gospel of Interpretation." That little volume gives a portrait of a very remarkable woman indeed. She had as many visions as St. Theresa, and a force of character transcending that of the Spanish saint. I have heard Mrs. Besant on the platform, and I have heard Anna Kingsford as chairman of a meeting of the Hermetic Society. She was analytical, subtle, ready, if she lacked (or avoided) the eloquent but somewhat artificial outbursts of Mrs. Besant. It is to be remarked, too, that when Mrs. Kingsford died, a writer in the *Illustrated London News* announced that at the age of twenty-two she was the most beautiful woman he had ever seen.

One day she read an account of a cruel vivisection. She was fired with indignation. It was suggested to her that medical science alone could judge how far such operations were necessary. To neutralise such a plea for the future, she determined to take a medical degree herself.

Many obstacles were in the way, including her feeble health. But a French writer has justly remarked—"Obstacles are the touchstone of capacity." In 1873 she passed her matriculation examination at the Apothecaries' Hall, and this "with a success so great as to fill her with high hopes of a triumphant passage through the course of her student life." But immediately after this the English

medical authorities closed their schools to women altogether.

Paris was open to her. Should she go and study there? Did she dare to brave a *viva voce* examination in French before the sniggering young Gandins of the French classes. Nothing daunted Anna Kingsford. She went to Paris. She worked hard, so hard that she permanently wrecked her health. But she came out triumphantly through the ordeal.

This allows us to understand the influence brought to bear by Madame Blavatsky on minds like Anna Kingsford. This lady was a mystic. From the date of Buddha, or indeed the Rishi Angiras, to the date of Saint Martin and the Illuminati of the nascent French Revolution, certain select minds have held that by sublimating the soul alone, can worthy dreams of God be vouchsafed. This list includes St. Paul, Origen, St. Clement of Alexandria, the Catholic mystics, the mediæval Kabalists, the Sufis, the Spinozas, the Agrippas, the Boehmes. Anna Kingsford had studied these, and had observed the close similarity of the Oriental and the best Western mysticism, and learning that a foreign lady was in contact with a lofty school of Buddhist mystics, and that they wished to found a Universal Brotherhood, she was naturally anxious to learn more. It is to be confessed that in reality this gifted lady was more a Buddhist than a Christian. She based all progress upon the metempsychosis. She considered the use of wine and flesh meat, morally as well as physically, deleterious. She believed with the Buddhists that all Bibles are simply parables, the folk-lore of the people, to be explained away, mystically. All these were points of contact between her and the imaginary Mahatmas of Tibet. And she had one more strong sympathy. Like Madame Blavatsky she hated spiritualism; not, however, for the same motive. Madame Blavatsky detested it because it pronounced her miracles untrustworthy; Anna Kingsford contemned it because she thought it made a mere plaything of man's supernal treasure.

It must be pointed out that Madame Blavatsky had an eminent cleverness. She could exhibit a few sequins, and gain credit for untold treasures. With a "Hush!" and the whisper of a mystic word such as "Fourth Principle!"

or "Para Brahma!" she could make you believe that she had all the secrets of Cornelius Agrippa. We now come to her Mahatma letters, to see what light they shed in the conversion of mystics like Anna Kingsford.

Without doubt these show much ability. She contrived to change in them her literary style and handwriting, and if Colonel Olcott's fibbing Russian lady is not altogether absent, the Mahatma-half at times seems really there.

Can a person have invention and no originality? The extravagant idea of an "astral post office" seems to have come from Mr. Sinnett. Madame Blavatsky was fond of borrowing ideas.

"One day, therefore, I asked Madame Blavatsky whether if I wrote a letter to one of the Brothers explaining my views, she could get it delivered for me. I hardly thought this was probable, as I knew how very unapproachable the Brothers generally are; but as she said that at any rate she would try, I wrote a letter, addressing it 'to the Unknown Brother,' and gave it her to see if any result would ensue. It was a happy inspiration that induced me to do this, for out of that small beginning has arisen the most interesting correspondence in which I have ever been privileged to engage—a correspondence which, I am happy to say, still promises to continue, and the existence of which, more than any experiences of phenomena which I have had, though the most wonderful of these are yet to be described, is the *raison d'être* of this little book.

"The idea I had specially in my mind when I wrote the letter above referred to, was that of all test phenomena one could wish for, the best would be the production in our presence in India of a copy of the London *Times* of that day's date. With such a piece of evidence in my hand, I argued, I would undertake to convert everybody in Simla who was capable of linking two ideas together, to a belief in the possibility of obtaining by occult agency physical results which were beyond the control of ordinary science. I am sorry that I have not kept copies of the letter itself nor of my own subsequent letters, as they would have helped to elucidate the replies in a convenient way; but I did not at the time foresee the developments to which they would give rise, and, after all, the interest of the correspon-

dence turns almost entirely on the letters I received : only in a very small degree on those I sent.

"A day or two elapsed before I heard anything of the fate of my letter, but Madame Blavatsky then informed me that I was to have an answer. I afterwards learned that she had not been able at first to find a Brother willing to receive the communication. Those whom she first applied to declined to be troubled with the matter. At last her psychological telegraph brought her a favourable answer from one of the Brothers with whom she had not for some time been in communication. He would take the letter and reply to it.

"Hearing this, I at once regretted that I had not written at greater length, arguing my view of the required concession more fully. I wrote again, therefore, without waiting for the actual receipt of the expected letter.

"A day or two after I found one evening on my writing-table the first letter sent me by my new correspondent. I may here explain, what I learned afterwards, that he was a native of the Punjab who was attracted to occult studies from his earliest boyhood. He was sent to Europe whilst still a youth at the intervention of a relative—himself an occultist—to be educated in Western knowledge, and since then has been fully initiated in the greater knowledge of the East. From the self-complacent point of view of the ordinary European this will seem a strange reversal of the proper order of things, but I need not stop to examine that consideration now.

"My correspondent is known to me as Koot Hoomi Lal Sing. This is his 'Tibetan mystic name'—occultists, it would seem, taking new names on initiation—a practice which has no doubt given rise to similar customs which we find perpetuated here and there in ceremonies of the Roman Catholic church.

"The letter I received began *in medias res*, about the phenomenon I had proposed. 'Precisely,' Koot Hoomi wrote, 'because the test of the London newspaper would close the mouths of the sceptics,' it was inadmissible. 'See it in what light you will, the world is yet in its first stage of disenthralment . . . hence unprepared. Very true, we work by natural, not supernatural, means and laws. But,

as on the one hand science would find itself unable, in its present state, to account for the wonders given in its name, and on the other the ignorant masses would still be left to view the phenomenon in the light of a miracle, every one who would thus be made a witness to the occurrence would be thrown off his balance, and the result would be deplorable. Believe me it would be so especially for yourself, who originated the idea, and for the devoted women who so foolishly rushes into the wide open door leading to notoriety. This door, though opened by so friendly a hand as yours, would prove very soon a trap—and a fatal one, indeed, for her. And such is not surely your object. . . . Were we to accede to your desires, know you really what consequences would follow in the trail of success? The inexorable shadow which follows all human innovations, moves on, yet few are they who are ever conscious of its approach and dangers. What are, then, they to expect who would offer the world an innovation which, owing to human ignorance, if believed in, will surely be attributed to those dark agencies the two-thirds of humanity believe in and dread as yet? . . . The success of an attempt of such a kind as the one you propose must be calculated and based upon a thorough knowledge of the people around you. It depends entirely upon the social and moral conditions of the people in their bearing on these deepest and most mysterious questions which can stir the human mind—the deific powers in man and the possibilities contained in Nature. How many even of your best friends, of those who surround you, are more than superficially interested in these abstruse problems? You could count them upon the fingers of your right hand. Your race boasts of having liberated in this century the genius so long imprisoned in the narrow vase of dogmatism and intolerance—the genius of knowledge, wisdom, and free thought. It says that, in their turn, ignorant prejudice and religious bigotry, bottled up like the wicked *djin* of old, and sealed by the Solomons of science, rest at the bottom of the sea, and can never, escaping to the surface again, reign over the world as in the days of old: that the public mind is quite free, in short, and ready to accept any demonstrated truth. Ay, but is it verily so, my respected friend? Experimental knowledge

does not quite date from 1662, when Bacon, Robert Boyle, and the Bishop of Chester transformed under the royal charter their "invisible college" into a society for the promotion of experimental science. Ages before the Royal Society found itself becoming a reality upon the plan of the "Prophetic Scheme," an innate longing for the hidden, a passionate love for, and the study of, Nature, had led men in every generation to try and fathom her secrets deeper than their neighbours did. *Roma ante Romulum fuit* is an axiom taught us in your English schools. . . . The *Vril* of the *Coming Race* was the common property of races now extinct. And as the very existence of those gigantic ancestors of ours is now questioned—though in the Himalays, on the very territory belonging to you, we have a cave full of the skeletons of these giants—and their huge frames, when found, are invariably regarded as isolated freaks of Nature—so the *vril*, or *akas* as we call it, is looked upon as an impossibility—a myth. And without a thorough knowledge of *akas*—its combinations and properties, how can science hope to account for such phenomena? We doubt not but the men of your science are open to conviction; yet facts must be first demonstrated to them; they must first have become their own property, have proved amenable to their modes of investigation, before you find them ready to admit them as facts. If you but look into the preface to the *Micrographia* you will find, in Hooke's suggestions, that the intimate relations of objects were of less account in his eyes than their external operation on the senses, and Newton's fine discoveries found in him their greatest opponent. The modern Hookeses are many. Like this learned but ignorant man of old, your modern men of science are less anxious to suggest a physical connection of facts which might unlock for them many an occult force in Nature, than to provide a convenient classification of scientific experiments, so that the most essential quality of a hypothesis is, not that it should be *true*, but only *plausible*, in their opinion.

"So far for science—as much as we know of it. As for human nature in general it is the same now as it was a million of years ago. Prejudice, based upon selfishness, a general unwillingness to give up an established order of

things for new modes of life and thought—and occult study requires all that and much more—pride and stubborn resistance to truth, if it but upsets their previous notions of things—such are the characteristics of your age. . . . What, then, would be the results of the most astounding phenomena supposing we consented to have them produced? However successful, danger would be growing proportionately with success. No choice would soon remain but to go on, ever *crescendo*, or to fall in this endless struggle with prejudice and ignorance, killed by your own weapons. Test after test would be required, and would have to be furnished; every subsequent phenomenon expected to be more marvellous than the preceding one. Your daily remark is, that one cannot be expected to believe unless he becomes an eye-witness. Would the lifetime of a man suffice to satisfy the whole world of sceptics? It may be an easy matter to increase the original number of believers at Simla to hundreds and thousands. But what of the hundreds of millions of those who could not be made eye-witnesses? The ignorant, unable to grapple with the invisible operators, might some day vent their rage on the visible agents at work; the higher and educated classes would go on disbelieving, as ever, tearing you to shreds as before. In common with many, you blame us for our great secrecy. Yet we know something of human nature, for the experience of long centuries—ay, ages, has taught us. And we know that so long as science has anything to learn, and a shadow of religious dogmatism lingers in the hearts of the multitudes, the world's prejudices have to be conquered step by step, not at a rush. As hoary antiquity had more than one Socrates, so the dim future will give birth to more than one martyr. Enfranchised Science contemptuously turned away her face from the Copernican opinion renewing the theories of Aristarchus Samius, who "affirmeth that the earth moveth circularly about her own centre," years before the Church sought to sacrifice Galileo as a *holocaust* to the Bible. The ablest mathematician at the Court of Edward VI., Robert Recorde, was left to starve in jail by his colleagues, who laughed at his *Castle of Knowledge*, declaring his discoveries vain phantasies. . . . All this is old history, you will think. Verily so, but the chronicles of our modern days do not



differ very essentially from their predecessors. And we have but to bear in mind the recent persecutions of mediums in England, the burning of supposed witches and sorcerers in South America, Russia, and the frontiers of Spain, to assure ourselves that the only salvation of the genuine proficient in occult sciences lies in the scepticism of the public; the charlatans and the jugglers are the natural shields of the adepts. The public safety is only ensured by our keeping secret the terrible weapons which might otherwise be used against it, and which, as you have been told, become deadly in the hands of the wicked and selfish.”

The letter of Mr. Sinnett contained, without doubt, a business-like suggestion. But the reply of Madame Blavatsky was equally business-like. There were very sound reasons why a copy of the *Times* should not be “precipitated” half across the globe. Mr. Sinnett and Mr. Hume now demanded that an independent lodge should be established at Simla for English inquirers. This occasioned a second letter:—

“We will be at cross purposes in our correspondence until it has been made entirely plain that occult science has its own methods of research, as fixed and arbitrary as the methods of its antithesis, physical science, are in their way. If the latter has its dicta, so also have the former; and he who would cross the boundary of the unseen world can no more prescribe how he will proceed, than the traveller who tries to penetrate to the inner subterranean recesses of L’Hassa the Blessed could show the way to his guide. The mysteries never were, never can be, put within the reach of the general public, not, at least, until the longed-for day when our religious philosophy becomes universal. At no time have more than a scarcely appreciable minority of men possessed Nature’s secrets, though multitudes have witnessed the practical evidences of the possibility of their possession. The adept is the rare efflorescence of a generation of inquirers; and to become one, he must obey the inward impulse of his soul, irrespective of the prudential considerations of worldly science or sagacity. Your desire is to be brought to communicate with one of us directly, without the agency of either Madame Blavatsky or any medium. Your idea would be, as I understand it, to obtain such

communications, either by letters, as the present one, or by audible words, so as to be guided by one of us in the management, and principally in the instruction of the Society. You seek all this, and yet, as you say yourself, hitherto you have not found sufficient reasons to even give up your modes of life, directly hostile to such modes of communication. This is hardly reasonable. He who would lift up high the banner of mysticism and proclaim its reign near at hand must give the example to others. He must be the first to change his modes of life, and, regarding the study of the occult mysteries as the upper step in the ladder of knowledge, must loudly proclaim it such, despite exact science and the opposition of society. 'The kingdom of Heaven is obtained by force,' say the Christian mystics. It is but with armed hand, and ready to either conquer or perish, that the modern mystic can hope to achieve his object.

"My first answer covered, I believe, most of the questions contained in your second and even third letter. Having, then, expressed therein my opinion that the world in general was unripe for any too staggering proof of occult power, there but remains to deal with the isolated individuals who seek, like yourself, to penetrate behind the veil of matter into the world of primal causes—i.e., we need only consider now the cases of yourself and Mr. —"

"I should here explain," says Mr. Sinnett, "that one of my friends at Simla, deeply interested with me in the progress of this investigation, had, on reading Koot Hoomi's first letter to me, addressed my correspondent himself. More favourably circumstanced than I, for such an enterprise, he had even proposed to make a complete sacrifice of his other pursuits, to pass away into any distant seclusion which might be appointed for the purpose, where he might, if accepted as a pupil in occultism, learn enough to return to the world armed with powers which would enable him to demonstrate the realities of spiritual development and the errors of modern materialism, and then devote his life to the task of combating modern incredulity and leading men to a practical comprehension of a better life. I resume Koot Hoomi's letter:—

"This gentleman also has done me the great honour to

address me by name, offering to me a few questions, and stating the conditions upon which he would be willing to work for us seriously. But your motives and aspirations being of diametrically opposite character, and hence leading to different results, I must reply to each of you separately.

“The first and chief consideration in determining us to accept or reject your offer lies in the inner motive which propels you to seek our instruction and, in a certain sense, our guidance; the latter in all cases under reserve, as I understand it, and therefore remaining a question independent of aught else. Now, what are your motives? I may try to define them in their general aspects, leaving details for further consideration. They are—(1) The desire to see positive and unimpeachable proofs that there really are forces in Nature of which science knows nothing; (2) the hope to appropriate them some day—the sooner the better, for you do not like to wait—so as to enable yourself (a) to demonstrate their existence to a few chosen Western minds; (b) to contemplate future life as an objective reality built upon the rock of knowledge, not of faith; and (c) to finally learn—most important this, among all your motives, perhaps, though the most occult and the best guarded—the whole truth about our lodges and ourselves; to get, in short, the positive assurance that the “Brothers,” of whom every one hears so much and sees so little, are real entities, not fictions of a disordered, hallucinated brain. Such, viewed in their best light, appear to us your motives for addressing me. And in the same spirit do I answer them, hoping that my sincerity will not be interpreted in a wrong way, or attributed to anything like an unfriendly spirit.

“To our minds, then, these motives, sincere and worthy of every serious consideration from the worldly standpoint, appear *selfish*. (You have to pardon me what you might view as crudeness of language, if your desire is that which you really profess—to learn truth and get instruction from us who belong to quite a different world from the one you move in.) They are selfish, because you must be aware that the chief object of the Theosophical Society is not so much to gratify individual aspirations as to serve our fellow-men, and the real value of this term “selfish,” which may jar upon

your ear, has a peculiar significance with us which it cannot have with you; therefore, to begin with, you must not accept it otherwise than in the former sense. Perhaps you will better appreciate our meaning when told that in our view the highest aspirations for the welfare of humanity become tainted with selfishness, if, in the mind of the philanthropist, there lurks the shadow of a desire for self-benefit, or a tendency to do injustice, even where these exist unconsciously to himself. Yet you have ever discussed, but to put down, the idea of a Universal Brotherhood, questioned its usefulness, and advised to remodel the Theosophical Society on the principle of a college for the special study of occultism. . . .

"Having disposed of personal motives, let us analyse your terms for helping us to do public good. Broadly stated, these terms are—first, that an independent Anglo-Indian Theosophical Society shall be founded through your kind services, in the management of which neither of our present representatives shall have any voice;<sup>1</sup> and, second, that one of us shall take the new body "under his patronage," be "in free and direct communication with its leaders," and afford them "direct proof that he really possessed that superior knowledge of the forces of Nature and the attributes of the human soul which would inspire them with proper confidence in his leadership." I have copied your own words so as to avoid inaccuracy in defining the position.

"From your point of view, therefore, those terms may seem so very reasonable as to provoke no dissent, and, indeed, a majority of your countrymen—if not of Europeans—might share that opinion. What, will you say, can be

<sup>1</sup> "In the absence of my own letter, to which this is a reply, the reader might think from this sentence that I had been animated by some unfriendly feeling for the representatives referred to—Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott. This is far from having been the case; but, keenly alive to mistakes which had been made up to the time of which I am writing, in the management of the Theosophical Society, Mr. — and myself were under the impression that better public results might be obtained by commencing operations *de novo*, and taking, ourselves, the direction of the measures which might be employed to recommend the study of occultism to the modern world. This belief on our part was co-existent in both cases with a warm friendship based on the purest esteem for both the persons mentioned."

more reasonable than to ask that that teacher anxious to disseminate his knowledge, and pupil offering him to do so, should be brought face to face, and the one give the experimental proof to the other that his instructions were correct? Man of the world, living in, and in full sympathy with it, you are undoubtedly right. But the men of this other world of ours, untutored in your modes of thought, and who find it very hard at times to follow and appreciate the latter, can hardly be blamed for not responding as heartily to your suggestions as in your opinion they deserve. The first and most important of our objections is to be found in our *rules*. True, we have our schools and teachers, our neophytes and "shaberon" (superior adepts), and the door is always open to the right man who knocks—And we invariably welcome the new-comer—only, instead of going over to him, he has to come to us. More than that, unless he has reached that point in the path of occultism from which return is impossible by his having irrevocably pledged himself to our Association, we never—except in cases of utmost moment—visit him or even cross the threshold of his door in visible appearance.

"Is any of you so eager for knowledge and the beneficent powers it confers, as to be ready to leave your world and come into ours? Then let him come, but he must not think to return until the seal of the mysteries has locked his lips even against the chances of his own weakness or indiscretion. Let him come by all means as the pupil to the master, and without conditions, or let him wait, as so many others have, and be satisfied with such crumbs of knowledge as may fall in his way.

"And supposing you were thus to come, as two of your own countrymen have already—as Madame B. did and Mr. O. will—supposing you were to abandon all for the truth; to toil wearily for years up the hard, steep road, not daunted by obstacles, firm under every temptation; were to faithfully keep within your heart the secrets entrusted to you as a trial; had worked with all your energies and unselfishly to spread the truth and provoke men to correct thinking and a correct life—would you consider it just, if, after all your efforts, we were to grant to Madame B. or Mr. O. as "outsiders" the terms you now ask for yourselves. Of these

two persons, one has already given three-fourths of a life, the other six years of manhood's prime to us, and both will so labour to the close of their days; though ever working for their merited reward, yet never demanding it, nor murmuring when disappointed. Even though they respectively could accomplish far less than they do, would it not be a palpable injustice to ignore them in an important field of Theosophical effort? Ingratitude is not among our vices, nor do we imagine you would wish to advise it.

"Neither of them has the least inclination to interfere with the management of the contemplated Anglo-Indian Branch, nor dictate its office. But the new Society, if formed at all, must, though bearing a distinctive title of its own, be, in fact, a branch of the parent body, as is the British Theosophical Society at London, and contribute to its vitality and usefulness by promoting its leading idea of a Universal Brotherhood, and in other practicable ways.

"Badly as the phenomena may have been shown, there have still been, as yourself admit, certain ones that are unimpeachable. The "raps on the table when no one touches it," and the "bell sounds in the air," have, you say, always been regarded as satisfactory, etc., etc. From this, you reason that good test phenomena "may easily be multiplied *ad infinitum*." So they can—in any place where our magnetic and other conditions are constantly offered, and where we do not have to act with and through an enfeebled female body, in which, as we might say, a vital cyclone is raging much of the time. But imperfect as may be our visible agent, yet she is the best available at present, and her phenomena have for about half a century astonished and baffled some of the cleverest minds of the age. . . ."

All this should make us cry as well as laugh. A gallant gentleman announces himself as ready to throw off the gold-embroidered coat of the secretary to the Government of India and to don the dirt and the leopard's skin of the Yogi. And yet Madame Metrovitch, the variety performer, tells him coolly that he is not morally worthy of such a career although she is.

I must draw attention to one or two other points.

There is much in these letters that might influence a mind like Anna Kingsford or Mr. Hume. As a historical fact we

know that both were so influenced. But this would be effected not by what they state, but what they suggest. If you tell a Swedenborg that a band of workers are "raising the banner of mysticism" in a certain locality, he would at once draw a flattering mind-picture of these workers, a picture that one whose "interior man" (to use the Swedenborg language) was not developed could not draw. This gives us the secret of Madame Blavatsky's influence over genuine mystics like Anna Kingsford. But these letters, instead of really "raising the banner of mysticism," pull it down. Mr. Hume and Mr. Sinnett make a very reasonable request. They ask to have a branch lodge at Simla to "raise the banner of mysticism" amongst the English. Now, if there had been any real Mahatmas this request would certainly not have been refused, for those astute persons would have seen that by such means the suspicions aroused in the English mind by Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott would have been allayed. But it did not suit the Russian adventuress to tell the world what real yoga was, namely, an inner growth independent of any Mahatmas and certainly independent of any Blavatskys. Therefore she dances on thin ice all through the correspondence, and dances very cleverly.

