

## FRAGMENTS OF OCCULT TRUTH.

## No. IV.

## THE EVOLUTION OF MAN.

BY A LAY CHELA.

An essay on so vast a topic as this can only be a very fragmentary "Fragment"; but an incomplete sketch may be found useful as a framework for speculation. It is one thing to ponder on the origin and destination of man without knowing more of the subject than can be gathered from the open page of Nature before us at any given moment: it is quite another to exercise the imaginative and reasoning faculties in filling up details, after the general design has been made intelligible. All ordinary theories concerning creation and the soul belong to speculations of the former order, and very poor, crude and inaccurate, do they seem, when referred to the broad outline of the facts as known to initiates of occult science.

Greatly more intelligent, within its domain, than religious metaphysics, ordinary science has made out a great deal concerning the evolution of Man's body. And even though its conclusions may be incomplete, they are not altogether wrong. It only errs seriously when it tries to deal with problems outside its proper domain, and fancies that the evolution of animal forms, and their gradual improvement may constitute the whole process which leads to the evolution of humanity; in other words that the intelligence with which humanity is now endowed is merely one of the phenomena of organic chemistry. However, in training modern thought to understand the principle of evolution, physical science has paved the way for explanations which occult science is at last conceding to the world. It has supplied a clue to the true method of investigating the results so unscientifically attributed by vulgar cosmogony to creation. It is difficult to say how far the habit of literally believing the statements of the Bible has really established in the Western mind the idea that God, in the beginning, performed some charm "with woven paces and with waving hands" and that the Earth sprang instantly into existence, furnished with trees and livestock, and ready in the course of the week for the habitation of a no less instantaneously created man. But even when orthodox theologians concede that the days of creation may be long periods of time, they certainly do not, as a rule, get rid of the notion that this Earth and all its inhabitants are the fruit of an act of creation worked out more or less deliberately, *within the limits of the world now before us*, either through laws especially designed to produce the results now perceived, or by a more workmanlike process with lumps of clay, spare ribs, or any other handy materials which a tangible and visible Creator might find lying about his premises.

Certainly physical science, again breaking in upon theological conceptions, disturbs orthodox speculation by pointing out that the earth was at one time a viscid globe of inorganic fiery matter, that further back still it was a ring of incandescent vapour thrown off from the sun, that further back still it was part merely of a vast fiery nebula like that which to this day may be observed in the constellation of Orion, and which the fine instruments of modern physical research have shown with approximate certainty to be actually in that state which reason had previously suggested that our own system must have been in once. But physical science does not go further than to suggest that theology must somehow reconcile its conceptions with these rudimentary facts. It fails to accomplish the reconciliation itself, and offers, for its own part, a theory so unsatisfactory in one direction—that of spiritual mysteries,—that only a small number of thinking men find themselves able to put up with it to the entire exclusion of theological hypotheses, unsatisfactory though these may be in the direction of physical mysteries.

Now occult science can and does bridge the gulf between science and religion. This is not the place to descant at length upon its methods of research. On that head a great deal has been published lately, and the reader may be referred to other writings in reference to opportunities that ordinary people have had for realising the fact that extraordinary persons, by the cultivation of faculties dormant in all, (and the existence of which all may prove for themselves if they are prepared to take the necessary trouble) have obtained the means of exploring regions of the universe inaccessible to the physical senses. By degrees such persons have acquired that enormous mass of knowledge concerning the operations of Nature over vast areas of space and time, which enable them to make positive statements concerning the character of the processes we are about to describe.

The first great fact which occult science presents to our notice in reference to the origin of man on this globe will be seen at a glance to help the imagination over some embarrassments of the familiar scientific idea of evolution. The evolution of man is not a process carried out on this planet alone. It is a result to which many worlds in different conditions of material and spiritual development have contributed. If this statement were merely put forward as a conjecture, it would surely recommend itself forcibly to rational minds. For there is a manifest irrationality in the common-place notion that man's existence is divided into a material beginning, lasting sixty or seventy years, and a spiritual remainder lasting for ever. The irrationality amounts to absurdity when it is alleged that the acts of the sixty or seventy years,—the blundering helpless acts of ignorant human life—are permitted by the perfect justice of an All-wise Providence to define the conditions of that later life of infinite duration. Nor is it less extravagant to imagine that apart from the question of justice, the life beyond the grave should be exempt from the law of change, progress and improvement, which every analogy of Nature points to as probably running through all the varied existences of the universe. But once abandon the idea of a uniform, unvarying, unprogressive life beyond the grave,—once admit the conception of change and progress in that life—and we admit the idea of a variety hardly compatible with any other hypothesis than that of progress through successive worlds. As we have said before, this is not hypothesis at all for occult science, but a fact, ascertained and verified beyond the reach (for occultists) of doubt or contradiction.

The life and evolutionary processes of this Planet in fact,—all which constitutes it something more than a dead lump of chaotic matter,—are linked with the life and evolutionary processes of several other planets. But let it not be supposed that there is no finality as regards the scheme of this planetary union to which we belong. The human imagination once set free is apt sometimes to bound too far. Once let this notion, that the earth is merely one link in a mighty chain of worlds, be fully accepted as probable, or true, and it may suggest the whole starry heavens are the heritage of the human family. That is so far from being the fact that it is almost infinitely far therefrom. One globe does not afford Nature scope for the processes by which mankind has been evoked from chaos, but these processes do not require more than a limited and definite number of globes. Separated as these are, in regard to the gross mechanical matter of which they consist, they are closely and intimately bound together by subtle currents and forces, whose existence reason need not be much troubled to concede since the existence of *some* connection,—of force as etherial media,—uniting all visible celestial bodies, is proved by the mere fact that they *are* visible. It is along these subtle currents that the life-elements pass from world to world.

The fact, however, will at once be liable to distortion to suit preconceived habits of mind. Some readers may imagine our meaning to be that after death the surviving soul will be drawn into the currents of that world with which its affinities connect it. The real process

is more methodical. The system of worlds is a circuit round which *all* individual spiritual entities have, alike, to pass; and that passage constitutes the Evolution of Man. For it must be realised, that the evolution of man is a process still going on, and by no means yet complete. Darwinian writings have taught the modern world to regard the ape as an ancestor, but the simple conceit of Western speculation has rarely permitted European evolutionists to look in the other direction and recognise the probability, that to our remote descendants we may be, as that unwelcome progenitor to us. And the two facts just declared hinge together. The higher evolution will be accomplished by our progress through the successive worlds of the system; and in higher forms we shall return to this earth again, and again, and again. But the avenues of thought through which we look forward to this prospect, are of almost inconceivable length.

It will readily be supposed that the chain of worlds to which this earth belongs are not all prepared for a material existence exactly, or even approximately resembling our own. There would be no meaning in an organised chain of worlds which were all alike, and might as well all have been amalgamated into one. In reality the worlds with which we are connected are very unlike each other, not merely in outward conditions, but in that supreme characteristic, the proportion in which,—spirit and matter,—are mingled in their constitution. Our own world presents us with conditions in which spirit and matter are, on the whole, evenly balanced in equilibrium. Let it not be supposed on that account that it is very highly elevated in the scale of perfection. On the contrary, it occupies a very low place in that scale. The worlds that are higher in the scale are those in which spirit largely predominates. There is another world attached to the chain rather than forming a part of it in which matter asserts itself even more decisively than on earth, but this may be spoken of later.

That the superior worlds which Man may come to inhabit in his onward progress should gradually become more and more spiritual in their constitution,—life there being more and more successfully divorced from gross material needs,—will seem reasonable enough at the first glance. But the first glance in imagination at those which might conversely be called the inferior, but may with less inaccuracy be spoken as the preceding worlds, would perhaps suggest that they ought to be conversely less spiritual,—more material, than this earth. The fact is quite the other way,—and must be so, it will be seen on reflection, in a chain of worlds which is an endless chain, *i.e.* round and round which the evolutionary process travels. If that process had merely one journey to travel along a path which never returned into itself, one could think of it, at any rate, as working from almost absolute matter, up to almost absolute spirit, but nature works always in complete curves, and travels always in paths which return into themselves. The earliest, as also the latest, developed worlds—for the chain itself has grown by degrees,—the furthest back as also the furthest forward are the most immaterial, the most ethereal of the whole series and that this is in all ways in accordance with the fitness of things will appear from the reflection that the furthest forward of the worlds is not a region of finality, but the stepping stone to the furthest back—as the month of December leads us back again to January. But it is not a climax of development from which the individual monad falls, as by a catastrophe, into the state from which he slowly began to ascend millions of years previously. From that which for reasons which will soon appear must be considered the highest world on the ascending arc of the circle to that which must be regarded as the first on the descending arc,—in one sense the lowest, *i.e.* in the order of development,—there is no descent at all, but still ascent and progress. For the spiritual monad or entity which has worked its way all round the cycle of evolution, at any one of the many stages of development into which

the various existences around us may be grouped, begins its next cycle at the next higher stage, and is thus still accomplishing progress as it passes from world Z back again to world A. Many times does it circle, in this way right round the system, but its passage round must not be thought of merely as a circular revolution in an orbit. In the scale of spiritual perfection it is constantly ascending. Thus if we compare the system of worlds to a system of towers standing on a plain,—towers each of many stories and symbolising the scale of perfection,—the spiritual monad performs a spiral progress round and round the series, passing through each tower, every time it comes round to it, at a higher level than before.

It is for want of realising this idea that speculation concerned with physical evolution is so constantly finding itself stopped by dead walls. It is searching for its missing links in a world where it can never find them now, for they were but required for a temporary purpose, and have passed away. Man, says the Darwinian, was once an ape. Quite true, but the ape known to the Darwinian will never become a man, *i.e.* the *form* will not change from generation to generation till the tail disappears and the hands turn into feet, and so on. Ordinary science avows that though changes of form can be detected in progress within the limits of species, the changes from species to species can only be inferred, and to account for these, it is content to assume great intervals of time and the extinction of the intermediate forms. There has been no doubt an extinction of the intermediate or earlier forms of all species, (in the larger acceptance of the word), *i.e.*, of all kingdoms, mineral, vegetable, animal, man, &c., but ordinary science can merely guess that to have been the fact without realising the conditions which rendered it inevitable, and which forbid the renewed generation of the intermediate forms.

It is the spiral character of the progress accomplished by the life impulses which develop the various kingdoms of Nature, which accounts for the gaps now observed in the animated forms which people the earth. The thread of a screw which is a uniform inclined plane in reality looks like a succession of steps when examined only along one line parallel to its axis. The spiritual monads which are coming round the system on the animal level pass on to other worlds when they have performed their turn of animal incarnation here. By the time they come again, they are ready for human incarnation, and there is no necessity now for the upward development of animal forms into human forms,—these are already waiting for their spiritual tenants. But if we go back far enough we come to a period at which there were no human forms ready developed on the earth, but when spiritual monads travelling on the earliest or lowest human level, were beginning to come round. Their onward pressure in a world at that time containing none but animal forms provoked the improvement of the highest of these into the required form,—the much-talked-of missing link.

In one way of looking at the matter it may be contended that this explanation is identical with the inference of the Darwinian evolutionist in regard to the development and extinction of missing links. After all, it may be argued by a materialist, “we are not concerned to express an opinion as to the origin of the tendency in species to develop higher forms. We say that they do develop these higher forms by intermediate links, and that the intermediate links die out; and you say just the same thing.” But there is a distinction between the two ideas for any one who can follow subtle distinctions. The natural process of evolution from the influence of local circumstances, and sexual selection must not be credited with producing intermediate forms, and this is why it is inevitable that the intermediate forms should be of a temporary nature and should die out. Otherwise we should find the world stocked with missing links of all kinds, animal life creeping by plainly apparent degrees up to manhood, human forms mingling in indistinguishable confusion with those of animals. The impulse to the new evolution of

higher forms is really given as we have shown by rushes of spiritual monads coming round the cycle in a state fit for the inhabitation of new forms. These superior life impulses burst the chrysalis of the older form on the planet they invade and throw off an efflorescence of something higher. The forms which have gone on merely repeating themselves for milleniums, start afresh, into growth; with relative rapidity they rise through the intermediate into the higher forms, and then as these in turn are multiplied with the vigour and rapidity of all new growths they supply tenements of flesh for the spiritual entities coming round on that stage or plane of existence, and for the intermediate forms there are no longer any tenants offering. Inevitably they become extinct.