It appears that Mr. Sinnett and Mr. Hume thought Simla the best headquarters for a lodge, whether independent of Madame Blavatsky or under her supervision. But there are wheels within wheels:—

‘SIMLA.

"MY DEAR MME. COULOMB,

"I am obliged to remain till the 25th of October, as I can make 200 rupees, offered me by the Foreign Office for translating a book of Russian statistics. Say so to Damodar.

"Don't give yourself the trouble of setting the house. When I leave here, I will have to stop at various places, as I promised to pay visits to several persons, and have to see some fellows on my way back. I may be detained till end of November. I cannot go to Ceylon now. In January, I will go to Calcutta—to Mrs. Gordon—to establish a branch, and I want Olcott to come back, and go together to Bom-



bay again from Calcutta. I may not go to Ceylon before the spring.

"Say to Damodar his idea of establishing headquarters at Simla is absurd. He must have been influenced by Mr. Hume (magnetically), as it is Mr. Hume's hobby. If I change my headquarters—and we have to do it, for I hate Bombay—I will have headquarters at Calcutta and Ceylon, going to Simla every summer for two or three months. The rent here for a cottage of three rooms is 2,000 rupees, and everything dear in proportion. Hume and Damodar are both crazy.

"Oh, mon pauvre Christofolo! Il est donc mort, et vous l'avez tué? Oh, ma chère amie, si vous saviez comme je voudrais le voir revivre!

"Oh, my poor Christofolo! He is dead then, and you have killed him? Oh, my dear friend, if you only knew how I would like to see him revive!

.....  
"Ma bénédiction à mon pauvre Christofolo. Toujours à vous,  
H. P. B."

.....  
"My blessing on my poor Christofolo. Ever yours,  
H. P. B."

Here is another letter from a Mahatma. They do not all seem to be up to the same lofty moral plane:—

"MY 'DEAR BROTHER,'—This brooch, No. 2, is placed in this very strange place, simply to show you how very easily a real phenomenon is produced, and how still easier it is to suspect its genuineness. Make of it what you like, even to classing me with confederates.

"The difficulty you spoke of last night with respect to the interchange of our letters, I will try to remove. One of our pupils will shortly visit Lahore and the N.-W. P.; and an address will be sent to you which you can always use; unless, indeed, you really would prefer corresponding through—pillows? Please to remark that the present is not dated from a 'Lodge,' but from a Kashmere valley."

This next is better. It is a decided stroke of genius to make the Mahatma speak of her as "the old lady," but I

think she might have remembered that when he met her in 1857, she was not an old lady. One can't think of everything:—

"You see, then, that we have weightier matters than small societies to think about; yet the Theosophical Society must not be neglected. The affair has taken an impulse which, if not well guided, might beget very evil issues. Recall to mind the avalanches of your admired Alps, and remember that at first their mass is small, and their momentum little. A trite comparison, you may say, but I cannot think of a better illustration when viewing the gradual aggregation of trifling events growing into a menacing destiny for the Theosophical Society. It came quite forcibly upon me the other day as I was coming down the defiles of Konelum—Karakorum you call them—and saw an avalanche tumble. I had gone personally to our chief . . . and was crossing over to Lhadak on my way home. What other speculations might have followed I cannot say. But just as I was taking advantage of the awful stillness which usually follows such cataclysms, to get a clearer view of the present situation, and the disposition of the 'mystics' at Simla, I was rudely recalled to my senses. A familiar voice, as shrill as the one attributed to Saraswati's peacock—which, if we may credit tradition, frightened off the King of the Nagas—shouted along the currents—' . . . Koot Hoomi, come quicker and help me!' and, in her excitement, forgot she was speaking English. I must say that the 'old lady's' telegrams do strike one like stones from a catapult.

"What could I do but come. Argument through space with one who was in cold despair and in a state of moral chaos was useless. So I determined to emerge from a seclusion of many years, and spend some time with her to comfort her as well as I could. But our friend is not one to cause her mind to reflect the philosophical resignation of Marcus Aurelius. The Fates never wrote that she could say:—'It is a royal thing when one is doing good to hear evil spoken of himself.' I had come for a few days, but now find that I myself cannot endure for any length of time the stifling magnetism even of my own countrymen. I have seen some of our proud old Sikhs drunk and stagger-

ing over the marble pavement of their sacred temple. I have heard an English-speaking Vakil declaim against *Yog Vidya* and Theosophy as a delusion and a lie, declaring that English science had emancipated them from such degrading superstitions, and saying that it was an insult to India to maintain that the dirty Yogees and Sunnyasis knew anything about the mysteries of Nature, or that any living man can, or ever could, perform any phenomena. I turn my face homeward to-morrow.

" . . . . I have telegraphed you my thanks for your obliging compliance with my wishes in the matter you allude to in your letter of the 24th. . . . Received at Amritsur, on the 27th, at 2 P.M. I got your letter about thirty miles beyond Rawul Pindee, five minutes later, and had an acknowledgment wired to you from Jhelum at 4 P.M. on the same afternoon. Our modes of accelerated delivery and quick communications are not, then, as you will see, to be despised by the Western world, or even the Aryan English-speaking and sceptical Vakils.

"I could not ask a more judicial frame of mind in an ally than that in which you are beginning to find yourself. My brother, you have already changed your attitude towards us in a distinct degree. What is to prevent a perfect mutual understanding one day? . . . . It is not possible that there should be much more at best than a benevolent neutrality shown by your people towards ours. There is so very minute a point of contact between the two civilisations they respectively represent, that one might almost say they could not touch at all. Nor would they, but for the few—shall I say eccentrics?—who, like you, dream better and bolder dreams than the rest, and, provoking thought, bring the two together by their own admirable audacity."

"The letter before me," says Mr. Sinnett, "is occupied so much with matters personal to myself, that I can only make quotations here and there; but these are specially interesting, as investing with an air of reality subjects which are generally treated in vague and pompous language. Koot Hoomi was anxious to guard me from idealising the Brothers too much on the strength of my admiration for their marvellous powers.

" 'Are you certain,' he writes, 'that the pleasant impres-

sion you now may have from our correspondence would not instantly be destroyed upon seeing me? And which of our holy *shaberon*s has had the benefit of even the little university education and inkling of European manners that has fallen to my share?

"In a guarded way, Koot Hoomi said that as often as it was practicable to communicate with me, 'whether by . . . letters (in or out of pillows) or personal visits in astral form, it will be done.'"

How did these letters come? Mr. Sinnett shall tell us:—

"I have hitherto said nothing of the circumstances under which these various letters reached my hands; nor, in comparison with the intrinsic interest of the ideas they embody, can the phenomenal conditions under which some of them were delivered, be regarded as otherwise than of secondary interest for readers who appreciate their philosophy. But every bit of evidence which helps to exhibit the nature of the powers which the adepts exercise, is worth attention, while the rationale of such powers is still hidden from the world. The fact of their existence can only be established by the accumulation of such evidence, as long as we are unable to prove their possibility by *a priori* analysis of the latent capacities in man.

"My friend to whom the last letter was addressed wrote a long reply, and subsequently an additional letter for Koot Hoomi, which he forwarded to me, asking me to read and then seal it up and send or give it to Madame Blavatsky for transmission, she being expected about that time at my house at Allahabad on her way down country from Amritsur and Lahore, where, as I have already indicated, she had stayed for some little time after our household broke up for the season at Simla. I did as desired, and gave the letter to Madame Blavatsky, after gumming and sealing the stout envelope in which it was forwarded. That evening, a few hours afterwards, on returning home to dinner, I found that the letter had gone, and had come back again. Madame Blavatsky told me that she had been talking to a visitor in her own room, and had been fingering a blue pencil on her writing table without noticing what she was doing, when she suddenly noticed that the paper on which

she was scribbling was my letter that the addressee had duly taken possession of, by his own methods, an hour or two before. She found that she had, while talking about something else, unconsciously written on the envelope the words which it then bore, 'Read and returned with thanks, and a few commentaries. Please open.' I examined the envelope carefully, and it was absolutely intact, its very complete fastenings having remained just as I arranged them. Slitting it open, I found the letter which it had contained when I sent it, and another from Koot Hoomi to me, criticising the former with the help of a succession of pencil figures that referred to particular passages in the original letter—another illustration of the passage of matter through matter, which, for thousands of people who have had personal experience of it in spiritualism, is as certain a fact of Nature as the rising of the sun, and which I have now not only encountered at spiritual *séances*, but, as this record will have shown, on many occasions when there is no motive for suspecting any other agency than that of living beings with faculties of which we may all possess the undeveloped germs, though it is only in their case that knowledge has brought these to phenomenal fruition.

"Sceptical critics, putting aside the collateral bearing of all the previous phenomena I have described, and dealing with this letter incident by itself alone, will perhaps say—Of course, Madame Blavatsky had ample time to open the envelope by such means as the mediums who profess to get answers to sealed letters from the spirit world are in the habit of employing."

Mr. Hodgson ("Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research," vol. iii. p. 258) is not satisfied with the genuineness of this "precipitation."

"The envelope," he says, "was in Madame Blavatsky's possession for several hours, and when it was returned to Mr. Sinnett he found it 'absolutely intact, its very complete fastenings having remained just as he had arranged them.' Cutting the envelope open Mr. Sinnett found inside not only the letter it had previously contained, but also another from Koot Hoomi. Mr. Sinnett showed me the envelope. The fastenings were not by any means what I should call

complete; so far from this being the case, that owing to the length of the flap, which was only sealed at its lower extremity, the letter might have been abstracted, and re-inserted with other letters, without even steaming the envelope, or loosening the adhesion of the gum by any other process. And if the gum had been loosened by careful steaming, the abstraction and re-insertion would have been superlatively easy."

"Let the incident," says Mr. Sinnett, "I have just described be compared with another illustration of an exactly similar incident which occurred shortly afterwards under different circumstances. Koot Hoomi had sent me a letter addressed to my friend to read and forward on. On the subject of this letter before sending it I had occasion to make a communication to Koot Hoomi. I wrote a note to him, fastened it up in an ordinary adhesive envelope, and gave it to Madame Blavatsky. She put it in her pocket, went into her own room, which opened out of the drawing-room, and came out again almost instantly. Certainly she had not been away thirty seconds. She said, 'he' had taken it at once. Then she followed me back through the house to my office-room, spoke for a few minutes in the adjoining room to my wife, and, returning into my office, lay down on a couch. I went on with my work, and perhaps ten minutes elapsed, perhaps less. Suddenly she got up. 'There's your letter,' she said, pointing to the pillow from which she had lifted her head; and there lay the letter I had just written, intact as regards its appearance, but with Koot Hoomi's name on the outside scored out and mine written over it. After a thorough examination I slit the envelope, and found inside, on the fly-leaf of my note, the answer I required in Koot Hoomi's handwriting. Now, except for the thirty seconds during which she retired to her own room, Madame Blavatsky had not been out of my sight, except for a minute or two in my wife's room, during the short interval which elapsed between the delivery of the letter by me to her and its return to me as described. And during this interval no one else had come into my room. The incident was as absolute and complete a mechanical proof of abnormal power exercised to produce the result as any conceivable test could have

yielded. Except by declaring that I cannot be describing it correctly, the most resolute partisan of the commonplace will be unable seriously to dispute the force of this incident. He may take refuge in idiotic ridicule, or he may declare that I am misrepresenting the facts. As regards the latter hypothesis I can only pledge my word, as I do hereby, to the exact accuracy of the statement."

An able analysis of this incident is given by Mr. Hodgson in the "Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research," vol. iii., p. 257. It appears that Mr. Sinnett made a "deposition" on the subject with fuller details before a committee of the society.

"From this account," says Mr. Hodgson, "it appears that Madame Blavatsky was not out of Mr. Sinnett's sight for *ten seconds*, but in the account given in 'The Occult World,' Mr. Sinnett undertakes to say only that she had not been away to her room *thirty seconds*, admitting that she was out of his sight for *a minute or two* in Mrs. Sinnett's room. After this I cannot feel certain that Madame Blavatsky may not have been absent in her own room considerably more than thirty seconds, nor do I feel certain that Madame Blavatsky may not have retired to some other room during the interval of 'a few minutes' which Mr. Sinnett assigns to her conversation with Mrs. Sinnett in the adjoining room. Even apart from this uncertainty I cannot attach any importance to the case after finding that on my second trial I could open a firmly closed ordinary adhesive envelope under such conditions as are described by Mr. Sinnett, read the enclosed note and reply to it, the question and the reply being as long as those of Mr. Sinnett's, and reclose the envelope, leaving it apparently in the same condition as before, in one minute. And it appears to me quite possible that Madame Blavatsky, with her probable superior skill and practice, might have easily performed the task in thirty seconds."

"In one or two cases," says Mr. Sinnett, "I have got back answers from Koot Hoomi to my letters in my own envelopes, these remaining intact as addressed to him, but with the address changed, and my letter gone from the inside, his reply having taken its place. In two or three cases



I have found short messages from Koot Hoomi written across the blank parts of letters from other persons, coming to me through the post, the writers in these cases being assuredly unaware of the additions so made to their epistles.

"Of course I have asked Koot Hoomi for an explanation of these little phenomena, but it is easier for me to ask than for him to answer, partly because the forces which the adepts bring to bear upon matter to achieve abnormal results, are of a kind which ordinary science knows so little about that we of the outer world are not prepared for such explanations; and partly because the manipulation of the forces employed has to do, sometimes, with secrets of initiation which an occultist must not reveal. However, in reference to the subject before us, I received on one occasion this hint as an explanation:—

"'. . . . Besides, bear in mind that these my letters are not written, but *impressed*, or precipitated, and then all mistakes corrected.'

"Of course, I wanted to know more about such precipitation; was it a process which followed thought more rapidly than any with which we were familiar? And as regards letters received, did the meaning of these penetrate the understanding of an occult recipient at once, or were they read in the ordinary way?

"'Of course I have to read every word you write,' Koot Hoomi replied, 'otherwise I would make a fine mess of it. And whether it be through my physical or spiritual eyes, the time required for it is practically the same. As much may be said of my replies; for whether I precipitate or dictate them or write my answers myself, the difference in time saved is very minute. I have to think it over, to photograph every word and sentence carefully in my brain, before it can be repeated by precipitation. As the fixing on chemically prepared surfaces of the images formed by the camera requires a previous arrangement within the focus of the object to be represented, for otherwise—as often found in bad photographs—the legs of the sitter might appear out of all proportion with the head, and so on—so we have to first arrange our sentences and impress every letter to appear on paper in our minds before it becomes fit to be read. For the present it is *all* I can tell you. When science will have

learned more about the mystery of the lithophyl (or litho-biblion), and how the impress of leaves comes originally to take place on stones, then I will be able to make you better understand the process. But you must know and remember one thing—we but follow and servilely copy Nature in her works.”

In another letter Koot Hoomi expatiates more fully on the difficulty of making occult explanations intelligible to minds trained only in modern science.

“Only the progress one makes in the study of arcane knowledge from its rudimental elements brings him gradually to understand our meaning. Only thus, and not otherwise, does it, strengthening and refining those mysterious links of sympathy between intelligent men—the temporarily isolated fragments of the universal soul, and the cosmic soul itself—bring them into full rapport.”

Mr. Sinnett relates another marvel:—

“The very first incident which took place was in the nature of a pleasant greeting from my friend Koot Hoomi. I had written to him (per Madame Blavatsky, of course) shortly before leaving London, and had expected to find a letter from him awaiting my arrival at Bombay. But no such letter had been received, as I found when I reached the headquarters of the Theosophical Society, where I had arranged to stay for a few days before going on to my destination up country. I got in late at night, and nothing remarkable happened then. The following morning, after breakfast, I was sitting talking with Madame Blavatsky in the room that had been allotted to me. We were sitting at different sides of a large square table in the middle of the room, and the full daylight was shining. There was no one else in the room. Suddenly, down upon the table before me, but to my right hand, Madame Blavatsky being to my left, there fell a thick letter. It fell ‘out of nothing,’ so to speak; it was materialised, or reintegrated in the air before my eyes. It was Koot Hoomi’s expected reply—a deeply interesting letter, partly concerned with private matters and replies to questions of mine, and partly with some large, though as yet shadowy, revelations of occult philosophy, the first sketch of this that I had received. Now, of course, I know what some readers will say to this

(with a self-satisfied smile)—‘wires, springs, concealed apparatus,’ and so forth; but first all the suggestion would have been grotesquely absurd to any one who had been present; and secondly, it is unnecessary to argue about objections of this sort all over again *ab initio* every time. There were no more wires and springs about the room I am now referring to, than about the breezy hill-tops at Simla, where some of our earlier phenomena took place. I may add, moreover, that some months later an occult note was dropped before a friend of mine, a Bengal civilian, who has become an active member of the Theosophical Society, at a dak bungalow in the north of India; and that later again, at the headquarters of the Theosophical Society at Bombay, a letter was dropped according to a previous promise out in the open air in the presence of six or seven witnesses.”

I now give the celebrated letter of Koot Hoomi to Mr. Hume. It has been much praised, and is undoubtedly clever. But it is to be remarked that the same evasions shine through the grandiloquent language that Dr. Wyld complained of. Several of my friends have assured me that when they sought the secrets of magic from Madame Blavatsky, they were treated to like evasions.

“DEAR SIR,

“Availing of the first moments of leisure to formally answer your letter of the 17th ultimo, I will now report the result of my conference with our chiefs upon the proposition therein contained, trying at the same time to answer all your questions.

“I am first to thank you on behalf of the whole section of our fraternity that is especially interested in the welfare of India, for an offer of help whose importance and sincerity no one can doubt. Tracing our lineage through the vicissitudes of Indian civilisation from a remote past, we have a love for our motherland so deep and passionate that it has survived even the broadening and cosmopolitanising (pardon me if that is not an English word) effect of our studies in the laws of Nature. And so I, and every other Indian patriot, feel the strongest gratitude for every kind word or deed that is given in her behalf.

"Imagine, then, that since we are all convinced that the degradation of India is largely due to the suffocation of her ancient spirituality, and that whatever helps to restore that higher standard of thought and morals, must be a regenerating national force, everyone of us would naturally and without urging, be disposed to push forward a society whose proposed formation is under debate, especially if it really is meant to become a society untainted by selfish motive, and whose object is the revival of ancient science, and tendency to rehabilitate our country in the world's estimation. Take this for granted without further asseverations. But you know, as any man who has read history, that patriots may burst their hearts in vain if circumstances are against them. Sometimes it has happened that no human power, not even the fury and force of the loftiest patriotism, has been able to bend an iron destiny aside from its fixed course, and nations have gone out like torches dropped into the water in the engulfing blackness of ruin. Thus, we who have the sense of our country's fall, though not the power to lift her up at once, cannot do as we would either as to general affairs or this particular one. And with the readiness, but not the right, to meet your advances more than half-way, we are forced to say that the idea entertained by Mr. Sinnett and yourself is impracticable in part. It is, in a word, impossible for myself or any Brother, or even an advanced neophyte, to be specially assigned and set apart as the guiding spirit or chief of the Anglo-Indian branch. We know it would be a good thing to have you and a few of your colleagues regularly instructed and shown the phenomena and their rationale. For though none but you few would be convinced, still it would be a decided gain to have even a few Englishmen, of first-class ability, enlisted as students of Asiatic psychology. We are aware of all this, and much more; hence we do not refuse to correspond with, and otherwise help you in various ways. But what we do refuse is, to take any other responsibility upon ourselves than this periodical correspondence and assistance with our advice, and, as occasion favours, such tangible, possibly visible, proofs, as would satisfy you of our presence and interest. To 'guide' you we will not consent. However much we may be able to do, yet we can promise only

to give you the full measure of your deserts. Deserve much, and we will prove honest debtors; little, and you need only expect a compensating return. This is not a mere text taken from a schoolboy's copybook, though it sounds so, but only the clumsy statement of the law of our order, and we cannot transcend it. Utterly unacquainted with Western, especially English, modes of thought and action, were we to meddle in an organisation of such a kind, you would find all your fixed habits and traditions incessantly clashing, if not with the new aspirations themselves, at least with their modes of realisation as suggested by us. You could not get unanimous consent to go even the length you might yourself. I have asked Mr. Sinnett to draft a plan embodying your joint ideas for submission to our chiefs, this seeming the shortest way to a mutual agreement. Under our 'guidance' your branch could not live, you not being men to be guided at all in that sense. Hence the society would be a premature birth and a failure, looking as incongruous as a Paris Daumont drawn by a team of Indian yaks or camels. You ask us to teach you true science—the occult aspect of the known side of Nature; and this you think can be as easily done as asked. You do not seem to realise the tremendous difficulties in the way of imparting even the rudiments of *our* science to those who have been trained in the familiar methods of yours. You do not see that the more you have of the one the less capable you are of instinctively comprehending the other, for a man can only think in his worn grooves, and unless he has the courage to fill up these, and make new ones for himself, he must perforce travel on the old lines. Allow me a few instances. In conformity with exact science you would define but one cosmic energy, and see no difference between the energy expended by the traveller who pushes aside the bush that obstructs his path, and the scientific experimenter who expends an equal amount of energy in setting a pendulum in motion. We do; for we know there is a world of difference between the two. The one uselessly dissipates and scatters force, the other concentrates and stores it. And here please understand that I do not refer to the relative utility of the two, as one might imagine, but only to the fact that in the one case there is

but brute force flung out without any transmutation of that brute energy into the higher potential form of spiritual dynamics, and in the other there is just that. Please do not consider me vaguely metaphysical. The idea I wish to convey is that the result of the highest intellection in the scientifically occupied brain is the evolution of a sublimated form of spiritual energy, which, in the cosmic action, is productive of illimitable results; while the automatically acting brain holds, or stores up in itself, only a certain quantum of brute force that is unfruitful of benefit for the individual or humanity. The human brain is an exhaustless generator of the most refined quality of cosmic force out of the low, brute energy of Nature; and the complete adept has made himself a centre from which irradiate potentialities that beget correlations upon correlations through æons of time to come. This is the key to the mystery of his being able to project into and materialise in the visible world the forms that his imagination has constructed out of inert cosmic matter in the invisible world. The adept does not create anything new, but only utilises and manipulates materials which Nature has in store around him, and material which, throughout eternities, has passed through all the forms. He has but to choose the one he wants, and recall it into objective existence. Would not this sound to one of your 'learned' biologists like a mad-man's dream?