Thus is evolution accomplished as regards its essential impulse by a *spiral progress* through the worlds. In the course of explaining this idea we have partly anticipated the declaration of another fact of first-rate importance as an aid to correct views of the world system to which we belong. That is that the tide of life,—the wave of existence,—the spiritual impulse call it by what name we please, passes on from planet to planet by rushes, or gushes; not by an even continuous flow. For the momentary purpose of illustrating the idea in hand the process may be compared to the filling of a series of holes or tubs sunk in the ground, such as may sometimes be seen at the mouths of feeble springs, and connected with each other by little surface channels. The stream from the spring as it flows is gathered up entirely in the beginning by the first hole, or tub A, and it is only when this is quite full that the continued in-pouring of water from the spring causes that which it already contains to overflow into tub B. This in turn fills and overflows along the channel which leads to tub C, and so on. Now, though, of course, a clumsy analogy of this kind will not carry us very far, it precisely illustrates the evolution of life on a chain of worlds like that we are attached to, and, indeed, the evolution of the worlds themselves. For the process which goes on does not involve the pre-existence of a chain of globes which nature proceeds to stock with life; but it is one in which the evolution of each globe is the result of previous evolutions, and the consequence of certain impulses thrown off from its predecessor in the superabundance of their development. Now it is necessary to deal with this characteristic of the process to be described, but directly we begin to deal with it we have to go back in imagination to a period in the development of our system very far antecedent to that which is specially our subject at present,—the evolution of man. And manifestly, as soon as we begin talking of the beginnings of worlds, we are dealing with phenomena which can have had very little to do with *life*, as we understand the matter, and, therefore, it may be supposed, nothing to do with life impulses. But let us go back by degrees. Behind the human harvest of the life impulse there lay the harvest of mere animal forms,—as every one realises. Behind that the harvest or growths of mere vegetable forms—for some of these undoubtedly preceded the appearance of the earliest animal life on the planet. Then before the vegetable organisations there were mineral organisations, for even a mineral is a product of Nature, an evolution from something behind it, as every imaginable manifestation of nature must be until in the vast series of manifestations, the mind travels back to the unmanifested beginning of all things. On pure metaphysics of that sort we are not now engaged. It is enough to show that we may as reasonably,—and that we must if we would talk about these matters at all—conceive of a life impulse giving birth to mineral forms, as if the same sort of impulse concerned to raise a race of apes into a race of rudimentary men. Indeed, occult science travels back even further in its exhaustive analysis of evolution, than the period at which minerals began to assume existence. In the process of developing worlds from fiery nebule Nature begins with something earlier than minerals—with the elemental forces that underlie the phenomena of

nature as visible now and perceptible to the senses of man. But that branch of the subject may be left alone for the present. Let us take up the process at the period when the first world of the series globe A, let us call it, is merely a congeries of mineral forms. Now it must be remembered that globe A has already been described as very much more ethereal, more predominated by spirit, as distinguished from matter, than the globe of which we at present are having personal experience, so that a large allowance must be made for that state of things when we ask the reader to think of it at starting as a mere congeries of mineral forms. Mineral forms may be mineral in the sense of not belonging to the higher forms of vegetable organism, and may yet be very immaterial as we think of matter very ethereal consisting of a very fine or subtle quality of matter, in which the other pole or characteristic of nature,—spirit,—largely predominates. The minerals we are trying to portray are, as it were, the ghosts of minerals, by no means the highly-finished and beautiful, hard crystals, which the mineralogical cabinets of this world supply. In these lower spirals of evolution with which we are now dealing as with the higher ones, there is progress from world to world, and that is the great point at which we have been aiming. There is progress downwards, so to speak, in finish and materiality and consistency; and then, again, progress upward in spirituality as coupled with the finish which matter, or materiality rendered possible in the first instance. It will be found that the process of evolution in its higher stages as regards man is carried on in exactly the same way. All through these studies, indeed, it will be found that one process of Nature typifies another, that the big is the repetition of the little on a larger scale.

It is manifest from what we have already said, and in order that the progress of organisms on globe A shall be accounted for, that the mineral kingdom will no more develop the vegetable kingdom on globe A until it receives an impulse from without, than the Earth was able to develop Man from the ape till it received an impulse from without. But it will be inconvenient at present to go back to a consideration of the impulses which operate on globe A in the beginning of the system's construction.

We have already,—in order to be able to advance more comfortably from a far later period than that to which we have now receded, gone back so far that further recession would change the whole character of this explanation. We must stop somewhere, and for the present it will be best to take the life impulses behind globe A, for granted. And having stopped there we may now treat the enormous period intervening between the mineral epoch on globe A and the man epoch, in a very cursory way, and so get back to the main problem before us. What has been already said facilitates a cursory treatment of the intervening evolution. The full development of the mineral epoch on globe A prepares the way for the vegetable development, and as soon as this begins, the mineral life impulse overflows into globe B. Then when the vegetable development on globe A is complete and the animal development begins, the vegetable life impulse overflows to globe B, and the mineral impulse passes on to globe C. Then, finally, comes the human life impulse on globe A.

Now it is necessary at this point to guard against one misconception that might arise. As just roughly described, the process might convey the idea that by the time the human impulse began on globe A, the mineral impulse was then beginning on globe D, and that beyond lay chaos. This is very far from being the case for two reasons. Firstly, as already stated, there are processes of evolution which precede the mineral evolution, and thus a wave of evolution,—indeed several waves of evolution precede the mineral wave in its progress round the spheres. But over and above this, there is a fact to be stated which has such an influence on the course of events. When it is realised,

it will be seen that the life impulse has passed several times completely round the whole chain of worlds before the commencement of the human impulse on globe A. This fact is as follows:—Each kingdom of evolution, vegetable, animal, and so on, is divided into several spiral layers. The spiritual monads,—the individual atoms of that immense life impulse of which so much has been said,—do not fully complete their mineral existence on globe A, then complete it on globe B, and so on. They pass several times round the whole circle as minerals; and then again several times round as vegetables, and several times as animals. We purposely refrain for the present from going into figures, because it is more convenient to state the outline of the scheme in general terms first, but figures in reference to these processes of Nature have now been given to the world by the occult adepts (for the first time we believe in its history), and they shall be brought out in the course of these essays before we have done, but as we say the outline is enough for anyone to think of at first.

And now we have rudimentary man beginning his existence on globe A, in that world where all things are as the ghosts of the corresponding things in this world. He is beginning his long descent into matter. And the life impulse of each "round" overflows, and the races of man are established in different degrees of perfection on all the planets,—on each in turn. But the Rounds are more complicated in their design than this explanation would show if it stopped short here. The process for each spiritual monad is not merely a passage from planet to planet. Within the limits of each planet, each time it arrives there it has a complicated process of evolution to perform. It is many times incarnated in successive races of man, before it passes onward, and it even has many incarnations in each great race. It will be found when we get on further that this fact throws a flood of light upon the actual condition of mankind as we know it, accounting for those immense differences of intellect and morality, and even of welfare in its highest sense, which generally appear so painfully mysterious.

That which has a definite beginning generally has an end also. As we have shown that the evolutionary process under description began when certain impulses first commenced their operation, so it may be inferred that they are tending towards a final consummation, towards a goal and a conclusion. That is so, though the goal is still far off. Man, as we know him on this earth, is but half way through the evolutionary process to which he owes his present development. He will be as much greater,—before the destiny of our system is accomplished,—than he is now, as he is now greater than the missing link. And that improvement will even be accomplished on this Earth, while, in the other worlds, of the ascending series, there are still loftier peaks of perfection to be scaled. It is utterly beyond the range of faculties untutored in the discernment of occult mysteries to imagine the kind of life, which Man will thus ultimately lead before the zenith of the great cycle is attained. But there is enough to be done in filling up the details of the outline now presented to the reader without attempting to forecast those which have to do with existences towards which evolution is reaching across the enormous abysses of the future.

A VERY INTERESTING INSTRUMENT, CALLED A PHOTOGRAPHIC GUN, has been invented by a Frenchman—M. Marrez. It is nothing more nor less than a very large revolver, with a stock to put to the shoulder. The barrel is, telescope, that is to say, it contains the lenses of a camera. There are twelve apertures, which take the place of chambers. The photographer puts a sensitised plate behind these apertures, and, performing an operation analogous to cocking a gun, the weapon is ready for the field. On seeing a flying bird, he takes aim, and pulls the trigger. The chamber revolves once and in one second he obtains twelve little pictures of the bird in various positions. —*The Indian Mirror.*

## THE BIRTH AND GROWTH OF THE PHILHARMONIC ACADEMY OF CALCUTTA.

(Communicated.)

A few months ago, a notice was published in the columns of the THEOSOPHIST, announcing the establishment of a Philharmonic Academy at Calcutta, under the presidency and management of Rajah Sourindra Mohan Tagore, Mus. Doc., C.I.E., &c., the well-known reviver and reformer of Hindu music. In order to understand precisely the necessity and objects of this institution, it would be necessary to review the progress that Hindu music has attained during the last twelve years under the fostering care and liberal patronage of the public-spirited Rajah. Hindu music, both as an art and a science, received the highest amount of development in the ancient days, and formed a powerful help to the *Rishis* and devotees in performing their rituals, and to the worldly people in seeking for the enjoyment of innocent amusements. Music was then, in fact, the hand-maid of religion. But, in course of time, it came to be made the concomitant of voluptuous pursuits, and what had been cultivated by the holy and pure for noble purposes, was eagerly sought for by the wicked and impure, and turned to an ignoble use. Latterly, it had become so degraded, that a respectable father would be shocked to hear his children cultivate this art. And the inevitable consequence was that it became associated with all that was vulgar and base. The cultivation of music received some impetus during the reign of the Moguls in India, and several renowned musicians are known to have flourished during that period. The Mahomedans, be it remembered, are prohibited by their religion to cultivate music, and consequently they had no music of their own. What they patronised was the music of the Aryan nations, and, as practical music, was all that they chiefly cared for—they considering the music to be an art meant to satisfy carnal cravings—the elaborate learned theory of music, as propounded and recorded by several distinguished sages of old, came to be lost sight of. The system of notation devised by the Aryan sages got out of use, and, in the absence of any definite system of musical notation, much of the intrinsic character and integrity of the *rāgs* and *rāginies* was lost in the course of the transit of the art from ear to ear to succeeding generations. The *rāgs* and *rāginies* were in hopeless confusion, each modern musician insisting upon the correctness of their features as learned or taught by him, and rejecting those taught by others as incorrect. With the spread of modern education in this country, a taste for the revival of Indian music grew in many a Hindu heart, but it was not till the movements initiated by Rajah Sourindra Mohan Tagore took a practical form that the revival might be said to have commenced.

Rajah Sourindra Mohan Tagore, who studied music under very able professors, found his favourite study in pretty much the same plight as has just been described, and it was his enlightened liberality of spirit and an enthusiastic love of Aryan lore that prompted him to undertake the enterprise, the result of which has been to him, as to all others interested in the revival of Aryan glory, a matter of such unqualified gratification. It was, on the 3rd August, 1871, that the Bengal Music School was established by the Rajah in the rooms of the Government Normal School, Calcutta, with the object of providing his countrymen with a course of musical instruction upon a systematic basis with the help of elementary books and with a system of notation devised by him—all prepared purposely for their use. This institution was visited from time to time by several Indian gentlemen, and European gentlemen and ladies interested in the art of music, and the encouraging remarks which they recorded in the visitors' book regarding the plan of tuition and the efficient management of the classes, prompted the Rajah to further exertions.

## DEATH AND IMMORTALITY.

[The following letter states an embarrassment which may very likely have occurred to other readers of the passages quoted, besides our correspondent.—Ed.]

## OCCULT FRAGMENTS AND THE BOOK OF KHIU-TE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "THEOSOPHIST."

In the article on "Death" by the late Eliphas Levi printed in the October number of the THEOSOPHIST, vol. III., page 13, the writer says that "to be immortal in good, one must identify oneself with God; to be immortal in evil, with Satan. These are the two poles of the world of Souls; *between these two poles vegetate and die without remembrance the useless portion of mankind.*" In your explanatory note on this passage you quote the book of Khiu-te, which says that "to force oneself upon the current of immortality, or rather to secure for oneself an *endless series of re-births as conscious individualities*, one must become a co-worker with nature, either for *good* or for *bad*, in her work of creation and reproduction or in that of destruction. It is but the *useless drones* which she gets rid of, violently ejecting them and making them perish by the millions as self-conscious entities. Thus while the good and pure strive to reach Nirvana, the wicked will seek, on the contrary, a series of lives as conscious, definite existences or beings, preferring to be ever suffering under the law of retributive justice rather than give up their lives as portions of the integral universal whole. Being well aware that they can never hope to reach the final rest in pure spirit or *Nirvana*, they cling to life in any form rather than give up that 'desire for life,' or *Tanha*, which causes a new aggregation of *Skandas*, or individuality to be re-born. . . . There are thoroughly wicked or depraved men, yet as highly intellectual and acutely *spiritual* for evil, as those who are spiritual for good. The *egos* of these may escape the law of final destruction or annihilation for ages to come. . . . Heat and cold are the two 'poles,' *i.e.*, good and evil, *spirit* and *matter*. Nature *spues* the 'lukewarm' or 'the useless portion of mankind' out of her mouth, *i.e.*, annihilates them." In the very same number in which these lines occur we have the "Fragments of Occult Truth," and we learn thence that there are seven entities or principles constituting a human being. When death occurs, the first three principles (*i.e.*, the body, the vital energy, and astral body) are dissipated; and with regard to the remaining four principles "one of two things occurs." If the Spiritual Ego (sixth principle) has been in life material in its tendencies, then at death it continues to cling blindly to the lower elements of its late combination, and the true spirit severs itself from these and passes away elsewhere, when the Spiritual Ego is also dissipated and ceases to exist. Under such circumstances only two entities (the fourth and fifth, *i.e.*, Kama Rupa and Physical Ego) are left, and the *shells* take long periods to disintegrate.