"You say there are few branches of science with which you do not possess more or less acquaintance, and that you believe you are doing a certain amount of good, having acquired the position to do this by long years of study. Doubtless you do; but will you permit me to sketch for you still more clearly the difference between the modes of physical (called exact often out of mere compliment) and metaphysical sciences. The latter, as you know, being incapable of verification before mixed audiences, is classed by Mr. Tyndall with the fictions of poetry. The realistic science of fact on the other hand is utterly prosaic. Now, for us, poor unknown philanthropists, no fact of either of these sciences is interesting except in the degree of its potentiality of moral results, and in the ratio of its usefulness to mankind. And what, in its proud isolation, can be

more utterly indifferent to everyone and everything, or more bound to nothing but the selfish requisites for its advancement, than this materialistic science of fact? May I ask then . . . what have the laws of Faraday, Tyndall, or others, to do with philanthropy in their abstract relations with humanity, viewed as an intelligent whole? What care they for *Man* as an isolated atom of this great and harmonious whole, even though they may sometimes be of practical use to him? Cosmic energy is something eternal and incessant; matter is indestructible; and there stand the scientific facts. Doubt them, and you are an ignoramus; deny them, a dangerous lunatic, a bigot; pretend to improve upon the theories—an impertinent charlatan. And yet even these scientific facts never suggested any proof to the world of experimenters that Nature consciously prefers that matter should be indestructible under organic rather than inorganic forms, and that she works slowly but incessantly towards the realisation of this object—the evolution of conscious life out of inert material. Hence their ignorance about the scattering and concretion of cosmic energy in its metaphysical aspects, their division about Darwin's theories, their uncertainty about the degree of conscious life in separate elements, and, as a necessity, the scornful rejection of every phenomenon outside their own stated conditions, and the very idea of worlds of semi-intelligent if not intellectual forces at work in hidden corners of nature. To give you another practical illustration—we see a vast difference between the two qualities of two equal amounts of energy expended by two men, of whom one, let us suppose, is on his way to his daily quiet work, and another on his way to denounce a fellow-creature at the police station, while the men of science see none; and we—not they—see a specific difference between the energy in the motion of the wind and that of a revolving wheel. And why? Because every thought of man upon being evolved passes into the inner world, and becomes an active entity by associating itself, coalescing we might term it, with an elemental, that is to say, with one of the semi-intelligent forces of the kingdoms. It survives as an active intelligence—a creature of the mind's begetting—for a longer or shorter period proportionate with the original intensity of the cerebral action which



generated it. Thus, a good thought is perpetuated as an active, beneficent power, an evil one as a maleficent demon. And so man is continually peopling his current in space with a world of his own, crowded with the offsprings of his fancies, desires, impulses, and passions; a current which reacts upon any sensitive or nervous organisation which comes in contact with it, in proportion to its dynamic intensity. The Buddhist calls this his 'Shandba'; the Hindu gives it the name of 'Karma.' The adept involves these shapes consciously; other men throw them off unconsciously. The adept, to be successful and preserve his power, must dwell in solitude, and more or less within his own soul. Still less does exact science perceive that while the building ant, the busy bee, the nidifacient bird, accumulates each in its own humble way as much cosmic energy in its potential form as a Haydn, a Plato, or a ploughman turning his furrow, in theirs; the hunter who kills game for his pleasure or profit, or the positivist who applies his intellect to proving that  $+ \times + = -$ , are wasting and scattering energy no less than the tiger which springs upon its prey. They all rob Nature instead of enriching her, and will all, in the degree of their intelligence, find themselves accountable.

"Exact experimental science has nothing to do with morality, virtue, philanthropy, therefore can make no claim upon our help until it blends itself with metaphysics. Being but a cold classification of facts outside man, and existing before and after him, her domain of usefulness ceases for us at the outer boundary of these facts; and, whatever the inferences and results for humanity from the materials acquired by her method, she little cares. Therefore, as our sphere lies entirely outside hers—as far as the path of *Uranus* is outside the Earth's—we distinctly refuse to be broken on any wheel of her construction. Heat is but a mode of motion to her, and motion develops heat, but why the mechanical motion of the revolving wheel should be metaphysically of a higher value than the heat into which it is gradually transformed she has yet to discover. The philosophical and transcendental (hence absurd) notion of the mediæval theosophists that the final progress of human labour, aided by the incessant discoveries of man,

must one day culminate in a process which, in imitation of the Sun's energy—in its capacity as a direct motor—shall result in the evolution of nutritious food out of inorganic matter, is unthinkable for men of science. Were the sun, the great nourishing father of our planetary system, to hatch granite chickens out of a boulder 'under test conditions' to-morrow, they (the men of science) would accept it as a scientific fact without wasting a regret that the fowls were not alive so as to feed the hungry and the starving. But let a *shaberon* cross the Himalayas in a time of famine and multiply sacks of rice for the perishing multitudes—as he could—and your magistrates and collectors would probably lodge him in jail to make him confess what granary he had robbed. This is exact science and your realistic world. And though, as you say, you are impressed by the vast extent of the world's ignorance on every subject, which you pertinately designate as a 'few palpable facts collected and roughly generalised, and a technical jargon invented to hide man's ignorance of all that lies behind these facts,' and though you speak of your faith in the infinite possibilities of Nature, yet you are content to spend your life in a work which aids only that same exact science. . . .

"Of your several questions we will first discuss, if you please, the one relating to the presumed failure of the 'Fraternity' to 'leave any mark upon the history of the world.' They ought, you think, to have been able, with their extraordinary advantages, to have 'gathered into their schools a considerable portion of the more enlightened minds of every race.' How do you know they have made no such mark? Are you acquainted with their efforts, successes, and failures? Have you any dock upon which to arraign them? How could your world collect proofs of the doings of men who have sedulously kept closed every possible door of approach by which the inquisitive could spy upon them? The prime condition of their success was that they should never be supervised or obstructed. What they have done they know; all that those outside their circle could perceive was results, the causes of which were masked from view. To account for these results, men have, in different ages, invented theories of the interposition of gods, special providences, fates, the benign or hostile in-

fluence of the stars. There never was a time within or before the so-called historical period when our predecessors were not moulding events and 'making history,' the facts of which were subsequently and invariably distorted by historians to suit contemporary prejudices. Are you quite sure that the visible heroic figures in the successive dramas were not often but their puppets? We never pretended to be able to draw nations in the mass to this or that crisis in spite of the general drift of the world's cosmic relations. The cycles must run their rounds. Periods of mental and moral light and darkness succeed each other as day does night. The major and minor yugas must be accomplished according to the established order of things. And we, borne along on the mighty tide, can only modify and direct some of its minor currents. If we had the powers of the imaginary Personal God, and the universal and immutable laws were but toys to play with, then, indeed, might we have created conditions that would have turned this earth into an arcadia for lofty souls. But having to deal with an immutable law, being ourselves its creatures, we have had to do what we could, and rest thankful. There have been times when 'a considerable portion of enlightened minds' were taught in our schools. Such times there were in India, Persia, Egypt, Greece, and Rome. But, as I remarked in a letter to Mr. Sinnett, the adept is the efflorescence of his age, and comparatively few ever appear in a single century. Earth is the battle-ground of moral no less than of physical forces, and the boisterousness of animal passion, under the stimulus of the rude energies of the lower group of etheric agents, always tends to quench spirituality. What else could one expect of men so nearly related to the lower kingdom from which they evolved? True also, our numbers are just now diminishing, but this is because, as I have said, we are of the human race, subject to its cyclic impulse, and powerless to turn that back upon itself. Can you turn the Gunga or the Bramaputra back to its sources; can you even dam it so that its piled-up waters will not overflow the banks? No; but you may draw the stream partly into canals, and utilise its hydraulic power for the good of mankind. So we, who cannot stop the world from going in its destined direction, are yet able

to divert some part of its energy into useful channels. Think of us as demi-gods, and my explanation will not satisfy you; view us as simple men—perhaps a little wiser as the result of special study—and it ought to answer your objection.

“‘What good,’ you say, ‘is to be attained for my fellows and myself (the two are inseparable) by these occult sciences?’ When the natives see that an interest is taken by the English, and even by some high officials in India, in their ancestral science and philosophies, they will themselves take openly to their study. And when they come to realise that the old ‘divine’ phenomena were not miracles, but scientific effects, superstition will abate. Thus, the greatest evil that now oppresses and retards the revival of Indian civilisation will in time disappear. The present tendency of education is to make them materialistic and root out spirituality. With a proper understanding of what their ancestors meant by their writings and teachings, education would become a blessing, whereas now it is often a curse. At present the non-educated, as much as the learned natives, regard the English as too prejudiced, because of their Christian religion and modern science, to care to understand them or their traditions. They mutually hate and mistrust each other. This changed attitude towards the older philosophy, would influence the native princes and wealthy men to endow normal schools for the education of pundits; and old MSS., hitherto buried out of the reach of the Europeans, would again come to light, and with them the key to much of that which was hidden for ages from the popular understanding, for which your sceptical Sanscritists do not care, which your religious missionaries do not *dare*, to understand. Science would gain much, humanity everything. Under the stimulus of the Anglo-Indian Theosophical Society, we might in time see another golden age of Sanscrit literature. . . .

“If we look at Ceylon we shall see the most scholarly priests combining, under the lead of the Theosophical Society, in a new exegesis of Buddhistic philosophy; and at Galle, on the 15th of September, a secular Theosophical School for the teaching of Singhalese youth, opened with an attendance of over three hundred scholars; an example

about to be imitated at three other points in that island. If the Theosophical Society, 'as at present constituted,' has indeed no 'real vitality,' and yet in its modest way has done so much practical good, how much greater results might not be anticipated from a body organised upon the better plan you could suggest?

"The same causes that are materialising the Hindu mind are equally affecting all Western thought. Education enthrones scepticism, but imprisons spirituality. You can do immense good by helping to give the Western nations a secure basis upon which to reconstruct their crumbling faith. And what they need is the evidence that Asiatic psychology alone supplies. Give this, and you will confer happiness of mind on thousands. The era of blind faith is gone; that of inquiry is here. Inquiry that only unmasks error, without discovering anything upon which the soul can build, will but make iconoclasts. Iconoclasm, from its very destructiveness, can give nothing; it can only raze. But man cannot rest satisfied with bare negation. Agnosticism is but a temporary halt. This is the moment to guide the recurrent impulse which must soon come, and which will push the age towards extreme atheism, or drag it back to extreme sacerdotalism, if it is not led to the primitive soul-satisfying philosophy of the Aryans. He who observes what is going on to-day, on the one hand among the Catholics, who are breeding miracles as fast as the white ants do their young, on the other among the free thinkers, who are converting by masses into Agnostics—will see the drift of things. The age is revelling at a debauch of phenomena. The same marvels that the spiritualists quote in opposition to the dogmas of eternal perdition and atonement, the Catholics swarm to witness as proof of their faith in miracles. The sceptics make game of both. All are blind, and there is no one to lead them. You and your colleagues may help to furnish the materials for a needed universal religious philosophy; one impregnable to scientific assault, because itself the finality of absolute science, and a religion that is indeed worthy of the name since it includes the relations of man physical to man psychical, and of the two to all that is above and below them. Is not this worth a slight sacrifice? And if, after

reflection, you shall decide to enter this new career, let it be known that your society is no miracle-mongering or banqueting club, nor specially given to the study of phenomenalism. Its chief aim is to extirpate current superstitions and scepticism, and from long-sealed ancient fountains to draw the proof that man may shape his own future destiny and know for a certainty that he can live hereafter, if he only wills, and that all 'phenomena' are but manifestations of natural law, to try to comprehend which is the duty of every intelligent being."

All this is very fine, but it suggests a doubt whether Madame Blavatsky knew anything herself about the soul growth of Boehme and Buddha. With her the "ancient Indian spiritualism" seems to mean "phenomena," "science," "proof" of a next world.

An able analysis of the Koot Hoomi letters is given by Mr. Hodgson in the Report that I have frequently quoted. Mr. Sims and Mr. Netherclift, the leading experts in handwriting, pronounced the letters to be in the handwriting of Madame Blavatsky, unskillfully disguised at first, more skillfully disguised later on. Mr. Hodgson saw many of these letters in manuscript, a great advantage, as he says that in print they have been much edited. He thinks that in style Koot Hoomi and Madame Blavatsky have many points of similarity, "especially in the cumbrous and wordy form of sentence which so often appears, in the abundance of parenthetical phrases, and in the occasional use of *outré* metaphors."

Also both at times wrote curious English :—

KOOT HOOMI.

your's, her's  
fulfill, dispell  
thiefs  
leasure  
quarreling, marshaling  
alloted  
*in totto*  
defense

MADAME BLAVATSKY.

your's  
expell  
thiefs  
deceaved, beseached  
quarreling, quarreled  
cooly (for coolly)  
lazy, lazziness  
defense

Other mistakes, says Mr. Hodgson, suggesting that the

writer was accustomed to French, may be found in different Koot Hoomi documents; for instance, *mountain* for *moun-tain*, *profond* for *profound*, *vanted* for *vaunted*. "You have to beat your iron while it is yet hot."

Also both seemed to have the same ideas about dividing words at the end of a line:—

## KOOT HOOMI.

incessan-tly, direc-tly  
una-cquainted  
fun-ctions  
po-werless  
des-pite, misunders-tood

## MADAME BLAVATSKY.

recen-tly, hones-tly, perfec-tly  
cha-nged  
correc-tness  
po-wers  
Beacon-sfields

Both also seemed to mentally construct their sentences first in French and then to transfer them to English. Mr. Hodgson gives several specimens of these. Amongst others the following:—

## KOOT HOOMI.

So more the pity for him.  
You felt impatient and  
believed having reasons to  
complain.

One who understands  
tolerably well English.

Their active mentality pre-  
venting them to receive clear  
outside impressions.

## MADAME BLAVATSKY.

So more the pity for him.  
There is not a tittle of  
doubt for it being so.

Olcott says you speak very  
well English.

The mediums reproached  
me with preventing by my  
presence the "spirits" to  
come.

Then, too, there were specimens of American spelling, for instance, Koot Hoomi spelt "skepticism" thus.



## CHAPTER XI.

### PROFESSOR KIDDLE.

MADAME BLAVATSKY with Colonel Olcott and Baboula, the conjurer's boy, is steaming through the Suez Canal. She is approaching, but from an opposite pole, Anna Kingsford.

The advent of this latter lady was of immense importance to the theosophists. She did not stay very long, but she imported mysticism into the society. Koot Hoomi had prated about the mystical "banner," but as theosophy with Madame Blavatsky meant the guinea annual subscriptions of the members, it stood to reason that she could not tolerate any theory of magic that was not based on intricate secrets of the powers of five-rayed stars and catch-words, of which she alone possessed accurate knowledge. With Mrs. Kingsford were associated earnest students of the old Kabbalism like Mrs. Penny and Mr. Maitland. A few of these remained in the society, but most of them by and by left and formed "Hermetic" societies, "Christian Magians," "Christo Theosophical" societies, and so on.

Madame Blavatsky at length reached England; but it is to be doubted whether it was very wise policy allowing her to come. She was soon at her old tricks. The day after she was introduced to Anna Kingsford, a little comedy took place. The two ladies met in the morning, and by and by went together to a pastry-cook's shop for lunch. A discussion had previously taken place about a certain article in *The Theosophist*, Madame Blavatsky, who had started it, maintaining that such and such words were in the article, and Mrs. Kingsford being under an impression that they were not. With the Russian lady was a native of India, M——, who had come to England to bear testimony as to the existence of the Mahatmas.

"M——, have you got that copy of *The Theosophist* in your pocket?" said Madame Blavatsky.

The answer was in the negative.

At lunch the discussion was revived, and Madame Blavatsky was more positive than ever. She affected to lose her temper.

"M——, I must have that copy," meaning that it must be at once brought by occult means.

"There it is!" said M——, producing it from his pocket, but Mrs. Kingsford failed to credit this "precipitation."

Mrs. Kingsford used to narrate another amusing anecdote. One day she cross-examined the native.

"M——, tell me truly, have you ever seen these Mahatmas?"

"Seen! What do you mean by 'seen'? The word is vague."

"Have you seen any of them in the flesh?"

"In the flesh! No! I have seen their astral bodies."

A short time afterwards Mrs. Kingsford learnt from another lady that she had put the same question, and elicited quite a different answer.

"M——, what is this? You told Mrs. Dash that you had seen the Mahatmas in the flesh."

"Yes, I did so proclaim," said the native.

"And you told me just the contrary."

"That is so."

"But is not one statement a falsehood?"

"No, it is occultism—"

"Then occultism permits—"

"Any lie as long as it is not quite impossible."

Dr. Anna Kingsford told me another funny anecdote. Madame Blavatsky was at an evening party convened in her honour, and M——, the native, was there also. Suddenly in the middle of a commonplace conversation, the Russian lady threw herself sprawling on her knees, and M—— imitated her. Both looked with an expression of reverence and awe in the direction of an imaginary Mahatma whom they pretended to see.

But in truth the alliance between Madame Blavatsky and Anna Kingsford could not last very long. The mind of one was saturated with the teachings of Boehme and the fine old mystics, whereas the theosophy of the other was a complete antagonism to this.

The motto of the neo-platonist was simple—"Withdraw into thyself, and the adytum of thine own soul will reveal to thee profounder secrets than the Cave of Mithras."

The philosophy of Mrs. Kingsford was similar:—"There is no enlightenment from without. The secret of things is revealed from within."

She had an original mind, but she never liked to break completely away from the old orthodoxies. She pondered over the saying of Matthew Arnold :

"At the present moment there are two things about the Christian religion which must be obvious to every percipient person ; one, that men cannot do without it ; the other, that they cannot do with it as it is."

But Christianity was certainly not an atheism. Indeed the Christian mystics, as Mrs. Kingsford well knew, based their entire system on the text (John xiv. 23), "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him."

But how could there be union with God in a system which denied God altogether ? The answer was that by "living the life," a theosophist like M—— was rewarded by visits from the Mahatmas in their astral bodies. But then what guarantee was there for the genuineness of these visits ? The Mahatma might be a wicked shell personating a Mahatma. Besides a visit from a Mahatma has nothing to do with the next world at all. A Mahatma is as much a mortal as M—— himself. But after life theories are theories, and folks can differ about these theories and still remain fast friends. But Madame Blavatsky was very irritable and very aggressive. Mrs. Kingsford, in alliance with Mr. Maitland, wrote a pamphlet protesting against her atheism. They proposed that a section of the London Lodge should be allowed independent speculations. But a letter from Koot Hoomi at once threatened immediate expulsion. And a still less satisfactory event now occurred.

In Mr. Hodgson's article (p. 397 of the "Proceedings") is a copy of a letter written by Madame Blavatsky to a medium, "X," exhorting him to deceive Mr. Massey by the aid of a sham miracle.

"MY DEAR GOOD FRIEND,

"Do you remember what Z (the medium's control) told or rather promised to me? That whenever there is need for it he will always be ready to carry any message, leave it either on Massey's table, his pocket, or some other mysterious place. Well now, there is the *most important need* for such a show of his powers. Please ask him to take the enclosed letter and put it into M.'s pocket, or in some other still more mysterious place. But he must not know it is Z. Let him think what he likes, but he must not suspect you had been near him with Z at your orders. He does not distrust you, but he does Z."

Madame Blavatsky, taxed with this letter, admitted that this portion was genuine:—

"ENGHEIN, *Friday*.

"All I have the honour now of telling you is—on my *theosophical word of honour*,—1. That I am the author of but the first part of the letter you quote, *i.e.*, a few hurried lines to X, after receiving the letter addressed to you and received by me at Girgaum, Bombay—asking X to remind Z of his promise and convey the letter to you by any means *provided they were occult*. My authorship begins with 'My dear good friend,' and ends with 'He does not distrust you, but he does Z.' What follows after has never been written by me."

But Mr. Hodgson draws attention to the fact that there was nothing in her letter about sending the letter to Mr. Massey "only by occult means," and that in the other part of the letter a certain "L.L." was to be treated to occult letters by pure cheating. It will be remembered that Mrs. Besant has urged in her biography that Madame Coulomb is the sole witness against Madame Blavatsky. This is not quite correct, for in Cairo, in America, and here in London, the same queer stories of confederacy crop up. And the defence, namely, that part of the letter is forged, is unintelligible. How could a piece of paper be found with water-marks, etc., corresponding exactly with those of the letter

to be altered, and how could the two pieces be spliced together so as to avoid detection?

But whilst Anna Kingsford was trying to reconcile Madame Guyon and Koot Hoomi, and the Psychic Research Society were taking down "depositions," and listening to the "astral bell" concealed up Madame Blavatsky's petticoats, a bolt fell from the blue. In *Light*, September 1st, 1883, appeared the following letter:—

"SIR,

"In a communication that appeared in your issue of July 21st, 'G. W., M.D.,' reviewing 'Esoteric Buddhism,' says: 'Regarding this Koot Hoomi, it is a very remarkable and unsatisfactory fact that Mr. Sinnett, although in correspondence with him for years, has yet never been permitted to see him.' I agree with your correspondent entirely; and this is not the only fact that is unsatisfactory to me. On reading Mr. Sinnett's 'Occult World,' more than a year ago, I was very greatly surprised to find in one of the letters presented by Mr. Sinnett as having been transmitted to him by Koot Hoomi, in the mysterious manner described, a passage taken almost *verbatim* from an address on Spiritualism by me at Lake Pleasant, in August, 1880, and published the same month by the *Banner of Light*. As Mr. Sinnett's book did not appear till a considerable time afterwards (about a year, I think), it is certain that I did not quote, consciously or unconsciously, from its pages. How, then, did it get into Koot Hoomi's mysterious letter?

"I sent to Mr. Sinnett a letter through his publishers, enclosing the printed pages of my address, with the part used by Koot Hoomi marked upon it, and asked for an explanation, for I wondered that so great a sage as Koot Hoomi should need to *borrow* anything from so humble a student of spiritual things as myself. As yet I have received no reply; and the query has been suggested to my mind—Is Koot Hoomi a myth? or, if not, is he so great an adept as to have impressed my mind with his thoughts and words while I was preparing my address? If the latter were the case he could not consistently exclaim: 'Pereant qui ante nos nostra dixerunt.'