On the other hand, if the tendencies of the ego have been towards things spiritual, it will cling to the spirit, and with this pass into the adjoining *World of Effects*, and there evolve out of itself by the spirit's aid a new ego, to be re-born (after a brief period of freedom and enjoyment) in the next higher objective world of causes.

The "Fragments" teach that, apart from the cases of the higher adepts, there are two conditions:—*First*, that in which the Spirit is obliged to sever its connection; and, *secondly*, that in which the Spirit is able to continue its connection with the fourth, fifth and sixth principles. In either case the fourth and fifth principles are dissipated after a longer or a shorter period, and, in the case of the spiritual-minded, the Spiritual Ego undergoes a series of ascending births, while in the case of the depraved no Spiritual Ego remains and there is simply disintegration of the fourth and fifth principles after immense periods of time. The "Fragments" do not seem to admit of a third or

intermediary case which could explain the condition of Eliphas Levi's "useless portion" of mankind after death. It appears to me also that there could be only two cases—(1) either the spirit continues its connection, or (2) it severs its connection. What, then, is meant by the "useless portion of mankind" who, you suggest, are annihilated by the millions? Are they a combination of less than seven principles? That cannot be, for even the very wicked and depraved have them all. What, then, becomes of the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh principles in the case of the so-called "*useless portion of mankind*?"

The "Fragments" again tell us that, in the case of the wicked, the fourth and fifth principles are simply disintegrated after long ages, while in your above quoted note you say that the "wicked will seek a series of lives as conscious, definite existences or beings," and again in the note to the word "Hell" you write that it is "a world of nearly absolute *matter*, and one preceding the last one in the 'circle of necessity' from which there is no redemption, for there reigns *absolute darkness*." These two notes seem to suggest that, in the case of the depraved, the fourth and fifth principles are born again in inferior worlds and have a series of conscious existences.

The "Fragments" are admittedly the production of the "Brothers," and what I could gather from them after a careful perusal seems apparently not to accord with your notes quoted above. Evidently there is a gap somewhere, and, as the "useless portion of mankind" have been so far noticed, a more exhaustive explanation of them after the method of the seven principles is needed to make your otherwise learned note accord with the "Fragments." I might mention again that at every step the words "matter" and "spirit" confound the majority of your readers, and it is highly important and necessary that these two words be satisfactorily explained so that the average reader might understand wherein lies the difference between the two; what is meant by matter emanating from spirit, and whether spirit does not become limited to that extent by the emanation of matter therefrom.

Yours faithfully and fraternally,

N. D. K.,—, F.T.S.

\* \* The apparent discrepancy between the two statements, that our correspondent quotes, does not involve any real contradiction at all, nor is there a "gap" in the explanation. The confusion arises from the unfamiliarity of ordinary thinkers, unused to Occult ideas, with the distinction between the personal and individual entities in Man. Reference has been made to this distinction in modern Occult writing very frequently, and in *Isis* itself where the explanations of a hundred mysteries lie but half buried,—they were altogether buried in earlier works on Occult philosophy,—only waiting for the application of intelligence guided by a little Occult knowledge to come out into the light of day. When *Isis* was written, it was conceived by those,—from whom the impulse, which directed its preparation, came,—that the time was not ripe for the explicit declaration of a great many truths which they are now willing to impart in plain language. So the readers of that book were supplied rather with hints, sketches, and adumbrations of the philosophy to which it related, than with methodical expositions. Thus in reference to the present idea the difference between personal and individual identity is suggested, if not fully set forth at page 315, vol. I. There it is stated as the view of certain philosophers, with whom, it is easy to see, the writer concurs:—"Man and Soul had to conquer their immortality by ascending towards the Unity with which, if successful, they were finally linked. The individualisation of Man after death depended on the spirit, not on his soul and body. Although the word personality, in the sense in which it is usually understood, is an absurdity, if applied literally to our immortal essence, still the latter is a distinct entity, immortal and eternal *per se*." And a



little later on:—"A person may have won his immortal life, and remain the same *inner self* he was on earth throughout eternity, but this does not imply necessarily that he must remain the Mr. Smith or Mr. Brown he was on earth."

A full consideration of these ideas will solve the embarrassment in which our correspondent is placed. Eliphas Levi is talking about personalities—the "Fragments" about individualities. Now, as regards the personalities, the "useless portion of mankind" to which Eliphas Levi refers, is the great bulk thereof. The *permanent* preservation of a personal identity beyond death is a very rare achievement, accomplished only by those who wrest her secrets from Nature, and control their own super-material development. In his favourite symbolical way Eliphas Levi indicates the people who contrive to do this as those who are immortal in good by identification with God, or immortal in evil by identification with Satan. That is to say, the preservation of personal identity beyond death (or rather, let us say, far beyond death, reserving for the moment an explanation of the distinction) is accomplished only by adepts and sorcerers—the one class having acquired the supreme secret knowledge by holy methods, and with benevolent motives; the other having acquired it by unholy methods, and for base motives. But that which constitutes the inner self, the purer portions of the earthly personal soul united with the spiritual principles and constituting the essential individuality, is ensured a perpetuation of life in new births whether the person, whose earthly surroundings are its present habitat, becomes endued with the higher knowledge, or remains a plain ordinary man all his life.