"Perhaps Mr. Sinnett may think it scarcely worth while

to solve this little problem ; but the fact that the existence of the brotherhood has not yet been proved may induce some to raise the question suggested by 'G. W., M.D.' Is there any such secret order ? On this question, which is not intended to imply anything offensive to Mr. Sinnett, that other still more important question may depend. Is Mr. Sinnett's recently published book an exponent of Esoteric Buddhism ? It is, doubtless, a work of great ability, and its statements are worthy of deep thought ; but the main question is, are they true, or how can they be verified ? As this cannot be accomplished except by the exercise of abnormal or transcendental faculties, they must be accepted, if at all, upon the *ipse dixit* of the accomplished adept, who has been so kind as to sacrifice his esoteric character or vow, and make Mr. Sinnett his channel of communication with the outer world, thus rendering his sacred knowledge exoteric. Hence, if this publication, with its wonderful doctrine of 'Shells,' overturning the consolatory conclusions of Spiritualists, is to be accepted, the authority must be established, and the existence of the adept or adepts—indeed, the facts of adeptship—must be proved. The first step in affording this proof has hardly yet, I think, been taken. I trust this book will be very carefully analysed, and the nature of its inculcations exposed, whether they are Esoteric Buddhism or not."

The following are the passages referred to, printed side by side for the sake of ready reference :—

*Extract from Mr. Kiddle's discourse, entitled "The Present Outlook of Spiritualism," delivered at Lake Pleasant Camp Meeting on Sunday, August 15th, 1880.*

"My friends, *ideas* rule the world; and as men's minds receive new ideas, laying aside the old and effete, the world advances. Society rests

*Extract from Koot Hoomi's letter to Mr. Sinnett, in the "Occult World," 3rd Edition, p. 102. The first edition was published in June, 1881.*

"Ideas rule the world ; and as men's minds receive new ideas, laying aside the old and effete, the world will advance, mighty revolutions

upon them; mighty revolutions spring from them; institutions crumble before their onward march. It is just as impossible to resist their influx, when the time comes, as to stay the progress of the tide.

And the agency called Spiritualism is bringing a new set of ideas into the world—ideas on the most momentous subjects, touching man's true position in the universe; his origin and destiny; the relation of the mortal to the immortal; of the temporary to the Eternal; of the finite to the Infinite; of man's deathless soul to the material universe in which it now dwells—ideas larger, more general, more comprehensive, recognising more fully the universal reign of law as the expression of the Divine will, unchanging and unchangeable, in regard to which there is only an *Eternal Now*, while to mortals time is past or future, as re-

will spring from them, creeds and even powers will crumble before their onward march, crushed by their irresistible force. It will be just as impossible to resist their influence when the time comes as to stay the progress of the tide. But all this will come gradually on, and before it comes we have a duty set before us: that of sweeping away as much as possible the dross left to us by our pious forefathers. New ideas have to be planted on clean places, for these ideas touch upon the most momentous subjects. It is not physical phenomena, but these universal ideas that we study, as to comprehend the former, we have first to understand the latter. They touch man's true position in the universe in relation to his previous and future births, his origin and ultimate destiny; the relation of the mortal to the immortal, of the temporary to the Eternal, of the finite to the Infinite; ideas larger, grander, more comprehensive, recognising the eternal reign of immutable law, unchanging and unchangeable, in regard to which there is only an *ETERNAL NOW*: while to uninitiated mortals time is past or future, as related to



lated to their finite existence on this material plane; &c., &c., &c. their finite existence on this material speck of dirt; &c., &c., &c.

"NEW YORK, Aug. 11, 1883."

"HENRY KIDDLE."

This letter created an immense excitement in occult circles. And an explanatory letter from Tibet, if anything, made matters worse. In it Koot Hoomi announced that he had gone off to Mount Pleasant in his astral or spirit body, and there had heard Professor Kiddle's inspirational address.

"For the first time in my life I paid serious attention to the utterances of the poetical media (American for mediums), of the so-called 'inspirational' oratory of the English American lecturers, its quality and limitations. I was struck with all this brilliant but empty verbiage, and recognised for the first time fully its materialism."

Returning to the flesh in Tibet, with this "inspirational" discourse jingling in his ear, the Mahatma proposed not to plagiarise from it but to attack it in a letter sent to Madame Blavatsky through the spiritual telegraph. "Proofs," it appears, are struck off in this process, but the Mahatma, being tired after a long ride, failed to correct them on this occasion. These "proofs" are all carefully kept; and a new version of the letter corrected from the proofs was sent.

But the terrible Professor Kiddle was again on the watch. In *Light* (Sept. 20, 1884), he pointed out that if the Mahatma went in his astral body to Mount Pleasant he could scarcely have heard the discourse, for it was delivered at Lake Pleasant.

Also, if the main object of his astral flight was to witness a "medium" discoursing under the obsession of a spirit it is difficult to understand his satisfaction at his success, for the professor is no "medium," and he read the lecture from a manuscript.

The cup was full. Anna Kingsford retired, together with Mr. Maitland, Mr. Stainton Moses, Mr. Massey, in fact the greater portion of the intelligent members of the society. They had long argued that whether there were Mahatmas or no it was desirable to support a society in touch with the real occultism of India. To this important question we must now turn.

## CHAPTER XII.

### BUDDHISM, "ESOTERIC" AND GENUINE.

IN "The Secret Doctrine," Madame Blavatsky announces that there are two Buddhisms, two revelations of occultism, a sham one to be found in the discourses which, with pleasant comedy, Buddha delivered to his disciples to put them off the track of the real secrets, and a real one only known to her.

Oddly enough, if we turn to the "*Lalita Vistara*," which contains the life of Buddha, we find a claim very similar to hers. It states that the work was written to reveal the "mysteries" of the Buddhas, the secrets of *yoga*, to show how a mortal can acquire the "divine vision," with its concomitant "magical powers" (Foucaux's translation, pp. 7, 401).

Which is the authentic claimant here? and which the sham one? My own impression is that better than any other work in the world, better than the Upanishads, better than Cornelius Agrippa or Paracelsus, the "*Lalita Vistara*" reveals the secrets of the White Magician. The Western occultists give a hint here, and a dark sentence there. They write under the shade of the great Roman Church. The "*Lalita Vistara*" without any disguise gives the external and the internal development of the adept (Brahmajñāni, he who knows Brahma). As this work has never been treated from this point of view, I will give a hasty sketch of it.

Buddha was born of the Virgin of the Zodiac, called by the Brahmins, Mâyâ Devî. He comes to her womb as an elephant. Capricorn in the early Buddhist sculptures is an elephant issuing from a Makara, or Leviathan. The "*Lalita Vistara*" talks of the elephant Airâvana (born of the waters), and also of the elephant called Bodhi (spiritual enlightenment). It is plainly a story, not of an ordinary birth, but

of the birth of the Purusha, the divine man of Brahminism, the Higher Ego, the Higher Adam of Christianity.

At the birth of the little prince soothsayers were consulted by the king. They pronounced the following :—

“The young boy will, without doubt, be either a king of kings, or a great Buddha. If he is destined to be a great Buddha, four presaging tokens will make his mission plain. He will see—

“1. An old man.

“2. A sick man.

“3. A corpse.

“4. A holy recluse.

“If he fails to see these four presaging tokens of an avatāra, he will be simply a Chakravartin (king of earthly kings).”

King Suddhodana, who was a trifle worldly, was very much comforted by the last prediction of the soothsayers. He thought in his heart, It will be an easy thing to keep these four presaging tokens from the young prince. So he gave orders that three magnificent palaces should at once be built—the Palace of Spring, the Palace of Summer, the Palace of Winter. These palaces, as we learn from the “*Lalita Vistara*,” were the most beautiful palaces ever conceived on earth. Indeed, they were quite able to cope in splendour with Vajrayanta, the immortal palace of Indra himself. Costly pavilions were built out in all directions, with ornamented porticoes and furbished doors. Turrets and pinnacles soared into the sky. Dainty little windows gave light to the rich apartments. Galleries, balustrades, and delicate trellis-work were abundant everywhere. A thousand bells tinkled on each roof. We seem to have the lacquered Chinese edifices of the pattern which architects believe to have flourished in early India. The gardens of these fine palaces rivalled the chess-board in the rectangular exactitude of their parterres and trellis-work bowers. Cool lakes nursed on their calm bosoms storks and cranes, wild geese and tame swans; ducks, also, as parti-coloured as the white, red, and blue lotuses amongst which they swam. Bending to these lakes were bowery trees—the champak, the acacia serisha, and the beautiful asoka-tree with its orange-scarlet flowers. Above rustled the mimosa,

the fan-palm, and the feathery pippala, Buddha's tree. The air was heavy with the scent of the tube-rose and the Indian jasmine. These palaces, when the prince was old enough, were peopled with beautiful wives and concubines. The chief wife was lovely Yasodhara.

Perhaps, at this time, the good King Suddhodana was more happy than even the prince in the ecstasy of his honeymoon. He had found for that prince the most beautiful wife in the world. He had built him palaces that were the talk of the whole of Hindoostan. No Indian maharaja before had had such beautiful palaces, such lovely wives and handmaidens, such dancing girls, singers, jewels, luxuries. In his bowers of camphor cinnamon, amid the enchanting perfumes of the tube-rose and the santal-tree, his life must surely be one long bliss, a dream that has no awakening.

But suddenly this exultation was dashed with a note of woe. The king dreamt that he saw his son in the russet cowl of the beggar-hermit. Awaking in a fright, he called an eunuch.

"Is my son in the palace?" he asked abruptly.

"He is, O king."

The dream frightened the king very much, and he ordered five hundred guards to be placed at every corner of the walls of the Palace of Summer. And the soothsayers having announced that a Buddha, if he escapes at all, always escapes by the Gate of Benediction, folding doors of immense size were here erected. The sound of their swing on their hinges resounded to a distance of half a yogana (three and a half miles). Five hundred men were required to stir either gate. These precautions completely quieted the king's mind, until one day he received a terrible piece of news. His son had seen the first of the four presaging tokens. He had seen an old man.

This is how the matter came about. The king had prepared a garden even more beautiful than the garden of the Palace of Summer. A soothsayer had told him that if he could succeed in showing the prince this garden, the prince would be content to remain in it with his wives for ever. No task seemed easier than this, so it was arranged that on a certain day the prince should be driven thither in his

chariot. But, of course, immense precautions had to be taken to keep all old men and sick men and corpses from his sight. Quite an army of soldiers was told off for this duty, and the city was decked with flags. The path of the prince was strewn with flowers and scents, and adorned with vases of the rich kadali plant. Above were costly hangings and garlands, and pagodas of bells.

But, lo and behold! as the prince was driving along, plump under the wheels of his chariot, and before the very noses of the silken nobles and the warriors with javelins and shields, he saw an unusual sight. This was an old man, very decrepit and very broken. The veins and nerves of his body were swollen and prominent; his teeth chattered; he was wrinkled, bald, and his few remaining hairs were of dazzling whiteness; he was bent very nearly double, and tottered feebly along, supported by a stick.

"What is this, O coachman?" said the prince. "A man with his blood all dried up, and his muscles glued to his body! His head is white; his teeth knock together; he is scarcely able to move along, even with the aid of that stick!"

"Prince," said the coachman, "this is Old Age. This man's senses are dulled; suffering has destroyed his spirit; he is contemned by his neighbours. Unable to help himself, he has been abandoned in this forest."

"Is this a peculiarity of his family?" demanded the prince, "or is it the law of the world? Tell me quickly."

"Prince," said the coachman, "it is neither a law of his family, nor a law of the kingdom. In every being youth is conquered by age. Your own father and mother and all your relations will end in old age. There is no other issue to humanity."

"Then youth is blind and ignorant," said the prince, "and sees not the future. If this body is to be the abode of old age, what have I to do with pleasure and its intoxications? Turn round the chariot, and drive me back to the palace!"

Consternation was in the minds of all the courtiers at this untoward occurrence; but the odd circumstance of all was that no one was ever able to bring to condign punishment the miserable author of the mischief. The old man could never be found.

King Suddhodana was at first quite beside himself with tribulation. Soldiers were summoned from the distant provinces, and a cordon of detachments thrown out to a distance of four miles in each direction, to keep the other pre-saging tokens from the prince. By-and-by the king became a little more quieted. A ridiculous accident had interfered with his plans: "If my son could see the Garden of Happiness he never would become a hermit." The king determined that another attempt should be made. But this time the precautions were doubled.

On the first occasion the prince left the Palace of Summer by the eastern gate. The second expedition was through the southern gate.

But another untoward event occurred. As the prince was driving along in his chariot, suddenly he saw close to him a man emaciated, ill, loathsome, burning with fever. Companionless, uncared for, he tottered along, breathing with extreme difficulty.

"Coachman," said the prince, "what is this man, livid and loathsome in body, whose senses are dulled, and whose limbs are withered? His stomach is oppressing him; he is covered with filth. Scarcely can he draw the breath of life!"

"Prince," said the coachman, "this is Sickness. This poor man is attacked with a grievous malady. Strength and comfort have shunned him. He is friendless, hopeless, without a country, without an asylum. The fear of death is before his eyes."

"If the health of man," said Buddha, "is but the sport of a dream, and the fear of coming evils can put on so loathsome a shape, how can the wise man, who has seen what life really means, indulge in its vain delights? Turn back, coachman, and drive me to the palace!"

The angry king, when he heard what had occurred, gave orders that the sick man should be seized and punished, but although a price was placed on his head, and he was searched for far and wide, he could never be caught. A clue to this is furnished by a passage in the "*Lalita Vistara*." The sick man was in reality one of the Spirits of the Pure Abode, masquerading in sores and spasms. These Spirits of the Pure Abode are also called the Buddhas of the Past

in many passages. The answers of the coachman were due to their inspiration.

It would almost seem as if some influence, malefic or otherwise, was stirring the good King Suddhodana. Unmoved by failure, he urged the prince to a third effort. The chariot this time was to set out by the western gate. Greater precautions than ever were adopted. The chain of guards was posted at least twelve miles off from the Palace of Summer. But the Buddhas of the Past again arrested the prince. His chariot was suddenly crossed by a phantom funeral procession. A phantom corpse, smeared with the orthodox mud, and spread with a sheet, was carried on a bier. Phantom women wailed, and phantom musicians played on the drum and the Indian flute. No doubt also, phantom Brahmins chanted hymns to Jatavedas, to bear away the immortal part of the dead man to the home of the Pitris.

"What is this?" said the prince. "Why do these women beat their breasts and tear their hair? Why do these good folks cover their heads with the dust of the ground. And that strange form upon its litter, wherefore is it so rigid?"

"Prince," said the charioteer, "this is Death! Yon form, pale and stiffened, can never again walk and move. Its owner has gone to the unknown caverns of Yama. His father, his mother, his child, his wife cry out to him, but he cannot hear."

Buddha was sad.

"Woe be to youth, which is the sport of age! Woe be to health, which is the sport of many maladies! Woe be to life, which is as a breath! Woe be to the idle pleasures which debauch humanity! But for the 'five aggregations' there would be no age, sickness, nor death. Go back to the city. I must compass the deliverance."

A fourth time the prince was urged by his father to visit the Garden of Happiness. The chain of guards this time was sixteen miles away. The exit was by the northern gate. But suddenly a calm man of gentle mien, wearing an ochre-red cowl, was seen in the roadway.

"Who is this," said the prince, "rapt, gentle, peaceful in mien? He looks as if his mind were far away elsewhere. He carries a bowl in his hand."



"Prince, this is the New Life," said the charioteer. "That man is of those whose thoughts are fixed on the eternal Brahma [Brahmacharin]. He seeks the divine voice. He seeks the divine vision. He carries the alms-bowl of the holy beggar [bhikshu]. His mind is calm, because the gross lures of the lower life can vex it no more."

"Such a life I covet," said the prince. "The lusts of man are like the sea-water—they mock man's thirst instead of quenching it. I will seek the divine vision and give immortality to man!"

King Suddhodana was beside himself. He placed five hundred corseleted Sakyas at every gate of the Palace of Summer. Chains of sentries were round the walls, which were raised and strengthened. A phalanx of loving wives, armed with javelins, was posted round the prince's bed to "narrowly watch" him. The king ordered also all the allurements of sense to be constantly presented to the prince.

"Let the women of the zenana cease not for an instant their concerts and mirth and sport. Let them shine in silks and sparkle in diamonds and emeralds."

The allegory is in reality a great battle between two camps—the denizens of the Kamaloka, or the Domains of Appetite, and the denizens of the Brahmaloaka, or the Domains of Pure Spirit. The latter are unseen, but not unfelt.

For one day, when the prince reclined on a silken couch listening to the sweet crooning of four or five brown-skinned, large-eyed Indian girls, his eyes suddenly assumed a dazed and absorbed look, and the rich hangings and garlands and intricate trellis-work of the golden apartment were still present, but dim to his mind. And music and voices, more sweet than he had ever listened to, seemed faintly to reach him. I will write down some of the verses:—

"Mighty prop of humanity  
March in the pathway of the Rishis of old,  
Go forth from this city!  
Upon this desolate earth,  
When thou hast acquired the priceless knowledge of the Jinās,  
When thou hast become a perfect Buddha,  
Give to all flesh the baptism (river) of the Kingdom of Righteousness,

Thou who once didst sacrifice thy feet, thy hands, thy precious body  
 and all thy riches for the world,  
 Thou whose life is pure, save flesh from its miseries !  
 In the presence of reviling be patient, O conqueror of self !  
 Lord of those who possess two feet, go forth on thy mission !  
 Conquer the evil one and his army."

Thus run some more of these gathas :—

"Light of the world ! [Lamp du monde—Foucaux],  
 In former kalpas this vow was made by thee :  
 'For the worlds that are a prey to death and sickness I will be a  
 refuge !'  
 Lion of men, master of those that walk on two feet, the time for thy  
 mission has come !  
 Under the sacred Bo-tree acquire immortal dignity, and give Am-  
 rita (immortality) to all !  
 Revilings and many prisons,  
 Death and murder,  
 These hast thou suffered with love and patience,  
 Forgiving thine executioners.  
 Kingless, men seek thee for a king !  
 'Stablish them in the way of Brahma and of the ten virtues,  
 That when they pass away from amongst their fellow-men, they may  
 all go to the abode of Brahma."

But the good King Suddhodana opposed the bright spirits.

It is recorded that he offered to resign his royal umbrella in favour of his son. His urgent entreaty that the prince should abandon all thoughts of a religious life was answered thus :—

"Sire, I desire four gifts. Grant me these, and I will remain in the Palace of Summer."

"What are they ?" said King Suddhodana.

"Grant that age may never seize me. Grant that I may retain the bright hues of youth. Grant that sickness may have no power over me. Grant that my life may be without end."

The Buddhas of the Past prevail, and Buddha determines to escape. How is the Gate of Benediction to be opened ? Buddha prays to Dasasata Nayana (he of the ten hundred eyes), who sends his angels to open it. He exchanges the rags from the graveyard for a king's jewels and silks. I

cannot help giving here a paraphrase of a lyric in "Izeyl," pronounced by Buddha:—

"The throne is too far from the crowd,  
Its famine and cares ;  
I give up the crown for the shroud  
That the *yogi* wears.

"The throne is too far from the poor,  
And their soul, to know  
A man must go forth and endure  
Their want and woe.

"The throne is too far from the tomb,  
The corpse, the pall ;  
I will set up a torch in the gloom  
And succour all."

Buddha now puts himself under a teacher (*guru*), named Arata Kalama, but soon finds that he can learn little of him. He then studies the secrets of white magic in the only way that these can be learnt, by solitude and purification.

Already we have matter enough to enable us to judge Madame Blavatsky. Her Buddhism proclaims:—

1. Annihilation is the reward of the just man made perfect.

2. Communication with the unseen world is most perilous, as none but malignant fiends, the bad halves of dead mortals, can communicate with the denizens of earth.

3. Therefore, such communication should only be attempted under the guidance of a Mahatma.

4. There is no God.

If the allegory of Buddha's life has any meaning, it completely upsets proposition No. 1. Old age, disease, and death make happiness impossible here. But there is a remedy—*amrita* ("a," not "*mrita*," death). No doubt a bad school of Brahmanism about A.D. 20 foisted on early Buddhism the Pyrrhonism of the *Sunya Vadi*. This is fully set forth in my little work, "The influence of Buddhism on Primitive Christianity."

Proposition No. 2. Madame Blavatsky holds that all good thought and effort must come from Mahatmas and Dhyān Chohans, from mortals, from this world in short.

The "*Lalita Vistara*" reverses this proposition. All the

mortals round Buddha, the Brahmins, the king, etc., seem to hold the brief of Mara the tempter. They all seek to dissuade the prince from his lofty mission. All good thought and effort come to him from the dead Buddhas, called also Rishis, the dead saints, who certainly know nothing of any law of division at death. In the "White Lotus of Dharma," Buddha, like Christ, calls from the grave two of these mighty prophets to attest his mission.

Proposition No. 3. It so happens that Buddha, for a short time, was under an actual Mahatma. But he found that he could learn nothing but formalism from him. So he left him and sat under the bo-tree seeking interior light. On his death-bed he uttered these words:—

"Be to yourselves Ananda, your own light. Seek no other refuge. Let Dharma (interior knowledge) be your light and refuge. Whosoever now Ananda, or after my departure, shall be his own light, his own refuge, and shall seek no other refuge, will henceforth be my true disciple."

Proposition No. 4. A man who prays to Dasāsāta Nayana to burst open the barriers that keep him from the spiritual life, can scarcely be called an atheist. But we will let Buddha speak for himself.

When the teacher was dwelling at Manasakata in the mango grove, some Brahmins, learned in the three Vedas, come to consult him on the question of union with the eternal Brahma. They ask if they are in the right pathway towards that union. Buddha replies at great length. He suggests an ideal case. He supposes that a man has fallen in love with the "most beautiful woman in the land." Day and night he dreams of her, but has never seen her. He does not know whether she is tall or short, of Brahmin or Sudra caste, of dark or fair complexion; he does not even know her name. The Brahmins are asked if the talk of that man about that woman be wise or foolish. They confess that it is "foolish talk." Buddha then applies the same train of reasoning to them. The Brahmins versed in the three Vedas are made to confess that they have never seen Brahma, that they do not know whether he is tall or short, or anything about him, and that all their talk about union with him is also foolish talk. They are mounting a crooked staircase, and do not know whether it leads to a

mansion or a precipice. They are standing on the bank of a river and calling to the other bank to come to them.

Now it seems to me that if Buddha were the unpromising teacher of atheism that Sir Monier Williams pictures him, he has at this point an admirable opportunity of urging his views. The Brahmins, he would of course contend, knew nothing about Brahma, for the simple reason that no such being as Brahma exists.

But this is exactly the line that Buddha does not take. His argument is that the Brahmins knew nothing of Brahma, because Brahma is purely spiritual, and they are purely materialistic.

Five "Veils," he shows, hide Brahma from mortal ken. These are—

1. The Veil of Lustful Desire.
2. The Veil of Malice.
3. The Veil of Sloth and Idleness.
4. The Veil of Pride and Self-righteousness.
5. The Veil of Doubt.

Buddha then goes on with his questionings :

"Is Brahma in possession of wives and wealth?"

"He is not, Gautama?" answers Vasettha the Brahmin.

"Is his mind full of anger, or free from anger?"

"Free from anger, Gautama!"

"Is his mind full of malice, or free from malice?"

"Free from malice, Gautama!"

"Is his mind depraved or pure?"

"It is pure, Gautama!"

"Has he self-mastery, or has he not?"

"He has, Gautama."

The Brahmins are then questioned about themselves.

"Are the Brahmins versed in the three Vedas in possession of wives and wealth, or are they not?"

"They are, Gautama!"

"Have they anger in their hearts, or have they not?"

"They have, Gautama."

"Do they bear malice, or do they not?"

"They do, Gautama."

"Are they pure in heart, or are they not?"

"They are not, Gautama."

"Have they self-mastery, or have they not?"

"They have not, Gautama."

These replies provoke, of course, the very obvious retort that no point of union can be found between such dissimilar entities. Brahma is free from malice, sinless, self-contained, so, of course, it is only the sinless that can hope to be in harmony with him.

Vasettha then puts this question: "It has been told me, Gautama, that Sramana Gautama knows the way to the state of union with Brahma?"

"Brahma I know, Vasettha!" says Buddha in reply, "and the world of Brahma, and the path leading to it!"

The humbled Brahmins learned in the three Vedas then ask Buddha to "show them the way to a state of union with Brahma."

Buddha replies at considerable length, drawing a sharp contrast between the lower Brahminism and the higher Brahminism, the "householder" and the "houseless one." The householder Brahmins are gross, sensual, avaricious, insincere. They practise for lucre black magic, fortune-telling, cozenage. They gain the ear of kings, breed wars, predict victories, sacrifice life, spoil the poor. As a foil to this he paints the recluse, who has renounced all worldly things, and is pure, self-possessed, happy.

To teach this "higher life," a Buddha "from time to time is born into the world, blessed and worthy, abounding in wisdom, a guide to erring mortals." He sees the universe face to face, the spirit world of Brahma and that of Mara the tempter. He makes his knowledge known to others. The houseless one, instructed by him, "lets his mind pervade one quarter of the world with thoughts of pity, sympathy, and equanimity; and so the second, and so the third, and so the fourth. And thus the whole wide world, above, below, around, and everywhere, does he continue to pervade with heart of pity, sympathy, and equanimity, far-reaching, grown great, and beyond measure."<sup>1</sup>

"Verily this, Vasettha, is the way to a state of union with Brahma," and he proceeds to announce that the Bhikshu, or Buddhist beggar, "who is free from anger, free from malice, pure in mind, master of himself, will, after death, when the body is dissolved, become united with Brahma."

<sup>1</sup> "Buddhist Suttas," p. 201.

We here see how many million miles away the "Buddhism" of Madame Blavatsky was from that of Buddha. Supposing that there are Mahatmas and that the Russian lady's miracles were genuine, does that take us very far? Madame Blavatsky, a pauper, desired to use her magic to gain the lakhs of rupees of Mr. Sassoon and Holkar. Buddha having a crown and countless gold pieces desired to become a pauper. Madame Blavatsky had an ambition to astound the vulgar with duplicated diamond rings and astral post offices. Buddha contemned diamonds and false applause. Madame Blavatsky worked entirely on the plane of matter, and sought to demolish Brahma and his legions. Buddha worked entirely on the plane of spirit, and sought the immortal world of Brahma, and the soul growth. In short, the magic of one was black, and the other white. A fine Buddhist parable may throw light on this :—

#### ALCHEMY.

A vain young Brahmin once was told  
Of holy spells that made red gold ;  
This fancy vexed him day and night,  
His life was gross, his heart was light.  
Said one, " In Uravilva's wood  
There dwells the Buddha, calm and good.  
He knows all secrets. Ask his aid ! "  
The Brahmin sought the holy shade :  
Said Buddha, " What you wish, my son,  
May most undoubtedly be done.  
But gold is crime ! It whets the knife ;  
Designs the drops that poison life.  
It parents lust, and hate, and ire ;  
For gold the son will kill the sire,  
For gold the maiden sell her shame,  
Kings spread wide lands with sword and flame ;  
The sons of Dharma never tell  
Their mantras and their potent spell  
Except to those whose lives are pure,  
To those who've conquered earthly lure,  
Who know in fact the gold's true worth,  
The tawdriest tinsel upon earth."  
The Brahmin said, " My life is pure,  
I've conquered every earthly lure ;  
Who, like a Brahmin, knows the right ! "  
His life was gross, his heart was light.



One night the couple when the moon  
Hides for two weeks her light in June  
(The only fortnight in the year  
When man can make red gold appear),  
Sought out a cavern, where a rill  
Dashed down a chasm in the hill ;  
The mantras now were promptly told,  
And Buddha spread the ground with gold,  
Six thousand pieces the amount,  
A robber saw the Brahmin count.  
Then Buddha hurled it in the foam,  
Repeating as he journeyed home  
His solemn caution : " Son, beware !  
Use not this knowledge, have a care ! "  
But as they trudged, at break of day,  
Five hundred robbers barred the way !  
" Oh holy masters, we are told,"  
They said, " that you have countless gold."  
Said Buddha, " Gold sheds human blood,  
And so we flung it in the flood."  
The chieftain said, " Such words are vain,  
And one as hostage must remain—  
The younger one. So promptly hie  
And fetch the gold, or he must die,  
Within a week he will be slain ! "  
" Within a week I come again,"  
Said Buddha, " Fear not, Brahmin youth,  
A Buddha's tongue is simple truth."  
Grim terror pales the young man's brow,  
Will the great Buddha keep his vow ?  
Five days have passed away too soon,  
To-night will end the weeks in June  
When spells can work ; and if he wait,  
To-morrow will be all too late.  
" O take me to the rocky dell,  
To-night I'll work a mystic spell."  
The gold was made. Quick spread its fame,  
A rival band of robbers came ;  
" Divide or fight ! " they loudly cried,  
When the broad pieces they espied.  
" He made this gold," the first clan said,  
" We give him up to you instead."  
O pity now the Brahmin's fate,  
He thinks of Buddha's word too late.  
Though all unfit the time of year,  
The greedy robbers will not hear,  
They cut his throat ; and then assail  
Their rivals for their lying tale.  
Swords flash and fall on sounding crest,  
On cloyen targe, and stricken breast,

Sharp cries of anguish over all  
Outroar the angry waterfall,  
Whose snowy stream is soon a flood  
Of dying men and human blood,  
Borne off to Yama's realm of death ;  
Two robbers soon alone draw breath.  
Exhausted with three days of fast,  
They watch the gold. Says one at last,  
" You guard the cave ; but we must eat.  
I'll to the town for drink and meat."  
One hied him to a leech's stock,  
One nursed a dagger by a rock ;  
Each muttered, " Soon 'tis all mine own !"  
One perished, stabbed without a groan ;  
The other seized his drink and meat  
And soon was writhing at his feet.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### A CHANGE OF FRONT.

IN the month of February, 1894, at the request of a friend, I gave a short lecture at Toynbee Hall, intending to explain theosophy in a popular way to the working man, of whom I was told the audience would be chiefly composed. Instead of them I found that a large detachment of theosophists had invaded Whitechapel. They contradicted every word that I had said, and were especially angry with me for representing Madame Blavatsky's teaching to be atheistic, and for announcing that she had ever asserted that only the bad halves of men could ever communicate with the living.

I was puzzled. These theosophists were plainly enthusiasts. Also they seemed honest enthusiasts. And they cited chapter and verse against me. As I rolled home in the underground railway I began to think that the theory of "Shells" had come to me in some turbid dream.

Eagerly I consulted her writings when I reached home. Certainly in the *Theosophist* for October, 1881, appeared these words, "At death or before," the "Spirit," the higher Ego, "becomes a new person," that "can never span the abyss that separates its state from ours." Plainly I had not dreamt all this. And in "Esoteric Buddhism," p. 177, I read: "They (the Mahatmas) never occupy themselves with any conception remotely resembling the god of churches and creeds."

But my theosophical assailants could not be quite mad; so I made a careful examination of the more recent utterances of Madame Blavatsky, and I found that the charge made against me was perfectly just. "Theosophy" had made a complete change of front. I place a few of its statements side by side.

GOD.

"It (the Esoteric Philosophy) proves the necessity of an absolute Divine principle in nature."

"It denies Deity no more than it does the sun."

"Esoteric philosophy has never rejected God in nature, nor Deity as the absolute and abstract *Ens*" ("Secret Doctrine," vol. i. p. 20).

God is the "Seven-Skinned, Eternal Father - Mother" ("Secret Doctrine," i. p. 9).

"There is no God personal or impersonal." In a small work entitled, "Theosophy or Spiritual Dynamics," Dr. Wyld, for some years President of the British Branch of the Theosophical Society, announces that he retired from it when these words were used by Madame Blavatsky.

God is "unconscious" ("Esoteric Buddhism," p. 176).

"Revelation never comes from the Unmanifestable ONE LIFE. The Occultist accepts it alone from Dhyan Chohans, and planetary spirits, divine but finite beings, who have become Gods for men" ("Secret Doctrine," i. p. 10).

"This infinite eternal cause is Be-ness rather than Being" (*Ib.*, i. p. 14).

God "may be regarded indifferently as space, duration, matter, or motion" ("Esoteric Buddhism," p. 176).

"The God of the Apostle Initiate and of the Rishi is the Unseen and the Visible SPACE" ("Secret Doctrine," i. p. 9).

NIRVÂNA.

Nirvâna does not mean annihilation ("Secret Doctrine," i. xxi).

Annihilation is the reward of the highest adept ("Esoteric Buddhism," p. 133).

## GOOD SPIRITS.

The good halves of mortals, separated from the bad halves at death, "can never again span the abyss which separates their state from ours" (*Theosophist*, October, 1881).

All that can come to earth are the shells, the wicked halves of mortals (*Ib.*).

The good halves can span the abyss, but it is by drawing the "living seer" to the disembodied spirit.

Madame Blavatsky, cited by Mrs. Besant ("Death and After," p. 71).

The souls or astral egos of pure living sensitives, labouring under the same delusion, think their loved ones came down to them on earth, while it is their own spirits that are raised towards these in the Devachan (Mrs. Besant, *Ib.*, p. 72).

The "guardian angels" of the Christian are the same as the Dhyān Chohans, the Flagoe of Paracelsus, the Pitri or ancestors of the Hindoos ("Secret Doctrine," i. p. 222).

## DHYAN CHOHANS.

The Dhyān Chohans are spirits, the "architects of the visible worlds," the same as the "archangels" and seraphs of Christianity ("Secret Doctrine," i. p. 16).

They are the same as planetary spirits, they are men who have become gods ("Secret Doctrine," i. p. 10).

They are adepts, men living on earth at times. The "adept himself, no matter how high, does return to incarnation eventually after the rest of mankind have passed across the great dividing period in the middle of the fifth round" ("Esoteric Buddhism," p. 136).

## FLESH MEAT—WINE—MARRIAGE.

Dr. Wyld writes to me that when he was president of the English branch of the Theosophical Society, "H. P. B. and Olcott always taught us that the highest theosophy could not be reached except by abstaining from wine, marriage, and flesh meats, and they used to reply to our complaints that no teachers of the East came to us, that it was because we did not live 'the Life' as above."

Madame Blavatsky married twice after receiving this doctrine. According to Madame Coulomb she was "Madame Metrovitch," and Professor Coues tells us that she married one Betanelly in 1875, in America.

Colonel Olcott tells us that her weight was over 17 stone, and that her corpulence was "largely due to the manner of life she led, taking next to no physical exercise whatever, and eating much unless seriously out of health. Even then she partook largely of fatty meats, and used to pour melted butter by the quantity over her fried eggs at breakfast. Wines and spirits she never touched, her beverages being tea and coffee, the latter being her special favourite.

"Her appetite, while I knew her, was extremely capricious, and she was most rebellious to all fixed hours for meals, hence a terror to all cooks and the despair of her colleagues.

"When we removed to Adyar, I determined to put a stop to this bother, and I built a kitchen on the terrace near H. P. B.'s bedroom, gave her a set of servants to her-

self, and let her eat or go without as she pleased.

"She was never a vegetarian while I knew her, flesh diet seeming to be indispensable for her health and comfort, as it is to so many others in our society, including myself."

I have fully noticed other discrepancies, the metempsychosis, the seven and the four principles, etc.

What was the meaning of this complete change of front? Soon I detected a logic in it. Madame Blavatsky's theosophy had one consistent principle—opportunism. Her "Esoteric Buddhism" was designed to win over the rich Hindoos, and to do this she was obliged to dethrone Brahma, Vishnu, and Rama, and to put in their places the Mahatmas, the Dhyan Chohans. These Dhyan Chohans made the Kosmos as Mr. Sinnett tells us. But as they are still alive in Tibet they confront us with a difficulty. Without a world there could be no Dhyan Chohans, and without Dhyan Chohans there could be no world. Then Madame Blavatsky had to get rid of the Indian ghost worship. Her mind, as I have often stated, lacks originality. But a book by an eccentric Frenchman gave her a hint.

The Abbé Louis Constant, under the pseudonym of Eliphas Lévi, had written several works on magic. He was a Kabbalist, and he professed to be an adept himself, "Magus." But Mr. Home came to Paris and quite eclipsed this magician with his marvels. Eliphas Lévi retaliated with a doctrine that he professed to find in the Kabala, the doctrine of shells.

"Nothing can enter heaven but that which comes from heaven. After death, therefore, the divine spirit which animated man returns alone to heaven, and leaves on earth and in the atmosphere two corpses, one terrestrial and elementary, the other airy and astral, one inert already, the other still quickened by the universal movement of the soul of the world, but destined to die slowly, absorbed by the astral powers that produced it."



Eliphas Lévi goes on to say that "It is these airy corpses that necromancy evokes." This bad half of the individual "seeks again the objects of his passions, torments the dreams of young girls—haunts the scenes of his old mundane pleasures" (Eliphas Lévi, "Dogme et Rituel de la Haute Magie," vol. i. p. 262).

Madame Blavatsky seized eagerly on this passage. At once it played havoc with the visions of her rivals, the Yogis, and swept away the whole army of the Pitris that the Hindoos believed in. Also it furnished a splendid stick for those wicked spiritualists of America who had snubbed her and accused her of cheating. But Madame Coulomb and Mr. Hodgson broke in upon her Indian day-dreams. Mr. Subba Row, the Sanskrit scholar, who helped her so much, discovered her fraud, and left the society. Mohini and B. J. Padshah "found," says Mr. Coleman, "bundles of blue and red pencils with which the Mahatma letters were written, also packs of Chinese envelopes, and bundles of Tibetan dresses for personating the Mahatmas." Another native, Babajee, made revelations. He confessed that Damodar and Madame Blavatsky exercised so complete an influence over him that he was obliged to attest all they told him. He saw the Russian lady write Mahatma letters, and was told that these great adepts would be very angry if he did not say that he had seen them. Damodar disappeared.

The shipwreck had come. What was Madame Blavatsky to do? She must appeal to the white faces once more. The Christian Kabalists were friendly towards the theosophists, but they wanted a God. "Be-ness" was not enough for them. But the Christian Kabalists were too small a body to support a large society. The hated spiritualists had to be courted, and the "shell" doctrine of Eliphas Lévi explained away.

But all this was wormwood to poor Mr. Sinnett. The god that was to be "regarded indifferently as space, duration, matter, or motion," seemed to be quite demolished, carrying with him the "shells" in his downfall. A plaintive wail from his lips appears in the *Theosophist* of September, 1893. It is entitled "Esoteric Teaching."

"After the publication of 'Esoteric Buddhism,' the great

adept who gave me the information wrote to me declaring explicitly that it constituted a correct exposition of his teaching. His words were:—"Be certain that, with the few undetectable mistakes and omissions notwithstanding, your "Esoteric Buddhism" is the only right exposition, however incomplete, of our occult doctrines. You have made no cardinal fundamental mistakes, and whatever may be given to you hereafter will not clash with a single sentence in your book, but on the contrary will explain away any seeming contradiction."

Mr. Sinnett announces that, now Madame Blavatsky is dead, he is allowed to reveal the fact that he has had several letters of the Mahatmas forwarded to him without the knowledge of Madame Blavatsky at all.

He also states that, when the documents were precipitated from Tibet, "Madame Blavatsky eagerly perused the letters I received in reply to my elaborate questions, assuring me constantly that the information they contained was almost as new to her as it was to me." Decidedly there was an element of comedy in Madame Blavatsky.

But a conspicuous illustration of this change of front is to be found in the "Talking Image of Urur." This clever little work is at once a farce and a dirge—the dirge of deluded years. Its author, Dr. Hartmann, was induced by his theosophical studies to travel from America to India; and he was one of the committee at Adyar during the Coulomb troubles. Dr. Hartmann is the most able champion of Madame Blavatsky's teaching, not excepting Mr. Sinnett. He has published works on Boehme, Paracelsus, the Rosicrucians, and other mystics. In all these works there is, perhaps, too strained an attempt to show that mediæval Kabbalism was derived from the adepts of Tibet, and too little attention to the converse proposition. What must have been the surprise of the Esoteric Lodge when the prophet suddenly exchanged fervent eulogy for fervent denunciation.

Pancho is a young man living in San Francisco. He is married to the beautiful Conchita. From his youth he had those indefinite yearnings after mystical knowledge that disturbed the early days of Boehme and Madame Guyon. Dr. Hartmann's story is in part biographical. Suddenly a

Mr. Puffer comes to San Francisco, and he reveals to Pancho a mighty mystery. In the centre of Africa, at a place called Urur, is the head-quarters of a "Society for the Distribution of Wisdom." This society is under the guidance of certain great adepts called the "Lunar Brothers." Dr. Hartmann points out that all his *dramatis personæ* are "composite photographs of still living people." The eloquence of the "still living" Mr. Puffer fires the imagination of the susceptible Pancho.

"I should consider myself extremely fortunate to become a member of your society and to attract the attention of the adepts," said Pancho.

"That is easy enough," replied Mr. Puffer. "All you have to do is to get a diploma from Captain Bumpkins. I will manage the matter for you."

"I am infinitely obliged to you," said Pancho. "But, to tell you the truth, I should like to look a little deeper into this business. I am very much interested in occultism, and I should like to become a Chela like yourself."

"Ah!" said Mr. Puffer. "That is quite another affair, and rather difficult. You will have to get a Master, whose orders you must implicitly obey, whatever these orders may be, and you may not even know who that Master is; for his orders will be communicated to you through Chelas or through the Talking Image."

"It is just this mysterious way of doing things that is most attractive to me," replied Pancho. "I do not think that they will ask anything unreasonable."

"Then you will have to swear a solemn oath," continued Mr. Puffer, "always to obey implicitly all the instructions given to you by a Chela as supposed to be coming from an unknown superior. Whatever your private opinions may be, you must hold up our views before the world and give all your time, money and labour gratuitously to the support of the S. D. W. You will swear that if any one should object to any opinion offered by Captain Bumpkins, or any other member of our society, you will not listen to it, but support our views on every occasion."

"I am willing to swear to anything you like," answered Pancho, "if I can gain my object; because I have full confidence in your honesty."

Mr. Puffer accompanied Pancho to the door, and as they were bidding each other good-bye, Pancho said :

"By-the-by, I almost forgot to ask you a question, which you may, perhaps, consider absurd. Do the adepts believe in God?"

"In *our* society," answered Mr. Puffer, "every man's belief is respected. If you choose to imagine that the moon is made of green cheese, there is no one to prevent you from believing it, any more than in God. No, they do not believe in such nonsense."

Pancho, however, has one terrible wrench. It is explained to him that the Chela must give up flesh meat and wine. Also he must leave the beautiful Conchita behind him. Adepts cannot have wives. After a great struggle he sends a letter to Mr. Puffer.

"I have no doubt," he said, receiving the letter, "that you will be accepted on probation, and now, as you have entered upon the path, I advise you to cease shaving or cutting your hair, because, in doing so, a great deal of magnetism is lost. Do not eat any meat. Eggs are permitted, but you must always first remove the dot from the yolk. The dot is the seat of life, and must not be destroyed."

Soon Pancho is on the deck of a large steamer, which by and by touches at Madagascar. In the distance are blue misty hills, which may, he thinks, be near Kakodumbola where the Brothers dwell. The steamer entered a harbour; and a boat with a flag bearing the letters S. D. W. (Society for the Distribution of Wisdom) came out to the ship.

The people from the boat of the S. D. W. came on board. They were members of that society, venerable Hottentots, Kaffirs, and Zulus, who gave a hearty welcome to our friends, and invited them into their boat to go ashore, where carriages were awaiting to take them further on to Urur.

They landed, and Pancho entered a carriage with one of the Zulus.

"I am exceedingly anxious to make the acquaintance of Captain Bumpkins," said Pancho, as they drove along the beach on the road to Urur.

"We hope," said the Zulu, after some hesitation, "that you will have some influence over him."

"How could I, a mere beginner, have any influence over

the Hierophant?" asked Pancho, astonished. "Is it not far more probable that I will have to sit at his feet and listen to his wisdom?"

"It is all very well," said the Zulu; "but speaking confidentially, I will tell you that Bumpkins has some little peculiarities, and that we have stood his nonsense long enough; even the Hottentots will stand it no longer. We do not want to be made the laughing-stock for small boys and servant girls; we can see no wisdom in that. He wants us to march through the streets of the city, each one to wear a badge and a little flag in his hand. He means well enough; but we will not stand his nonsense, we won't! We hope that you will persuade him to give it up, or there will be a mutiny. This is all that I am permitted to say."

Captain Bumpkins is plainly another of these "composite photographs." He is not to be seen when Pancho reaches the headquarters, but Madame Corneille and Malaban, a black man, receive him and a fellow traveller, Mr. Green.

"How long have you been a Chela?" asked Mr. Green.

"This I am not permitted to tell," answered Malaban.

Pancho was going to ask him a question, but Madame Corneille said: "Do not ask him anything if you would not get fibs for an answer."

"Do Chelas ever tell fibs?" asked Pancho.

"They do not mean to do so," answered Madame Corneille, "but they love the truth so much that they adorn it on every occasion."

"Where is the Hierophant?" asked Pancho.

"The what?—Oh, you mean Bumpkins, Captain Bumpkins," said Madame Corneille. "You will not see him to-night. Poor fellow! He has an awful toothache. He always sleeps at night with open windows, and caught a cold."