This doctrine cannot be treated as one which falls in at once with the view of things entertained by people whose conceptions of immortality have been corrupted by the ignoble teaching of modern churches. Few exoteric religions ask their devotees to lift their imaginations above the conception that life beyond the grave is a sort of prolongation of life on this side of it. They are encouraged to believe that through "eternity," if they are good in this life, they will live on in some luxurious Heaven just as they would be living if transported to some distant country, miraculously protected there from disease and decay, and continuing for ever the "Mr. Smith or Mr. Brown" they may have been previous to emigration. The conception is just as absurd, when closely thought out, as the conception that for the merits or the sins of this brief life—but a moment in the course of eternity—they will be able to secure infinite bliss, or incur the utmost horrors of perpetual punishment. Ends and means, causes and effects, must be kept in due proportion to one another in the worlds of spirit as in the worlds of flesh. It is nonsense for a man who has not first rendered his personality something altogether abnormal to conceive that it can be rationally thought of as surviving *for ever*. It would be folly to wish even that it could be so perpetuated, for, how could human beings of ignoble, miserable life, whose personality is merely a congeries of wretched and sordid memories, be happy in finding their misery stereotyped for all coming time, and in perpetual contrast with the superior personalities of other such stereotypes. The memory of every personal life, indeed, is imperishably preserved in the mysterious records of each existence, and the immortal individual spiritual entity will one day,—but in a future so remote that it is hardly worth thinking about much at present,—be able to look back upon it, as upon one of the pages in the vast book of lives which he will by that time have compiled. But let us come back from these very transcendental reflections to the destinies more immediately impending over the great majority of us whom Eliphas Levi so uncivilly speaks of as "the useless portion of mankind"—useless only, be it remembered, as regards our special present congeries of earthly circumstances—not as regards the *inner-self* which is destined to active enjoyment of life and experience very

often in the future among better circumstances, both on this earth and in superior planets.

Now, most people will be but too apt to feel that unsatisfactory as the circumstances may be, which constitute their present personalities, these are after all *themselves*—"a poor thing, Sir, but mine own,"—and that the inner spiritual monads, of which they are but very dimly conscious, by the time they are united with entirely different sets of circumstances in new births, will be other people altogether in whose fate they cannot take any interest. In truth when the time comes they will find the fate of those people profoundly interesting, as much so as they find their own fates now. But passing over this branch of the subject, there is still some consolation for weak brethren who find the notion of quitting their present personality at the end of their present lives too gloomy to be borne. Eliphas Levi's exposition of the doctrine is a very brief one,—as regards the passage quoted—and it passes over a great deal which, from the point of view we are now engaged with, is of very great importance. In talking about immortality the great Occultist is thinking of the vast stretches of time over which the personality of the adept and the sorcerer may be made to extend. When he speaks of annihilation after this life, he ignores a certain interval, which may perhaps be not worth considering in reference to the enormous whole of existence, but which none the less is very well worth the attention of people who cling to the little fragment of their life experience which embodies the personality of which we have been talking.

It has been explained, in more than one paper published in this magazine during the last few months, that the passage of the spiritual monad into a re-birth does not immediately follow its release from the fleshly body last inhabited here. In the *Kama-loka*, or atmosphere of this earth, the separation of the two groups of ethereal principles takes place, and in the vast majority of cases in which the late personality,—the fifth principle yields up something which is susceptible of perpetuation and of union with the sixth,—the spiritual monad thus retaining consciousness of its late personality for the time being passes into the state described as *Devachan*, where it leads, for very long periods indeed as compared with those of life on this earth, an existence of the most unalloyed satisfaction and conscious enjoyment. Of course this state is not one of activity nor of exciting contrasts between pain and pleasure, pursuit and achievement, like the state of physical life, but it is one in which the personality of which we are speaking is perpetuated, as far as that is compatible with the non-perpetuation of that which has been painful in its experience. It is from this state that the spiritual monad is re-born into the next active life, and from the date of that re-birth the old personality is done with. But for any imagination, which finds the conception of re-birth and new personality uncomfortable, the doctrine of *Devachan*—and these "doctrines," be it remembered, are statements of scientific fact which Adepts have ascertained to be as real as the stars though as far out of reach for most of us,—the doctrine of *Devachan*, we say, will furnish people who cannot give up their earth life memories all at once,—with a soft place to fall upon.

#### THE "THEOSOPHISTS" IMAGE IN THE "MIRROR."

From a very long and kindly appreciative notice of our magazine, which appeared in the *Indian Mirror* of 29th August, and for which the Editor has our warm thanks, we are tempted to quote the following paragraphs, as they serve as an answer to the hostile writers of England and America, who have been exulting over the supposed loss by our Society of the esteem and affection of the Hindus:—

"One of the most interesting journals of the day, which has an especial interest for Hindus who feel a real love for their country, its religion, literature, and sciences, is the

the grasp of the finite and the conditioned"—is it not far more honest to confess that we know absolutely nothing of that God, and even less blasphemous—in the very improbable case that such a God should exist and yet remain unknown to all and absolutely beyond any possible human proof—than to go on investing it or him with imaginary attributes (*finite* attributes in something *infinite* ! ) and then imposing that being, created by human fancy, on the millions of the *oi polloi* and threaten them with hell and damnation unless they *do* believe in that something of which no one can know absolutely anything !—(Editor *pro tem*.)

### "M. A. (OXON)" AND THE "BROTHERS."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "THEOSOPHIST."

DEAR MADAME AND SISTER,

We, some of the Hindu Fellows of the Theosophical Society and *Chelas* who read "Light," have remarked, with feelings of deep regret and surprise, the hostile attitude that one of its best contributors, and, as we had reasons to believe, one of our Christian brothers—"M. A. (Oxon)"\*—has, for some time past, taken up against our MASTERS, "THE ADEPT-BROTHERS" as he chooses to call them, in his "NOTES BY THE WAY," which have won our greatest esteem and sympathy by their able advocacy of things spiritual in these hard materialistic days. We Hindus are taught in our *Shastras* that even tolerably advanced students of Occult Philosophy are liable to be deceived by *deras* or *devatas* (elemental spirits), and this affords the only explanation of the great inconsistency in the visions of different mediums and seers. TRUTH can be but one, and these apparent divergences are but disturbing effects produced by these elementals; and one of the principal objects of all Occultists is to train the WILL in such a manner as to be able to withstand the disturbing influence of these weird visitors, and to come face to face with living truth. As for our brother "M. A. (Oxon)," since he is known as a great medium, as such his WILL-POWER must be perfectly passive, and so we can easily understand how much more, than any other Spiritualist, is he subject to all sorts of disturbing influences. This is the reason why only repeated acts of gross injustice to our MASTERS (the Himalayan BROTHERS) on the part of "M. A. (Oxon)"—has induced us to put in this word of Protest.