"But why does he do that?" asked Pancho.

"He says," she answered, grinning, "that it is to save the Mysterious Brothers the trouble to dematerialise themselves when they come to visit him in his dreams."

One thing is patent in this "Universal Brotherhood." The black members thoroughly hate and condemn the white brethren, and find quite a pleasure in deceiving them.

"O ye gods!" exclaimed Pancho; "is this the outcome

of the wisdom of the adepts? A Hierophant parading the streets with a little flag in his hand, a Talking Image attended by spooks; Chelas who cannot open their mouths without telling a fib. . . . Yes, is it for this that I have left my home?"

Thus talking with himself, Pancho wandered away from the main building, and came in the vicinity of a house of smaller dimensions. A light shining from an open window attracted his attention, and he beheld a man in the room where the light was brightly burning. He seemed to be about fifty years of age; but his face could not be clearly seen as it was bound up with a handkerchief. He held a paper in his hand, looking at it and making gesticulations. Presently, however, he looked up, and must have seen Pancho standing among the trees, for he dropped his paper and stared at him with surprise.

Then something curious happened. The man, making a reverential bow and crossing his hands in Oriental fashion over his breast, addressed Pancho in the following words:

"O great Krashibashi! Have I then at last found favour in your eyes? For many years have I wished to see you. At last my prayer now seems granted, and you have consented to appear in bodily form before your obedient servant. May I ask you to enter this humble room and accept a chair? I shall immediately open the door."

Captain Bumpkins had mistaken Pancho for the astral form of the great adept, Krashibashi.

As the story goes on, the picture given of the members of the Theosophical Society (all "composite photographs," observe) is by no means flattering.

"The Society for the D. O. W. had also among its members some persons of considerable spiritual unfolding and intellectual power; but the vast majority of its members were attracted by a desire to gratify their curiosity, and to obtain favours from the Mysterious Brotherhood."

Thus one oldish young lady wants the elixir of youth, another Chela the philosopher's stone.

"On this occasion Pancho's interior eyes were also open to an extent. Even without the aid of a magic mirror he could see that the Society for the Distribution of Wisdom was

not exactly what he had imagined it to be. He could see that there were few persons, if any, who cared anything for truth for its own sake, but only for the benefits that would arise from its possession. He knew that it was not only the desire of benefiting humanity that had caused him to come to Urur, but that he hoped to obtain knowledge in regard to certain mysterious things which might be useful to him, and he was aware that neither Mr. Green nor Mrs. Honeycomb would have come to Africa if they had not expected to profit by the visit."

Here is another passage :—

"While the enemies of the Society for the Distribution of Wisdom thus did their very best to make its name known all over the world, those who belonged to it spent all the power at their command to ruin still more effectually its reputation. There were many who, like Pancho, Mr. Green, and Mrs. Honeycomb, had not the faintest conception of what self-knowledge means, and who, nevertheless, imagined it to be their duty to enlighten the world about things which were entirely unknown to themselves. They mistook 'wisdom' for a belief in certain statements supposed to come from the Mysterious Brotherhood; and the rubbish published by them was often sufficiently intolerable to frighten away for ever any honest investigator. In fact the S. D. W. assumed an entirely sectarian character, and differed from other sects only in so far as it advocated more superstitions than the rest."

All this is very just no doubt, but who promulgated the doctrine that inner wisdom and the dogmatism of the Mahatmas were one and the same thing? The discipline of the Chela is sketched off by one who has been a Chela himself.

"Mr. Green," said Mrs. Honeycomb, "Master says you must not let any idea come into your head."

"Never!" solemnly acquiesced Mr. Green.

"Now go!" She ordered him off, and Mr. Green disappeared downstairs.

"What is he going to do?" inquired Pancho.

"We always make him sit every day for an hour or two and look at any fly speck on the wall," replied Mrs. Honey-



comb, "so that the Master can work his brain and get it into good shape to make it receptive. The poor fellow is very anxious to become clairvoyant."

"He seems to be very obedient."

"Oh, yes! He is easily managed. If we would tell him to jump overboard, he would do so unhesitatingly. He is used to obedience. He was educated by a Christian clergyman, who made him do lots of nonsensical things to train him to obey. For two years Mr. Green had every day carefully to water a walking-cane stuck into a flower-pot, although he knew well enough that it would never grow. It was merely done to get him into the habit of not using his reason."

"But why did you tell him not to let any idea get into his head?"

"Because," was the answer, "there is nothing more dangerous for a Chela than if he does his own thinking. He should never think, but always believe what we tell him."

"He seems to have excellent qualifications for Chelaship," said Pancho.

"Oh, yes!" answered Mrs. Honeycomb. "He is ready to believe anything, especially if it comes in a letter that is dropped on his head."

But on one occasion even Mr. Green was bewildered. Contradictory teachings came from the "Masters."

"But was not the document signed by one of the Brothers?" asked Mr. Green.

"That does not make any difference," said Bumpkins. "Accepted Chelas are authorised to sign the names of their Masters to any document they like."

I have pointed out that the atheism of Madame Blavatsky was palpably opportunism. She wished to make the Rajahs think that the Mahatmas made the world and ruled the forces of nature. Dr. Hartmann fully confirms me here.

"For thousands of years the heads of the scientists have been puzzled to find out *what causes the world to move*. Some thought that it was the law of gravitation, and others imagined that it was magnetism; but it is evident that such absurd theories offer no explanation of the mystery. Mr. Puffer now assures us that the motion of the earth around its axis is due to the supernatural and miraculous powers

possessed by a body of adepts who live in a desert in Africa, in the exact geographical centre of the surface of this planet. By the united effort of their combined and concentrated will-power they can produce the most astonishing effects not only in the atmosphere of this earth, but also in the body of the sun. The proof of this assertion may be seen in the sun spots, a phenomenon well known to our astronomers, and which may be easily explained by the fact that the adepts are *supplying the sun with electricity, to keep its photosphere clear*. If these adepts neglect their business the disk of the sun becomes as full of mouldy spots as a cheese. If they were to stop for one moment exercising their will-power, the sun would become as dark as a crow and *the earth would cease to move*.

. . . . .

"Our reporter asked Mr. Puffer how it came that there were occasionally famines in Africa if the adepts had the power to do such things. Mr. Puffer replied that he had presented this matter to their consideration, but that the adepts had no time to attend to such trifling matters, as their number was small and it was all they could do to *keep the world going*. They had something more important to do than to satisfy the greed of the paupers."

Students of "Esoteric Buddhism" will scarcely know whether to call this burlesque or plagiarism. One point about the adepts Mr. Sinnett has neglected.

"These adepts, of which Mr. Puffer, by a concatenation of fortunate circumstances, has become *an accepted Chela*, are in possession of untold wealth; and it is said that even the roofs of the houses in which they live are made of pure gold and set with rubies and diamonds, and they are not smoking any other but *genuine Havana cigars*."

What was the "talking image"? A mechanism, a puzzle, an echo.

If you were very wise it spoke the words of transcendental wisdom. If you were very foolish its words were quite different, sometimes even very improper. Does this mean that the talking image was a "composite photograph" of Madame Blavatsky and the "shrine" of Adyar?

There is a not very pleasant underplot where Conchita,

the abandoned wife, gets into the clutches of an unprincipled mesmeriser. She throws herself out of the window of a house of ill-fame to escape a worse fate, and dies.

The hero of the story at last determines to "do his own thinking":—

"Pancho, in consequence of his experiences, had become fully convinced that pure and unadulterated truth cannot be found in anything in this mundane sphere; but that there is likewise nothing which does not contain a certain spark of truth, of God, or eternal life; and that within the human organism this spark may be blown into a flame whose heat causes the heart to glow with divine love, and whose light illuminates the mind with divine wisdom. He was perfectly sure that this could not be accomplished by any external means or ceremonies; neither by holding one's breath, nor by believing in certain doctrines, nor by learning by heart all the books in the world, together with all the sayings of the sages; but that it must be accomplished by internal means."

The next passage also is a little remarkable, considering that it comes from the Holy of Holies of Theosophy, and is written by a gentleman who still writes F.T.S. after his name.

"Pancho remained at the house of his friend. He studied the Bible and the works of Theophrastus Paracelsus and Jacob Boehme—not merely by means of his rational intellect, but by entering into the spirit in which these books were written; and the deeper he entered into that spirit, the more did his mind become clear of metaphysical phantasms; and the cobwebs which the African sun could not remove from Pancho's brain, became removed by the light that began to dawn at the very centre of his own soul."

"One of old, representing personified eternal truth, is reported to have said, 'I am the light of the world. He who follows me, will find eternal life.' He does not say, 'Go to the Mysterious Brotherhood and learn what kind of a description they give about the light.'"

## CHAPTER XIV.

### THEOSOPHY TRUE AND FALSE.

THE title of this chapter, "Theosophy True and False," is not intended to set forth the absolute truth of either theosophy, but only to infer that when a group of thinkers selects a certain title for their teachings, and a second group borrows the title for teachings that seem diametrically opposed to these, the earlier group may be called the true theosophists. These were secret societies. They can be traced from early times, certainly from the appearance of Buddhism in Persia, 300 B.C., and I propose to show that these teachings are eminently Buddhist. These secret societies emerged more or less into the light about one hundred years before the Christian Era, in Palestine, Egypt, Greece, Persia. As Essenes they inoculated Mosaism, as Mithraists they secretly pervaded the great Roman empire. Experts have discovered the records of Mithraism in Arthur's Oon, and other British caves. Christianity was largely due to these Essenes and these Mithraists. Christ called his followers Children of Wisdom, as Buddha called his followers Sons of Dharma.

"But we speak the Wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world to our glory." (*ἀλλά λαλοῦμεν σοφίαν θεοῦ ἐν μυστηρίῳ.*) Here (1 Cor. ii. 7) St. Paul actually calls Christianity theosophy.

There is a doubt about when the name was first used, but we will take up our theosophists in the huge darkness of the Middle Ages when the Church had become corrupt. To the Jews and also to the Mussulmans we owe a debt of gratitude, for each harboured a group of secret societies which preserved a high idea of God, and a spirit of independent thought, amid strong persecution. More than that, these secret societies inoculated Christianity with

groups of secret independent thinkers, and the Reformation was one great outburst of these.

Two great streams of theosophists came down, both curiously impregnated with the higher Buddhism. These were the Kabalists and the Sufis.

What was the Kabala?

The Kabala is a book of magic, a book of lofty mysticism, a book of quite astounding pretensions.

It is said to have been dictated by God Himself to a "select company of angels who formed a theosophic school in Paradise." It was revealed to Adam, and then to Noah, to Abraham, to Moses. It was the secret wisdom of Israel handed orally down with immense precautions.

With greater plausibility it is asserted to have been a secret book of the Essenes and Therapeutæ, the section of Israel that derived their mysticism from contact with the Buddhist missionaries. It is said to have been in the hands of Jesus and his disciples.

St. Paul was a Kabalist. Origen and Clement of Alexandria were impregnated with Kabalistic teachings. And Philo and Josephus also plainly belonged to the school of Jewish mystics. But orthodox Israel were slaves of letter, the most abject of bibliolaters.

How could they have cherished a work whose main teaching is that the letter of the Old Testament must all be explained away?

Let us listen to the Kabala.

"Woe be to the son of man who says that the Tora contains common sayings and ordinary narratives. For if this were the case we might at the present day compose a code of doctrines from profane writings which should excite greater respect. If the Tora contains ordinary matter, then there are nobler sentiments in profane odes. But every word of the law has a sublime sense and a heavenly mystery. Now the spiritual angels had to put on a heavenly garment when they descended to earth. If they had not put on such a garment they could neither have remained nor been understood on the earth.

"It is for this reason that David prayed, 'Open thou mine eyes that I may see the wondrous things of thy law.'"

The Kabala is essentially a book of high mysticism.

Humanity is divided into four groups who can be detected by the clairvoyant. Their types of faces resemble the Chajoth, the man, lion, ox, and eagle of the vision of Ezekiel. To the highest group alone is vouchsafed the "Luminous Mirror," as distinguished from the "Non-Luminous Mirror," the "Tree of Life," as distinguished from the "Tree of Knowledge."

These are the words used for the soul growth, the illumination of the mystic. The well-used word "Grace" has also a meaning distinct from that of modern pulpits. It is the faculty of reading the mystical sense, not the literal sense of the Bible.

A second objection may be stated.

The Jews were stubborn unitarians, and quite hated the Trinity idea. The Zohar proclaims the Trinity of Philo, the Trinity of Buddhism.

It announces that for millions of millions of years En Soph (the boundless), the formless, passionless, inconceivable, inactive God, remained quiescent and solitary in chaos. Then by the aid of Sophia (the Buddhist Prajñā or Dharma) and the "Divine Man" (Purusha of India) were formed the worlds. This chaos is the *Ungrund*, the great "All" and the great "Nothing" of Boehme. It is the Yliaster, the *Limbus magnus* of Paracelsus.

Other points might be taken up. The Kabala has the doctrine of re-incarnation, but the re-births are restricted to three. This makes nonsense of the India Karma idea, and argues a foreign doctrine only half accepted. I show, too, in my "Buddhism in Christendom" (p. 87), that the ten Sephiroth of the Kabala are taken from the ten Paramitas of the Buddha. Both words mean attributes (*ὑποστάσεις*), but the ideas of divine attributes varied a little in Behar and Palestine. Where the Buddhists write down "Patience," "Charity," "Gnosis," the Jews prefer "Splendour," "Kingdom," "Beauty." The three major Sephiroth are absolutely the same as the three principal Paramitas.

En Soph whose image is a dot or point. This in Buddhism is Dhyani, and represents also the Isvara or inactive God, "He whose image is Sunyata (no image), who is like a cypher or point infinite unsustained in Nirvriti,"

cited by Hodgson (*"Lit. of Nepal,"* p. 77). Nirvritti is the Buthos of the Gnostics and Pravritti the Pleroma.

The second and third Sephiroth are "Intelligence" and "Wisdom," called also in the Kabala the "Father" and "Mother." These in Buddhism are "Upaya" and "Prajna," and in the two systems they symbolise the active bi-sexual God.

"The Anointed they call male-female," says Cyril of Jerusalem.

I now come to another point, the "Shells." Man is often compared to a worm. Is it anywhere stated in the Kabala that at death this worm is cut in half, and that two halves run about independently. Following in the wake of Madame Blavatsky and Eliphas Lévi, the theosophists loved to repeat this statement, until the extreme immorality of the teaching was exposed. An interesting paper by a gentleman named Leiningen was read in 1887 before the Psychological Society of Munich. He shows that, according to the Kabala, the individual at death is separated not into two, but four portions, which may (or may not) be called distinct beings.

1. Neschamah (spirit), which goes to the Briatic World, the abode of pure spirits.

2. Ruach (soul), which goes to the World of Formation (Jetsirah).

3. Nephesch (the lower principle), which for a long time remains in the World of Matter (Asiah), and sometimes hovers about not very far from the corpse.

4. "The Spirit of the Bones," which remains in the sepulchre until the resurrection.

This seems to give a colour to the nonsense of Eliphas Lévi at first sight, but the author points out that when this latter "Spirit of the Bones" is evoked, Nephesch, Ruach, and Neschamah are evoked likewise. The individual is practically still an individual in spite of the separation.

How did such a theory arise? I think it is a simple perversion of the Buddhist doctrine of the five Skandhas. This word may mean the "five bodies," the "five detachments of an army," the "five aggregations." Some Buddhists hold that the Skandhas are what the individual takes with him to each new birth. Some think they are that which



he leaves behind him. Burnouf calls them "intellectual attributes;" Goldstücker, "means of conception;" Judson, in his "Birman Dictionary," the "living animal;" Schröter, in his "Bhotanta Dictionary," the "five bodies."

Childers gives a noteworthy fact. It is held by the Buddhists that even after Nirvāṇa four of the five Skandhas still exist. Now, if we take up the Sanskrit word Skandha in its literal meaning, we see the closest analogy between the Buddhist and the Kabalist ideas. A living man may be described as an army of five detachments. At death, one of these, the material body, is destroyed, and the remaining four detachments march off to ghostland. We may call any one of these what we like, "Nephesh," or the Buddhist "Vinnāṇa," the vagueness of the Buddhist Skandha idea is in its favour. But the Jew was hampered by a teaching received from Persia that the soul remained with the gross atomic body in the sepulchre, until that body revived at the resurrection. Hence the absurdity of the Jewish version, but it is by no means as absurd as Eliphas Lévi would make it.

We now come to the Sufis. When Islam attacked the Buddhists, a curious result took place. Asia Minor and Egypt had long been the home of secret societies, the remnants of the Gnostics, the Neo-platonists, the Manichæans, and even of the Essenes or disciples of John; secret societies due to Buddhist propagandism. By the aid of these, half of Islam became Buddhists. Advantage was taken of the quarrel raging between the Sheāhs and Soonees. One sect of the latter, the Ghoollat, made a sort of Buddha of Ali, whose rank amongst the prophets was the chief bone of contention between the rival camps. Some of the Ghoollat affirmed that, by transmigration, the higher nature of Ali returned to earth. Others held that he sat enthroned in the clouds, and that the thunder was his voice. This was the earliest school of mystics in Islam, said by some to go back to the actual date of Ali. The Sebiin, another sect of mystics, proclaimed the Seven Great Imams, seven successive incarnations of the Supreme in mortal shape. This is plainly the Buddhist doctrine of the Seven Mortal Buddhas. The rites of initiation were very severe,

"According to his progress in 'the way,'" says M. Napoleon Ney ("Le Sociétés Secrètes Musulmanes," p. 14), "different names were given to the neophyte." He was first Talamid (disciple or servant), then Mourid (aspirant). He was then initiated, and became Fakir (beggar, Ebionite, the Buddhist Bhikshu). He was then Sufi (seer, according to M. Ney, but some trace the word to Sophia), then Salek ("walking" in the way), then Medjedoub ("drawn to God"). Each of these degrees can only be gained after successive ordeals.

There are two higher degrees reached by few:—Mohammedi (full of the spirit of the prophet) and Touhidi, "merged in the Divinity, Supreme Beatitude."

M. Ney goes on to say that this is plainly the Nirvâna of Buddhism.

Each sect had a "chain of gold," namely, a catalogue of saints reaching to the Angel Gabriel. This catalogue varied with each. It was recorded in the "Golden Legend." M. Ney shows that the Rosicrucians of the Freemasons come from Islam. I have pointed out that the Lotus of India became the rose of Western mysticism.

"What rose do you wear?" is the Shibboleth of the Sufi.

"I wear the rose of Mouley Taieb," is the proud answer; but the uninitiated are obliged to say, "I wear no rose at all; I am simply a servant of God." Initiation is called "taking the rose."

"In some societies," says M. Ney, "to 'receive the rose,' a noviciate of a thousand and one days is required, during which the aspirant is condemned to the meanest duties of the household, and to painful and degrading ordeals. In the hands of thy Sheikh thou shalt be as a corpse in the hands of those who wash dead bodies. God's own voice commands this." This reminds M. Ney of the *perinde ac cadaver* of the Jesuits.

It is difficult to detach the Kabalists from the Sufis in history. The word "Toledo!" was the great pass-word in the witches' Sabbaths in France. Michelet explains this by the fact that Toledo in Spain was the headquarters of the Jewish and also the Arabian schools of magic. It is plain that these "theosophists" differed *in toto* from the modern

school. They held that the *magnum opus*, the great soul awakening, must come from within, not from Mahatmas and Blavatskys. Through Martinez Pasquales and Kolmer they organised the *Illuminati* of the French revolution.

## CHAPTER XV.

### CEREMONIAL MAGIC.

IN Paris a fierce war is raging between the *spiritistes* and the *occultistes*. The *spiritistes* are *occultistes* in one sense of the word, for their study is the occult world. But the *occultistes* hold that the term occultism applies to certain secrets of magic that they alone possess. Thus, occultism, with one party, means the secrets of the next world, and occultism with the other party means certain secrets existing in this world.

The battle seems due to a work by M. Papus. It is entitled "*Traité Méthodique de Science Occulte*." This gentleman is the "President of the Independent Group of Esoteric Studies," and also the head, I believe, of the *martinistes*, a Kabalistic society, which goes back as far as Martinez Pasquales, and is announced to have had Saint Martin, Eliphas Lévi, and also the first Lord Lytton amongst its members.

M. Papus in this volume attacks the *spiritistes*. The main blot of their system is that, by neglecting the traditions of ceremonial magic, they render themselves liable to become a prey to the *elementaires* and the *coques astrales*. This seems at first sight a plagiarism from Madame Blavatsky, who also dealt in theories about *coques astrales*. But M. Papus is more hostile to the theosophists than he is towards the honest, but mistaken, *spiritistes*. He calls the former "*Bouddhistes d'Opera Comique*." Eliphas Lévi is the high priest of *occultisme*; and a somewhat ghastly photograph of *le Grand Occultiste Français*, as he appeared after death, is given as a frontispiece. The great occultist looks a little like Fagin the Jew after execution. M. Papus gives an account of a séance of the *spiritistes* of Marseilles. One lady was controlled by General Marceau, and gave a histrionic representation of his death. St. John

the Evangelist came likewise, and a much more solemn name was attached to one visitant. M. Papus laughs at the reincarnation theory, which makes a clerk in a bank believe that he is Voltaire come back to earth, or Napoleon; and quite floods modern society with Joans of Arcs, Marie Stuarts, Madames de Maintenon. Somehow it is only the pretty ghosts that seem to be eager to come back.

But the *spiritistes* quickly took up the gauntlet, and one of them under the pseudonym of "Rouzel" ("*Spiritisme et Occultisme*," p. 5) sketched the two systems:—

"Spiritism is a science which has for object the study of certain phenomena whose causes baffle the senses, and seem to contradict certain laws established more or less arbitrarily by conventional science.

"Spiritism is a *science*. That is its fundamental character. It distinguishes it on one side from the current religions which are based on authority, and on the other side from that science which leans on *a priori* principles to deduce consequences all more or less logical and all more or less false."

The writer goes on to describe the patient methods of the spiritistes, the Crookes, Wallaces, Gurneys; how they methodically observe occult phenomena, note down the facts, and make comparisons in a careful way. A flood of evidence has established, they maintain, the following results:—

1. The agents which produce these phenomena are the spirits of the dead.

2. The soul survives the body.

3. If the soul survives the body the conclusions of science that the soul is a resultant of the organism is disproved.

The author then proceeds to sketch occultism, but says that her definition is a far more difficult matter:—

"For a long time I have observed it move like a wavelet, contradict itself, change its name and its last teaching; 'Buddhist' yesterday, 'Magist' the day before, 'Occultist' to-day, now 'Kabalist,' now 'Zingari,' it is truly Proteus.