In "Light" of September 23, "M. A. (Oxon)" quotes with approbation, from the review of Mr. Sinnett's *The Occult World* in the *Journal of Science*, the following words:—

"Till some foot-hold of this kind is given us, it is useless to bid us join the Theosophical Society or change our 'mode of life.' Teachings, so indefinite, we are compelled to reject, not indeed 'superciliously' but sadly."

And, a few lines before, he says *in personâ propria*:—

"But, after all, it is the creation of crockery and the displacement of furniture that make most impression on the average Philistine."

Here we must confess, to no small surprise, to discover "the average Philistine" under the mask of "M. A. (Oxon)." For the value of the teaching is here made to depend on the strangeness of the phenomena and not on the peculiar character of them. But to the *really* scientific mind a straw is not merely a straw when it shows the way the wind blows. But, as for a Peter Bell, of course:—

A primrose by a river's brim

A yellow primrose is to him

And 'tis nothing more . . . .

If Benjamin Franklin waited for some such foot-hold before drawing his conclusions, the Science of Electricity would have still been in its infancy. But, as we said

before, we have nothing to complain against "M. A. (Oxon)" personally, for he is a medium and sees things but through a glass darkly.

Mohini M. Chatterji, F.T.S.

Rama Sourindro Gargya, F.T.S.

Nobin K. Banerjee, F.T.S.

S. Ramaswamier, F.T.S.

Darbhagiri Nath, F.T.S.

CHELAS WHO  
KNOW THEIR  
MASTERS.

Darjeeling, October 17, 1882.

### FRAGMENTS OF OCCULT TRUTH.

No. V.

THE EVOLUTION OF MAN—CONTINUED.

When we come to examine the evolution of man on our own planet, the explanation has to be drawn out on a larger scale than that which served for a sketch of the whole cosmogony. Our career on the preceding planets of the descending series is for the present over and done with. Few of us know enough of our lives there to be curious about details. But here, the phenomena of the world about us, and the period we are passing through, are all replete with interest. Our wish would be to get explanations of the conditions out of which these have originated, and of the results to which they are tending, that should be as enlarged and precise as our knowledge of the actual present. But in truth an explanation on that scale of the phenomena immediately preceding and immediately following our present life, would require an exhaustive knowledge of all natural laws and operations lying outside the physical group we have grown familiar with. And the exposition of this knowledge would involve the complete development of sciences the very alphabet of which is hidden from the world as yet. In short, it is no less impossible to comprehend all Nature's detail—the infinitely little—completely, as it is to fathom the infinitely great. But just as the principles of evolution carried on through the series of worlds, of which our planet is one, have been found susceptible of an explanation which, if not minute, is sufficiently definite to be intelligible, so it is possible now to sketch the process of evolution carried on in the case of this single planet. The area of nature to be dealt with is less enormous, and therefore a treatment of its phenomena, down to a corresponding level of detail, gives us a closer insight into the process under investigation.

And a striking illustration of the uniformities of Nature is brought out by the first glance at the Occult doctrine in reference to the development of Man on the Earth. The outline of the design is the same as the outline of the more comprehensive design covering the whole chain of worlds. The inner details of this world, as regards its units of construction, are the same as the inner details of the larger organism of which this world itself is a unit. That is to say, the development of humanity on this earth is accomplished by means of successive waves of development, which correspond to the successive worlds in the great planetary chain. The great tide of human life, be it remembered,—for that has been already set forth—sweeps round the whole circle of worlds in successive waves. These primary growths of humanity may be conveniently spoken of as Rounds. We must not forget that the individual units, constituting each round in turn, are identically the same as regards their higher principles, that is, that the individualities on the earth during Round 1, come back again after completing their travels round the whole series of worlds and constitute round 2, and so on. But the point to which special attention should be drawn here is that the individual unit having arrived at any given planet of the series, in the course of any given Round, does not merely touch that planet and pass on to the next. Before passing on, he has to live through a series of races on that planet. And this fact suggests the outline of the fabric which will presently

\* "M. A. (Oxon)" was a Theosophist since the very formation of the Society; and he has never resigned. Nevertheless, we have reasons to doubt, to our great regret, whether he could or even would consent to being regarded as a Theosophist at present.—Ed.

develop itself in the reader's mind and exhibit that similarity of design on the part of the one world as compared with the whole series to which attention has already been drawn. As the complete scheme of Nature that we belong to, is worked out by means of a series of Rounds sweeping through all the worlds, so the development of humanity on each world is worked out by a series of races developed within the limits of each world in turn.

It is time now to make the working of this law clearer by coming to the actual figures which have to do with the evolution of our doctrine. It would have been premature to begin with them, but as soon as the idea of a system of worlds in a chain, and of life evolution on each through a series of re-births, is satisfactorily grasped, the further examination of the laws at work will be greatly facilitated by precise reference to the actual number of worlds and the actual number of rounds and races, required to accomplish the whole purpose of the system. For the whole duration of the system is as certainly limited in time, be it remembered, as the life of a single man. Probably *not* limited to any definite number of years set irrevocably from the commencement, but that which has a beginning, progresses onward towards an end. The life of a man, leaving accidents quite out of the account, is a terminable period, and the life of a world system leads up to a final consummation. The vast-periods of time, concerned in the life of a world system, dazzle the imagination as a rule but still they are measurable: they are divisible into sub-periods of various kinds, and these have a definite number.

By what prophetic instinct Shakespear pitched upon seven as the number which suited his fantastic classification of the ages of man is a question with which we need not be much concerned, but certain it is that he could not have made a more felicitous choice. In periods of sevens the evolution of the races of man may be traced and the actual number of the objective worlds, which constitute our system and of which the earth is one, is seven also. Remember the Occult Scientists know this as a fact, just as the Physical Scientists know for a fact that the spectrum consists of seven colours, and the musical scale of seven tones. There are seven kingdoms of nature, not three as modern science has imperfectly classified them. Man belongs to a kingdom distinctly separate from that of the animals, including beings in a higher state of organization than that which manhood has familiarised us with, as yet; and below the mineral kingdom there are three others which science in the West knows nothing about; but this branch of the subject may be set aside for the present. It is mentioned merely to show the regular descent of the division, in Nature.