"Occultism like spiritism deals with those phenomena whose causes evade materialistic science. It professes to offer a solution—many solutions even—more satisfactory than ours. On that point the public shall be a judge.

"The method of the occultists is radically opposed to the method of the spiritists. This last is the experimental process, as we have shown. Occultism places authority above *Magister dixit*.

"There was a time, not very remote, when the occultists explained all the phenomena noted by Crookes and Wallace and Gurney by the intervention of certain beings called by them elementaries and elementals, to the absolute exclusion of spirits of the dead. Now they admit that these latter may come sometimes. Thus their 'authority' is certainly changeable."

Another answer to M. Papus comes from Italy. M. Palazzi has written a little work which in its French translation is called "*Les Occultistes Contemporains*." As M. Papus takes exclusively for an authority Eliphas Lévi, M. Palazzi gives quotations from his writings to show how contradictory these writings are:—

"Through the veil of all allegories hieratic and mystic, through the darkness and the grotesque ordeals of all the initiations, through the symbolism of ancient scriptures, in the ruins of Nineveh or Thebes, on the crumbling tablets of old temples, and on the blackened faces of the sphinxes of Assyria and Egypt, on the monstrous and also marvellous paintings that interpret the Vedas to the believers in India, in the strange emblems of our old books of alchemy, in the ceremonies of reception practised by all mystic societies we find the traces of a doctrine always the same and always studiously hidden" (Eliphas Lévi, "*Dogme et Rituel de la Haute Magie*," p. 63).

On the second page of the same book we read, says M. Palazzi:—

"The discovery of the great secrets of the religion and primitive science of the Magi . . . gives us the explanation of their miracles and prodigies.

"The greatest genius of the Catholics in modern times, Count Joseph de Maistre, foresaw this great event.

"'Newton,' he said, 'brings us back to Pythagoras; the analogy which exists between science and faith must sooner or later bring them together.'

"Sharing with the great man both his faith and hope,

we have dared to ransack the rubbish heaps of the old sanctuaries of occultism; we have asked of the secret doctrines of the Chaldeans, of the Egyptians, of the Hebrews, the secrets of the transfiguration of dogmas."

In his "*Histoire de la Magie*," p. 5, Eliphas Lévi writes also: "The key of knowledge has been abandoned to children, and as was to be expected, this *key is mislaid and as good as lost.*"

"Here already," says M. Palazzi, commenting on these passages, "in this confession of Eliphas Lévi is a complete proof that the occultists are not by an uninterrupted affiliation, nor even by continuous tradition, the exclusive retainers of the secret knowledge of the ancient initiations, and of the doctrine of the Magi. Their pretensions have no basis. Eliphas Lévi announces that he has 'dared' to place himself on the lost track, seeking in the darkness of initiations amongst the ruins of the old cities of the East a doctrine which he confesses was always *concealed with the greatest possible care.*"

This seems unanswerable; and the great French occultist seems to cut himself away still more completely from the past in another passage:—

"The Church, always inspired by the spirit of truth, found it necessary to proscribe under the terms 'magic,' 'manichæism,' 'illumism,' 'masonry,' all that was in any way connected with the primitive profanation of the mysteries."

The unprofaned mysteries, the French writer explains, came first from the true as distinguished from the false Zoroaster, and then were handed down first by the Egyptians in their hieroglyphic alphabet, then by Moses, then by the Zingari in their Tarot. The society to which he belonged was called the Martinistes, the chief French section of the Illuminati. The mysticism of this latter complex movement seems to have been mainly due to three individuals. The first was Martinez Pasquales, a mystic from Spain, who taught Saint Martin to evoke the dead. His followers called themselves "Philaléthes," and "Knights of the Holy City." At Avignon and Lyons they performed many marvels, including, it is said, much intercourse with the dead. The second founder was Schreöper whose evoca-



tions were famous in Germany, and so were those of the Count St. Germain, his pupil, who showed Louis XV. his decapitated son in a magic mirror. The third was Kolmer, who learnt his magical knowledge in the East. He is supposed to be Altotas, from whom Cagliostro derived, as he tells us, his magical knowledge. But Kolmer had a more important pupil, Wieshaupt, the great captain of the *Illuminati*. If Eliphas Lévi repudiates "illuminationism," "manichæism," and so on, he cuts himself completely from the past, for "illuminationism" was Sufism. And where did he get his doctrine of shells, for the Magists of the French Revolution seemed quite to live with the dead? There is a record of a famous banquet of twelve, of whom six were to be ghosts. It was a sort of test banquet, to which the *Podmores* of the *Illuminati* sent chosen delegates. The dead guests were the Duke of Choiseul, Voltaire, d'Alembert, Diderot, the Abbé de Voisenon, and Montesquieu.

"They talked," says M. de Canteleu ("*Sociétés Secrètes*," p. 180), "with a rare impudence, and spared no one, not even their own personality."

But magic has its secrets. This is quite true, but it gets these secrets from books open to the public, from the *Kabala*, and such works as "*The Magus*" of Frances Barrett. This gentleman was one of the real *Illuminati*, and the real Martinistes. His work, which appeared in 1801, gives the secrets of *Kabalistic* magic.

Many people have asked me why a good spirit is called an "astral" spirit, and its body an "astral" body, and so on. I have been unable to answer, but by the aid of Mr. Barrett I can do so now. Ceremonial magic plainly dates from the time when the ancients believed that each star was a god, the planets very great gods, the fixed stars very small gods. And the main object of ceremonial magic was to evoke and win the influence of these "astral" spirits, even in the *Kabalism* of the early century. Mr. Barrett shows that an advance had been made on the *Peripatetics* who held that there was only one spirit in each star. Each had its hierarchy, but the "intelligent president" alone could be summoned, the presidents of the seven planets being the most potent of all. These are the "Seven spirits round the throne of God," says Mr. Barrett.

But how are you to evoke one of these spirits, say the "intelligent president" of Saturn?

The first difficulty is to get his real name. Without that nothing can be done. And the process is by no means easy.

"This then is to be known," says Mr. Barrett (p. 73), "that the names of the intelligent presidents of every one of the planets are constituted after this manner, that is to say by collecting together the letters out of the figures of the world from the rising of the body of the planet, according to the succession of the signs through the several degrees from the aspects of the planet himself, the calculation being made from the degree of the ascendant."

Now as all this might be a little difficult to the tyro, we may let him know at once that the name of Saturn, deduced by this process, is "Oriphael."

But this is only a beginning. I will give a sketch of other necessary proceedings, promising that if any member of the Psychic Research Society is really anxious to "summon" the intelligent President of Saturn, he must go direct to Mr. Barrett.

First you must get a sword. It must be two-edged, says Mr. Barrett, quoting a passage attributed a little vaguely to "the prophets":—

"Take unto you two-edged swords."

You must have "two holy wax lights," a magic wand scored over with that six-pointed star that figures on all Madame Blavatsky's literature. It is called the "Seal of Solomon," and all readers of the "Arabian Nights" know that on one occasion it kept the Djinn in the jar. You must have a tripod "in which the perfumes are put, and may be either held in the hand or set in the earth." All "magical instruments" must be consecrated with "holy water," "holy oil," and "oderiferous suffumigations." Also you must be protected from evil spirits by the aid of a "pentacle." M. Papus defines this as a "synthetical tracery," which does not tell us much. It is a plate of metal with magical symbols scored upon it, the "Seal of Solomon," a "lamb slain," "the figure of the serpent hanging on the Cross," or some other sacred device.

But more important than all is the "Lamen." Trace on

brass, or virgin wax properly scented two circles from the same centre, leaving a space large enough to write the ten names of God in Hebrew, El, Eloshim, Elohe, Zebaoth, Elion, etc., between them. In the centre of the lamens draw a six-pointed star and place in it the name of the intelligent president, Oriphael in this case. Round the six-pointed star there must be four five-pointed stars irregularly drawn, if only one spirit is summoned, but a star for each of the minor spirits if several are invoked. Does not this business of a badly drawn star for each spirit go back to the times when savages thought the stars gods and drew badly and couldn't write at all?

The evocation of Kabalistic magic has been compared on one side to the Essene and Christian Sacramentum, and on the other to the rites of the *bona fide* Buddhist magician. Mr. Barrett tells us that in the Kabala a preliminary fast of forty days is pronounced necessary. The evoker must wear white linen and a white veil. The "table or altar" must be covered with a clean white linen cloth, and set towards the East. There must be wax lights and incense. Round all you must have a magic circle. "In the middle of the altar you must place lamens covered with fine white linen, which is not to be open until the days of consecration" ("The Kabala," p. 93). On the forehead of the evoker there must be a gold lamen. Eliphas Lévi adds a detail which Mr. Barrett has plainly omitted through inadvertence. Bread and wine is placed on the altar for the spirit ("Dogme," vol. ii. p. 187). The Buddhist necromancer evokes Vajra pâni, the "Wiêlder of the thunderbolt," with similar rites.

All this requires some comment. Each of the seven planets has a vast hierarchy of angels, as Mr. Barrett tells us, under the intelligent governor (p. 43). The distance of Saturn from the sun, according to our astronomers, is 893,955,000 miles.

It follows that when the two planets are whirling round on opposite sides to the sun there is a vast space between them.

Does it not seem *a priori* a rather strange arrangement that a ruler of a vast legion of angels should be obliged to leave his superintendence of them, and travel, say, one

billion two hundred and forty-three millions of miles every time that a *bon vivant* like Eliphas Lévi, suffering from the gout, scores a few Hebrew words on a lamén of virgin wax? This magic to the uninitiate is plainly a survival of early astronomical ignorance, when people thought that the earth was a large flat plane, the planets seven large lamps, the other stars small lamps, all fixed on to a solid dome; when they thought also that the stars were the astral bodies, each of a god. Even Mr. Barrett often confuses stars and angels in a hopeless manner.

But supposing that we have properly prepared our magic lamens and the real Oriphael comes to us, what have we gained? How can we be certain that he is not a wicked "shell" personating the intelligent governor of Saturn?

One tremendous answer is open to the occultists, but I do not know whether they would like to use it. These rites are the rites of *black magic*. A thin veneering of orthodoxy is used in some of the "invocations."

"In the name of the blessed Trinity I do *desire* thee, strong and mighty angel, named Oriphael, that if it be the divine will of him who is called Tebragrammaton, etc., thou take upon thee some shape as best becometh thy celestial nature and appear to us visibly in this place," and so on ("The Kabala," p. 93). But Mr. Barrett confesses that exactly the same lamén is used "for the invoking of all spirits whatever" (p. 95). By this hocus pocus, a "demon, whether good or bad, may be drawn out" (p. 62). He especially cautions us to go through the proper ceremony of "*licencing* the good angels to depart" after they have obeyed us in coming (p. 94). The circle is a prison, the Hebrew words bars, the food and drink a bait for the "good angel," the sword is there to frighten him. Imagine one of the "seven great angels that stand by the throne of God" alarmed at the aspect of the fat little Abbé Eliphas Lévi, holding in his hand a second-hand sword bought of an old clothes man.

We come upon another difficulty. The evocation of these astral spirits, these intelligent governors of the planets, was the crux of ceremonial magic in Mr. Barrett's day, when Martinez, the founder of the French Kabalists, was still alive. M. Papus is now their chief, and lo and behold!

these vast legions of starry gods have disappeared. Elementals and elementaries, he tells us ("Traité Methodique," p. 1047), are the only spirits that *occultisme* recognises. Can it be that *occultisme* is learning lessons from *spiritisme*? But the "Elementals" of M. Papus deserve a word, as Mr. Barrett believed in them likewise. There are four species of "invisible powers." "Some are fiery, some watery, some ærial, some terrestrial" (Barrett, "Ceremonial Magic," p. 43). He adduces as specimens of these elementals the Nereides that the old Greek sailors propitiated with milk, honey, and the flesh of goats, for calm voyages; the Dryades or spirits of trees; the spirits of the air, "that hold the four winds in the four corners of the earth"; the "boiling spirits," etc., etc. (p. 48). Plainly in Mr. Barrett's day the elementals were what they were in the days of Homer, intelligent beings, that could give to the world rain, warmth, precious metals, prosperous voyages. But M. Papus has backed out of all this likewise. He calls the elementals "esprits inconscients." Madame Blavatsky goes further. She tells us ("Theosophical Glossary," p. 112) that they are "rather forces of nature than ethereal men and women." This puzzles me. I doze on the seashore. A soft air fans my forehead. I look up. I may perhaps see a pretty Nereid breathing upon me. I may detect only a soft breeze. But I don't see how it can be rather more one than the other. Madame Blavatsky at one time professed to be the solitary person outside of Tibet who, by magical processes, could control these beings. Surely, if any one, she can tell us whether a certain elemental that she was ordering about was a soft Nereid or only a soft breeze.

But we have one proof more that occultism is not tradition but shifting guess-work, the "Elementaries." This word is unknown to Mr. Barrett, and seems to have been coined by Eliphas Lévi to describe the bad halves of dead mortals, *Coques astrales*. M. Papus affirms that the *incubi* and *succubi* are elementaries.

This contradicts the older theosophists, for these spirits, according to Paracelsus, are not dead mortals at all. An *incubus* is the same as an *Umbratilis*, a full-grown young woman, handsome and abominably wicked, that can be created by the male without the aid of the female in half

a minute. How she can become abominably wicked in that time is not explained.

On one very important point Mr. Barrett throws light. He has a chapter on the "method of raising evil spirits, and also the souls and shadows of the dead," in fact he views both evocations as black magic. A churchyard must be selected and the "bones of the dead" must be "perfumed with new blood, eggs, honey, oil, etc., and then the body and soul (not a *Coque astrale*) will obey the summons." This confirms me in what I have already suggested, that the Kabalists, like the Catholics, were astride of two conflicting eschatologies. The first taught that the saints were flying about everywhere, the second that their souls were with their bodies in the grave until the resurrection.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### A LAST CHAPTER.

THREE years ago I read this funny letter in a newspaper :—

"SIR,—I must apologise for trespassing on the valuable space in your paper; but being deeply interested in the subject, I should like to ask either you or any of your readers, and especially 'R. C.; F. T. S.,' whether it is a fact that two ladies drove through, or about, or round London in a hansom cab, with the cremated remains of Madame Blavatsky in an urn upon their knees. And if they did so, then why?  
GILDED COACH."

Another newspaper report was that these cremated remains were to be placed in four *stupas* of the pattern erected to Buddha. These stupas were to be in Europe, Asia, Africa, and America respectively. The death took place on May 8th, 1871, now called "White Lotus Day."

Whilst the ashes of this noteworthy old lady are waiting for their stupas let us say a last word over them, and make it as kindly as we can. The first point to be considered is this, and it is a very important one. From about the date of the Société Spirite in Cairo she seems to have been quite without means. Becky Sharp thought that with ten thousand a year she could have lived quite a "respectable" life. Perhaps with some such sum at her disposal Madame Blavatsky might have been a Madame Guyon. But when she adopted spiritism as a means of livelihood she started on an incline of polished ice. "Miracle Club," "Arya Samāj," "theosophy," the "occult business," the "materialising show business," each was "business." She had to live and help Colonel Olcott, who, through her, had lost a lucrative practice.

Fibs by a Russian or a Pole are not by any means viewed as fibs are viewed by a Frenchman, who in his turn admits



that the Englishman quite beats him in the matter of truthfulness.

"Yes, sir!" says one of Balzac's heroes, using English to emphasise a particularly solemn assurance.

If the career of a Madame Guyon had been open to Madame Blavatsky, it is probable that even then she might have a little embellished the narrative of her experiences, both inner and outer. It must be said in her favour too that she was not the originator of the teaching of occultism, that the main duty of man is to invent ingenious fibs to keep concealed certain pass-words and rites.

In the following passage Madame Coulomb seems to record a genuine conversation:—

"At this period, having satisfied myself that neither phenomenon or apparitions were genuine, I began to think more seriously on the matter, and finally one day I asked her why she did these things, to which she answered as follows: 'But do you know that you are a great "*Seccatura*?' What a bigot you are! Do not be afraid, I do no harm; but on the contrary, a great deal of good. See,' she added, 'Mr. Somebody, who for eight years was careless of his wife and child, by this means has been brought back to the fold, and now, as you see him, he cares for both; and, moreover, the same gentleman, who, before joining the society, was so proud and so hard with the natives, now shakes hands with them, and even remains in their company.' And she related to me many instances of good results from such foolish practices."

No doubt the relations between the black faces and the white in India are by no means satisfactory. Two rival Brahminisms are face to face. Madame Blavatsky really tried to make matters better, but she plunged into a vast difficulty like a "griff." She did an immense deal of harm, but we must credit her with good intentions. And when the members of the Theosophical Society freely subscribed their guineas the good old lady was generous. She wore an old dressing-gown, and supported quite an army of poor natives.

She did a surprising amount of work.

"While she was writing 'Isis Unveiled' at New York she would not leave her apartment for six months at a stretch. From early morning until very late at night she would sit at her table working. It was not an uncommon thing for her to be seventeen hours out of the twenty-four at her writing. Her only exercise was to go to the dining-room or bath-room and back again to her table. As she was then a large eater, the fat accumulated in great masses on her body.

"When 'Isis' was finished and we began to see ahead the certainty of our departure, she went one day with my sister and got herself weighed; she turned the scales at 245 lbs. (17 stone 7), and then announced that she meant to reduce herself to the proper weight for travelling, which she fixed at 156 lbs. (11 stone 2)."

One point I have kept purposely in the background, but I hear that the Psychical Research Society are about to bring it prominently forward. Letters have already been produced by that body, in which she seems to confess that at one period she led an immoral life. But, as Mr. Stead has truly remarked, if "Messalina" rises from her dead self, the point is in her favour.

"We might as well refuse to recognise what the psalms have done for mankind because of David's treacherous murder of Uriah."

Was she really a physical medium? The Psychic Research Society has answered No! with some emphasis. On the other hand, stories like this are going about. Colonel Olcott asserts positively, in his "Diary Leaves," that one day in America he and Madame Blavatsky and another lady were in a room together. This second lady was wearing a plain gold ring. Madame Blavatsky pressed her hand a moment, and the plain gold ring was covered with diamonds and other precious stones. A curious story this! If she could produce diamonds thus easily, why did she descend to Adyar "shrines" and Simla pic-nics?

She had the gift of "suggestion" and hypnotism beyond a doubt. I copy from *Light* an account of the conversion of Mrs. Besant:—

"From 1886 onwards, Mrs. Besant, being of an active nature, had noticed the current which was setting in the

direction of the new psychology. She had, indeed, investigated spiritualism, and was not satisfied with the spiritualistic hypothesis, and had finally convinced herself that there was some hidden thing, some hidden power, and resolved to seek until she found—yet the 'conversion' was as startling as it was sudden."

The account of this change we give in Mrs. Besant's own words. It is to be understood that she had been asked by Mr. Stead to review "*The Secret Doctrine*" for him:—

"Home I carried my burden and sat me down to read. As I turned over page after page the interest became absorbing; but how familiar it seemed; how my mind leapt forward to presage the conclusions; how natural it was, how coherent, how subtle, and yet how intelligible! I was dazzled, blinded, by the light in which disjointed facts were seen as parts of a mighty whole, and all my puzzles, riddles, problems, seemed to disappear. The effect was partially illusory in one sense, in that they all had to be slowly unravelled later, the brain gradually assimilating that which the swift intuition had grasped as truth. But the light had been seen, and in that flash of illumination I knew that the weary search was over and the very Truth was found."

Now this finding of the "very Truth" is of the exact nature of "conversion." In another form we meet with it constantly in religious tracts and biographies. Storm-tossed and weary, the excited sinner at last finds "peace," and henceforth knows that he too has found the "very truth," it may be in the materialistic creed of the conventicle, or it may be in the sensuous certainties of Catholicism. But henceforth there is no doubt, the "very truth" has been found. And the parallel goes on. Mrs. Besant met Madame Blavatsky as a result of her review of "*The Secret Doctrine*." There was some natural reluctance, of course, in leaving one "very truth" for another "very truth"; and so, breaking with her old friends, therefore, Mrs. Besant went again to Madame Blavatsky:—

"H. P. Blavatsky looked at me piercingly for a moment. 'Have you read the report about me of the Society for Psychical Research?' 'No; I never heard of it so far as I know.' 'Go and read it, and if, after reading it, you come back—well.' And nothing more would she say on the

subject, but branched off to her experiences in many lands.

"I borrowed a copy of the Report, read and re-read it. Quickly I saw how slender was the foundation on which the imposing structure was built; the continual assumptions on which conclusions were based; the incredible character of the allegations; and—most damning fact of all—the foul source from which the evidence was derived. Everything turned on the veracity of the Coulombs, and they were self-stamped as partners in the alleged frauds."

Here follows one of the most amazing passages ever written, and remember that it is written by a woman who had fought for years for the right of private judgment:—

"Could I put such against the frank, fearless nature that I had caught a glimpse of, against the proud fiery truthfulness that shone at me from the clear blue eyes, honest and fearless as those of a noble child?"

No reasoning here—simple surrender, that is all. But the account goes on:—

"Was the writer of 'The Secret Doctrine' this miserable impostor, this accomplice of tricksters, this foul and loathsome deceiver, this conjurer with trap-door and sliding panels? I laughed aloud at the absurdity and flung the Report aside with the righteous scorn of an honest nature that knew its own kin when it met them, and shrank from the foulness of a lie."

It is hardly necessary to say that Mrs. Besant immediately joined the Theosophical Society. H. P. B. soon afterwards put her hand on Mrs. Besant's head and said, "You are a noble woman. May Master bless you." This occurred on the 10th of May, 1889.

As in the case of Dr. Anna Kingsford, we have here a complete proof that the mystic develops from within. For years Mrs. Besant had been an unconscious Chela; and the crop of lofty mysticism that she carried away with her after her first interview with Madame Blavatsky had in reality been carried there. The Russian lady had little

more to do with her launch than the admiral's little daughter, who touches a button, and sends a ponderous fabric like H.M. battleship *Rodney* sliding down the grooves.

It is to be remembered also that, according to Colonel Olcott, there were two distinct beings in the red dressing-gown of Madame Blavatsky—a fibbing Russian lady and a mighty Mahatma. Plainly this latter was chiefly exhibited in the presence of Mrs. Besant. She certainly seemed to psychologise people.

"H. P. B." says Colonel Olcott, "made numberless friends, but often lost them again, and saw them turned into personal enemies. No one could be more fascinating than she when she chose, and she chose it when she wanted to draw persons to her public work. She would be caressing in tone and manner, and make the person feel that she regarded him as her best, if not her only friend. She would even write in the same tone, and I think I could name at least a dozen women who hold her letters saying that they are to be her successors in the T. S., and twice as many men, whom she declared her only *real* friends. I have a bushel of such certificates, and used to think them precious treasures, until after comparing notes with third parties, I found that they had been similarly encouraged. With ordinary persons like myself and her other associates, I should not say she was either loyal or staunch. We were to her, I believe, nothing more than the pawns in the game of chess, for whom she had no heart-deep love."

The following experience of an enthusiastic theosophist may throw some light here. "R. S." writes a letter to Madame Wachtmeister, published in that lady's "Reminiscences":—

"I was at a great distance from H. P. B. Madame Blavatsky died before I ever met her. I was accepted as a pupil;—no rules were laid down, no plan formulated. I continued my daily routine, and at night, after I fell into a deep sleep, the new life began. On waking in the morning . . . I would vividly remember that I had gone, as it were, to H. P. B. I had been received in rooms that I had described to those who lived with her, described even to the worn places and holes in the carpet."

From this astral H. P. B., "R. S." derived mighty truths. She was taught "the methods of motion," of vibration, of the formation of the world from the first nucleolus of "spirit moulding matter." She learnt that "motion was consciousness," and so on.

"A few days after Madame Blavatsky died, H. P. B. awoke me at midnight. She held my eyes with her leonine gaze. Then she grew thinner, taller, her shape became masculine. Slowly then her features changed, until a man of height and rugged powers stood before me."

Now, whatever "R. S." may be, it is evident that he (or she) is not an orthodox "theosophist," or he would have known that the dead Madame Blavatsky, being a wicked "shell," could not have preached mighty truths about motion, etc. But the letter shows the influences at work in theosophical circles.

We must remember, too, that on a public platform, Mrs. Besant announced solemnly, as a proof of the existence of the Mahatmas, that she had seen letters written in their well-known handwriting some time after Madame Blavatsky's death. But this utterance led to a quaint episode in the history of the Society.

Mrs. Besant discovered that a Mr. Judge in America had simulated the handwriting of the Mahatmas in these letters, and that all, except the "mental impression," were from him. Mrs. Besant at once, as head of the Society, summoned a great "Judicial Committee" to try Mr. Judge, who was charged with having "practised deception in sending false messages, orders, and letters, as if sent and written by the Mahatmas." The Judicial Committee met in London on the 20th July, 1894. According to one newspaper, Mrs. Besant presided, "dressed as a Mahatma," or, at any rate, as a native of India, with "white dress and white turban," although in what part of India females wear white turbans was not specified. "Mr. Judge raised a question of jurisdiction, and the Council of the Society has sustained his plea that, *even if guilty* of the misuse of the Mahatmas' names and handwriting, he was not amenable to an inquiry by the Judicial Committee, as the offence would have been committed by him as a private member and not in his official capacity. The Council had also passed a resolution

to the effect that a statement as to the truth or otherwise of at least one of the charges as formulated against Mr. Judge would involve a declaration on their part as to the existence or non-existence of the Mahatmas, and that would be a violation of the spirit of neutrality and the unsectarian nature and constitution of the Society."

Mrs. Besant is reported to have thus spoken:—

"I regard Mr. Judge as an occultist, possessed of considerable knowledge and animated by a deep and unswerving devotion to the Theosophical Society. I believe that he has often received direct messages from the Masters and from their Chelas, guiding and helping him in his work. I believe that he has sometimes received messages for other people in one or other of the ways that I will mention in a moment, but not by direct writing by the Master nor by his direct precipitation; and that Mr. Judge has then believed himself to be justified in writing down in the script adopted by H. P. B. for communications from the Master, the message psychically received, and in giving it to the person for whom it was intended, leaving that person to wrongly assume that it was a direct precipitation or writing by the Master himself—that is, that it was done *through* Mr. Judge, but done *by* the Master.

"Now personally I hold that this method is illegitimate, and that no one should simulate a recognised writing which is regarded as authoritative when it is authentic. And by authentic I mean directly written or precipitated by the Master himself. If a message is consciously written it should be so stated: if automatically written, it should be so stated. At least so it seems to me. It is important that the very small part generally played by the Masters in these phenomena should be understood, so that people may not receive messages as authoritative merely on the ground of their being in a particular script. Except in the very rarest instances, the Masters do not personally write letters or directly precipitate communications. Messages may be sent by them to those with whom they can communicate by external voice, or astral vision, or psychic word, or mental impression, or in other ways. If a person gets a message which he believes to be from the Master, for communication to anyone else, he is bound in honour not to



add to that message any extraneous circumstances which will add weight to it in the recipient's eyes. I believe that Mr. Judge wrote with his own hand, consciously or automatically I do not know, in the script adopted as that of the Master, messages which he received from the Master or from Chelas; and I know that, in my own case, I believed that the messages he gave me in the well-known script were messages directly precipitated or directly written by the Master. When I publicly said that I had received after H. P. Blavatsky's death letters in the writing H. P. Blavatsky had been accused of forging, I referred to letters given to me by Mr. Judge, and as they were in the well-known script I never dreamt of challenging their source. I know now that they were not written or precipitated by the Master, and that they were done by Mr. Judge, but I also believe that the gist of these messages was psychically received, and that Mr. Judge's error lay in giving them to me in a script written by himself and not saying that he had done so. I feel bound to refer to these letters thus explicitly, because, having been myself mistaken, I in turn misled the public."

Now all this may be satisfactory to Mr. Judge, but is it satisfactory to the Theosophical Society? The satire that we have quoted ("Talking Image of Urur," see ante., p. 190) from the pen of a gentleman that knows perhaps more about that society than any living being, made one special hit. This was that it was a leading maxim that a Chela must receive as a genuine document of the Mahatmas anything that any superior chose to write. And we know that the red pencils and Tibetan envelopes found amongst Madame Blavatsky's properties were so used by Damodar and others. But satire has now become sober fact, if the "mental impression" of A. and of B. is to be received as a genuine document of the Mahatmas. But these mental impressions differ considerably, as we have seen in the cases of Mr. Judge and Mr. Sinnett. How can we be certain which of the two gives us the "block of absolute truth"?

These Mahatmas have strangled the conscience and thought of theosophy. Perhaps the Judge trial was an effort to cast off the incubus.

Listen to this astounding passage in the "Diary Leaves" of Colonel Olcott:—

"I have been obliged to trace its evolution (that of the reincarnation theory) within our lines, at the risk of a small digression, as it was necessary for the future welfare of the society to show the apparent baselessness of the theory that our present grand block of teaching has been in H. P. B.'s profession since the beginning. To admit that would involve the necessity of conceding that she had knowingly and willingly lent herself to deception, and the teaching of untruth; in 'Isis'" (*Theosophist*, August, 1893).

This is the passage, and at once the splendid fabric of theosophy, the astral post offices, and the huge underground crypt libraries, seem to dissolve like a palace of ice in Russia before the first sunbeam of spring. The theory of Mr. Sinnett is logical enough. Madame Blavatsky was entrusted with the secret doctrine of the Mahatmas during her visit to Tibet in the year 1856, but a wise and far-seeing obscurantism made it necessary that her mission should at first be concealed by expedients, some honest, and some dishonest. On no other hypothesis, indeed, could her visit to Tibet, and the existence of the Mahatmas, be established. But Colonel Olcott has now dissipated all this. The colonel, though credulous, is believed by all to be thoroughly honest. He has given up a lucrative profession in the quest of higher ideals. In hot climates he has worked without rest, preaching, like Buddha, his Dharma in the bazaar. If any know the secrets of Madame Blavatsky, it ought to be the colonel, and now he assures us that she knew nothing of the Tibetan secret doctrine till she went with him to India. Then, when did the Tibetan Mahatma come in? The colonel would perhaps reply: At the date of the battle of Mentana, when the Tibetan Mahatma took possession of the body of a fibbing Russian lady. This is all very well, but this Mahatma first of all said that he was a spirit from the ghost world. He then announced that he was a Brother of Luxor. That he was a Tibetan Mahatma was only his third statement. According to the colonel, we have a Tibetan Mahatma fobbing off his ideas on a fibbing Russian lady. But may not the fibbing Russian lady have been one too many for him, and fobbed off her ideas on him?

THE END.



## APPENDIX No. I.

### THE MAHATMA AND THE "WESTMINSTER GAZETTE."

WHILST these sheets are passing through the press some singular details about the "mental impressions" of the Vice-President of the Theosophical Society, Mr. W. Q. Judge, have been given in a series of papers in the *Westminster Gazette*, commencing on October 29th. They were written by Mr. F. M. Garrett, whose facts are guaranteed by Mr. Walter R. Old (*Westminster Gazette*, November 9th), who was a member of the "Esoteric Section" when these transactions took place. It appears that the Mahatma (his name is Morya) wanted to displace Colonel Olcott from the post of President of the Theosophical Society. And so immediately after the death of Madame Blavatsky, Mr. Judge had a "mental impression" that he must post off to England, having wired from America:

"Do nothing 'till I come!"

His first step on arrival was to propose to Mrs. Besant that the Mahatmas should be consulted by placing a letter asking for their advice in a well-known cabinet in Madame Blavatsky's room.

"Mr. Judge took the letter out again. On his showing it to Mrs. Besant, judge of that lady's emotion at the discovery that at the end of the question stood the word 'Yes' traced apparently in red chalk."

Three days later the "Esoteric Section Council" met to decide how the section should in future be governed, its head being gone. Mr. Judge at once produced a plan "under which the council was to dissolve, and its powers to be delegated to Mrs. Besant and himself as 'Joint Outer Heads,' the Inner Heads being the Mahatmas."

Mrs. Besant was arranging her papers, when amongst them was discovered a little slip with the words:—"Judge's plan is right." This was written in red pencil, and sealed with a "Cryptograph M."

Plainly these words had again come as Mrs. Besant put it, "in what some would call a miraculous fashion." Soon more miracles occurred. Letters were found in gummed envelopes, in desks, in old letters, as in the old Blavatsky days; and Mrs. Besant felt justified in making her celebrated announcement.

Speaking in the Hall of Science on August 30, 1891, three months after Madame Blavatsky's death, she said :—

"You have known me in this hall for sixteen and a half years. You have never known me tell a lie. ('No, never,' and loud cheers.) I tell you that since Madame Blavatsky left I have had letters in the same handwriting as the letters which she received. Unless you think dead persons can write, surely that is a remarkable fact. You are surprised ; I do not ask you to believe me ; but I tell you it is so. All the evidence I had of the existence of Madame Blavatsky's teachers of the so-called abnormal powers came through her. It is not so now. Unless even sense can at the same time deceive me, unless a person can at the same time be sane and insane, I have exactly the same certainty for the truth of the statements I have made as I know that you are here. I refuse to be false to the knowledge of my intellect and the perceptions of my reasoning faculties."

But the work of the Mahatma was only half finished. Practically Mr. Judge and Mrs. Besant ruled the society, but Colonel Olcott was still the nominal head. It was necessary to force him to retire. The method adopted was so astounding, that unless a sober member of the "Esoteric Section" had confirmed the statement, I should have hesitated to record it. Mrs. Besant was informed that good old Colonel Olcott *wanted to poison her*. It is also positively asserted that she put off a journey through fear of such a catastrophe.

But a Mahatma may be too clever. A "precipitated" letter was sent to Colonel Olcott, with a very clear impression of the "Cryptograph M." The colonel opened his eyes. He recognised the impression of a brass seal which he himself had had made in the Punjab as "a playful present" for Madame Blavatsky. Further investigation disclosed that the paper of some of the missives was "the sort of tissue which is used to separate the sheets of typewriting transfer paper." At other times certain "Punjab paper," bought by Colonel Olcott, was detected. This and the "brass seal" were known to be amongst the late Russian lady's effects, and to these Mr. Judge had had access.

Here was a discovery ! The poor Mahatma, baffled, planned a great coup. A letter reached Colonel Olcott from "a Mr. Abbott Clark of Orange City, California, a gentleman who was under no sort of suspicion of having anything to do with Mahatmas." In this letter was an additional slip containing these words :—

"Judge is not the forger you think, and did not write 'Annie.' My seal is with me, and he has not seen it, but would like to. Both are doing right each in his own field. Yes, I have been training him and can use him, when he does not know, but he is so new it fades

but often as it may in this letter from an enthusiast \* \* \* it for you to know."

The asterisks represent a blur. The precipitated letter was in red chalk. It was signed with the "Cryptograph M," purposely smudged. And across it in black carbon were the words :—

"Facit per alium applies to the Lahore brass 'M.' It is not pencil."

But the best laid schemes of mice and Mahatmas oft "gang agley." Colonel Olcott had not bought the brass seal at Lahore at all, but at quite another place, and "writing to Mr. Clark, he discovered that Mr. Judge had spent two days in Orange county at the very date when the Master availed himself of Mr. Clark's envelope."

We need not go very far into the question whether the red pencil letters were really written by a Mahatma. It is enough that Mrs. Besant, Colonel Olcott, and other leading theosophists, believed that they had complete evidence of a fraud.

Says *The Westminster Gazette*, commenting on these revelations :—

"In general, if not yet in detail, the peculiar series of 'missives' which have been reproduced, and in some cases facsimiled, in *The Westminster Gazette*, are admitted; it is admitted, too, that this foundation of the Theosophical Society's inner fabric during the last few years has somewhere about it something rotten. Colonel Olcott's view, pointing at Mr. Judge, is recorded in his written evidence, which afforded the main gravamen of the articles; Mrs. Besant's view, pointing so far as it is intelligible in the same direction, is recorded in her adoption of that evidence at the published 'enquiry.' It is a queer enough spectacle to see Mrs. Besant, who regretted that her strict intellect could not accept miracles on the Christian evidence, greedily swallowing the 'precipitated' revelations of the Mahatma. But it is a queerer and a much sadder spectacle to find her, on the tardy discovery that she had been deceived, leading the way in a condemnation of the deception which makes her whole Church, as it were, a party to it. And that, even more flagrantly, has been the line of most of her followers who have yet spoken upon fuller knowledge. Here is a society which claims to be the recipient of a revelation from god-like beings, and the teacher to the world of a transcendently high system of ethics. Yet with one accord we now have them pleading that they do not care twopence half-penny whether the demi-gods, by whom they have solemnly sworn, do or do not exist, or exist only as jugglers, equal neither in culture nor in honesty to, say, the average Cheap-Jack: while the question as to whether their own principal officials are or are not utterly untrustworthy persons is dismissed as a matter of no moral importance. We are not ignoring the fact, which

has been made clear by many other correspondents besides Mr. Burrows, that this mental and moral flabbiness is not shared by all members of the society. Far from it. But as the official and the most ostentatious line taken, it is a notable feature. It illustrates how inevitably the miracle-seeking instinct of this and all similar epochs is linked with the moral crookedness of 'theosophy.'

It is difficult to gainsay this. Indeed, the low state of morality of the theosophists is evinced, as it seems to me, less by these transactions than by the comments on them, with which, in many letters, they have since flooded the newspapers. A document is written in red chalk, it is immaterial whether the name of the writer be Blavatsky or Damodar. It is fraudulently announced that this document is written by a Mahatma. But, if I repeat the statement, knowing it to be false, I am just as guilty as the writer. I may urge that, without the glamour of the Mahatmas and their miracles, a vast apparatus for the exposition of the fine mysticism of Boehme and Saint Martin would collapse. Theosophy is a Chinese cage whose bars are labelled "Slavery," "Gobemoucheerie," "Hocus-pocus," "Hush up!" This will be seen by a perusal of the "Rules and Pledges" of the "Probationer." I give them slightly condensed, on the authority of Professor Coues.

[COPY.]

*"Strictly private and confidential."*

"THE ESOTERIC SECTION OF THE T. S.

[Seal.]

"DEAR —, I forward you herewith a copy of the Rules and Pledges for the Probationers of the Esoteric Section T. S. Should you be unable to accept, then I request that you will return this to me without delay.

"H. P. BLAVATSKY.

"Rules of the Esoteric Section (Probationary) of the Theosophical Society.

\* \* \* \* \*

"2. Application for membership in the Esoteric Section must be accompanied by a copy of the pledge hereunto appended, *written out* and sealed by the Candidate, who thereupon enters upon a special period of probation, which commences from the date of the pledge.

"4. He who enters the Esoteric Section is as one newly born; his past—unless connected with crime, social or political, in which case he cannot be accepted—shall be regarded as never having had existence in respect of blame for actions committed.

"7. To preserve the unity of the Section, any person joining it expressly agrees that he shall be expelled, and the fact of his expulsion made public to all members of the Society, should he violate any one of the three following conditions :



"(a) Obedience to the Head of the Section in all Theosophical matters.

"(b) The secrecy of the signs and passwords.

"(c) The secrecy of the documents of the Section, and any communication from any Initiate of any degree, unless absolved by the head of the Section.

"PLEDGE OF PROBATIONERS OF THE ESOTERIC SECTION OF THE T. S.

"2. *I pledge myself to support before the world the Theosophical movement, its leaders, and its members, and in particular to obey, without cavil or delay, the orders of the Head of the Esoteric Section.*

"6. *I pledge myself to give what support I can to the Theosophical movement in time, money, and work.*

"7. *I pledge myself to preserve inviolable secrecy as regards the signs and passwords of the Section and all confidential documents. So help me my higher self.*

"Signed, \_\_\_\_\_

"The arrangements with regard to the Esoteric teaching which will be given to members of the Section will be communicated to them in due course."

## APPENDIX No. II.

### BLAVATSKYANA.

WHEN Madame Blavatsky first went to America (says Mrs. Hannah Wolff) she, for cheapness, put up at the "Working Woman's Home." She translated a book on Russia; changed the word "Russia" everywhere to "United States"; and she wanted to publish it as an original work written by her on America.

She took "haschish" at this time.

She claimed that photographs left in her drawer would become coloured.

"Isis Unveiled," according to Mr. Coleman, contains 2000 plagiarisms from "Christianity and Greek Thought," by B. T. Cocker; "Demonologia," by J. S. F.; "Plato and the Older Academy," by Zeller;

the "Philosophy of Magic," by Salverte; "Sod, the Son of Man," by S. F. Dunlop," and "over a hundred" other books. In a series of articles written in *The Golden Way* Mr. Coleman points out these plagiarisms.

According to the Countess of Wachtmeister, Madame Blavatsky, on one occasion being unable to obtain a match, elongated herself two or three feet and stretched up to the gas chandelier to light a cigarette.

The man Michalko (see *ante*, p. 26) was alive when, as a dead man, he was supposed to come to the Eddy séance.

Home, the medium, in a letter from Geneva, dated June 12, 1882, says that Madame Blavatsky was in Paris in 1858. "I took no interest in her, excepting a singular impression I had the first time I saw a young gentleman who has ever since been as a brother to me. He did not follow my advice. He was at that time her lover, and it was most repulsive to me that in order to attract attention she pretended to be a medium. My friend still thinks she is mediumistic, but he is also just as fully convinced that she is a cheat."

In "Isis Unveiled," Madame Blavatsky talks of "Christna," "Bhudda," and of two Sanskrit books called the "Bhagavad Gita" and the "Haripurana."

Schmiechen, the German artist, from sketches by Madame Blavatsky, produced two large oil paintings of "Koot Hoomi" and "Morya." Like the well-known presentment of "John King," they had black beards, and white turbans and white robes—rather a chilly costume for Tibet.

Experts have pronounced that the letters of the two Mahatmas and those of Madame Blavatsky are written in the same handwriting.

In *The Graphic* (American) of November 13th, 1874, Madame Blavatsky published "six statements" about her early life, which six statements in the *Banner of Light*, Feb. 17, 1877, she flatly contradicted: "I was not born in 1834; Ekaterinoslav cannot claim the illustrious honour of being my birth-place. M. Blavatsky was not seventy-three when he capped the climax of my terrestrial felicity," and so on. Was there an element of madness in the Russian lady?

She once saw Col. Olcott's astral body "oozing through the wall" of her bedroom.

On another occasion, as the colonel tells us, she created a pipe "out of nothing."

Mahatmas must be followed from distance to distance as the yokel follows the rainbow. Their home was first announced to be Egypt, then Malta, then Kashmir, then Tibet.

Col. Olcott's first guru was called "Serapis."

This is the colonel's letter to Dayānanda Sarasvatī :—

"Venerated Teacher,—A number of American and other students, who earnestly seek after spiritual knowledge, place themselves at your feet, and pray you to enlighten them."

All the Anglo-Indian officials that I have spoken to fully believe that in India Madame Blavatsky was in the secret service of Russia. The refugees of that nation in London tell the same story. They affirm that the Coulomb scandal caused her to be dismissed, and that, to recover her position, she courted Mrs. Besant, who was known to be in touch with Stepniak and Krapotkin. Mr. Newton, the first treasurer of the Theosophical Society, affirms that the journey to India was decided upon after an interview at the Russian Legation.

#### DÉNOŨMENT.

The great drama of theosophy has many surprises. Mr. W. Q. Judge has dethroned Mrs. Besant. It had been arranged, it seems, that she was to rule the Indian and English sections of the Theosophical Society; and now these tremendous words have come across the Atlantic, "I declare Mrs. Besant's headship at an end."

Three reasons are given by the Vice-President for this grave step—

1. Mrs. Besant has practised witchcraft and tried her weird spells, her "psychic experiments," on Mr. Judge and others.

2. Mrs. Besant has pronounced one of the letters of the Mahatma, which was precipitated in an orthodox manner and passed on to Mr. Sinnett, "a fraud by H. P. B. herself, made up entirely and not from the Master."

Says Mr. Judge with some acuteness: "If that letter be a fraud, then all the rest sent through our old teacher are the same."

3. Mrs. Besant, in league with a Hindu named Chakravarti and others, has quite flooded the society with documents from phantasmal Mahatmas and "black magicians."

"They had all sorts of letters sent me from India, with pretended messages from the Master."

Again :—

"The plot exists among the black magicians, who ever war against the white."

All this is sad, but was not also some of it inevitable? Let us suppose that there are really certain Dhyan Chohans in Tibet who made the Kosmos, rule it, and propose to instruct individual votaries by astral appearances and dream messages, all of which are to be received as infallible. Was it not quite certain that everyone would

soon have his private Mahatma, and that A would consider B's "Master" "black," not "white"? Was it not also probable that a Baphomet Sabbath would result, with its accusations of poisonings, spells, witchcraft, black magic? Mr. Judge proposes to dethrone the fine "old wisdom religion of India" as well as Mrs. Besant, its chief expounder. In America, a great Western school of magic is to be founded under the Mahatmas. They no longer "live in India."