Man—returning to the kingdom we are most interested in—is evolved in a series of Rounds (progressions round the series of worlds) and seven of these rounds have to be accomplished before the destinies of our system are worked out. The round which is at present going on is the fourth. There are considerations of the utmost possible interest connected with precise knowledge on these points, because each Round is as it were specially allotted to the predominance of one of the seven principles in man, and in the regular order of their upward gradation. But here again is a realm of inquiry that for the present can only be glanced at.

An individual unit, arriving on a planet for the first time in the course of a round, has to work through seven races on that planet before he passes on to the next, and each of those races occupies the earth for a long time. Our old-fashioned speculations about time and eternity, suggested by the misty religious systems of the West, have brought on a curious habit of mind in connection with problems bearing on the actual duration of such periods. We can talk glibly of eternity, and going to the other end of the scale, we are not shocked by a few thousand years, but directly years are numbered with precision in groups which lie in intervening regions of

thought, illogical Western theologians are apt to regard such numbering as nonsense. Now we at present living on this earth—the great bulk of humanity that is to say, for there are exceptional cases to be considered later—are now going through the fifth race of our present fourth round. And yet the evolution of that fifth race began about a million of years ago. In a very interesting volume of Western Science, Professor James Geikie, writing of “The Great Ice Age,” is good enough to push back the origin of man on earth to interglacial epochs in a way which expands the biblical five or six thousand years into something over 100,000. The book is not at hand as I write, and I forget the exact figures reached. But what is this calculation beside the facts of the case as revealed by Occult Science? Will the reader, in consideration of the fact that the present cosmogony does not profess to work with eternity, nerve himself to deal with estimates that do concern themselves with millions of years, and even count such millions by considerable numbers?

Each race of the seven which go to make up a Round, *i. e.*, which are evolved on the Earth in succession during its occupation by one of the great waves of humanity passing round the planetary chain, is itself subject to subdivision. Were this not the case, the active existences of each human unit would be indeed few and far between. Within the limits of each race there are seven subdivisional races, and again within the limits of each subdivision there are seven branch races. Through all these races each individual human unit must pass during his stay on Earth each time he arrives there on a Round of progress through the planetary system. On reflection this necessity should not appal the mind so much as a hypothesis which would provide for fewer incarnations. For, however many lives each individual unit may pass through while on Earth during a Round, be their numbers few or many, he cannot pass on—except in rare cases to be noticed hereafter—until the time comes for the Round-wave to sweep forward, and as the interval of time occupied by the stay of a Round-wave on Earth may be roughly conjectured from the fact that our present fifth race, by no means worked through yet, began a million of years ago, it is highly desirable that Nature should find for each of us some occupation where-with to pass the time. Even by the calculation already foreshadowed it will be seen that the time spent by each individual unit in physical life, can only be a small fraction of the whole time he has to get through between his arrival on Earth and his departure for the next planet. The larger part of the time—as we reckon duration of time—is obviously therefore spent in those subjective conditions of existence which belong to the “World of effects” or spiritual Earth attached to the physical Earth on which our objective existence is passed.

The nature of existence on the spiritual Earth must be considered *pari-passu* with the nature of that passed on the physical Earth alone dealt with in the above enumeration of race incarnations. We must never forget that between each physical existence the individual unit passes through a period of existence in the corresponding spiritual world. And it is because the conditions of that existence are defined by the use that has been made of the opportunities in the next preceding physical existence that the spiritual Earth is often spoken of in Occult writing as the World of Effects. The earth itself is its corresponding World of Causes.

That which passes into the World of Effects after an incarnation in the World of Causes, has been described in the “Fragments of Occult Truth” relating to the seven principles of Man. The individual unit or spiritual monad cannot but pass into the spiritual condition, but, as already explained, the extent—to which the personality, just dissolved, passes there with it,—is dependant on the qualifications of such personality,—on the use, that is to say, which the person in question has made of his opportunities in life. Thus the period to be spent in the World of Effects,—enormously



longer in each case than the life which has paved the way for existence there,—corresponds to the “Hereafter” or Heaven of vulgar Theology. And here it is interesting to digress for a moment to take note of the relative scope of Vulgar Theology and of Occult Science. The narrow purview of the former deals merely with our physical life and its consequences in the life to come. For want of knowing better, theology conceives that the entity concerned had its beginning in this physical life, and, from the same disabilities in the other direction, it conceives that the ensuing spiritual life will never stop. And this pair of existences which is shown by the mere elements of Occult Science that we are now unfolding, to constitute a part only of the entity’s experience during its connection with a branch race, which is one of seven belonging to a subdivisive race, itself one of seven belonging to a main race, itself one of seven belonging to the occupation of Earth by one of the seven Round-waves of humanity which have each to occupy it in turn before its functions in nature are concluded—this microscopic molecule of the whole structure is what common theology treats as *more* than the whole for it is supposed to cover eternity.

The reader must here be warned against one conclusion to which the above explanations—perfectly accurate as far as they go, but not yet covering the whole ground—might lead him. He will *not* get at the exact number of lives an individual entity has to lead on the Earth in the course of its occupation by one Round, if he merely raises seven to its third power. There is a mystery here which the great teachers of Occult Science have not yet thought fit to disclose to the laity. If one existence only were passed in each branch race the total number would obviously be 343. But the actual number is more than that, though nothing approaching the number that would be got at if we supposed seven separate incarnations to take place in each branch race. The explanation hinges on to some mysteries of detail in reference to which it is thought premature to convey information at present.

The methodical law which carries each and every individual human entity through the vast evolutionary process thus sketched out—is in no way incompatible with that liability to fall away into abnormal destinies or ultimate annihilation which menaces the *personal* entities of people who cultivate very ignoble affinities. The distribution of the seven principles at death shows that clearly enough, but, viewed in the light of these further explanations about evolution, the situation may be better realised. The permanent entity is that which lives through the whole series of lives, not only through the races belonging to the present Round-wave on Earth, but also through those of other Round-waves and other worlds. Broadly speaking, it will in due time,—though at some inconceivably distant future as measured in years,—recover a recollection of all those lives, which will seem as day in the past to us. But the astral dross, cast off at each passage into the World of Effects, has a more or less conscious existence of its own, which is quite separate from that of the spiritual entity from which it has just been disunited. The intensity of this consciousness varies very greatly: from absolute zero in the case of a person whose life has been so supremely good and spiritual that he has engendered no low affinities, to full consciousness in the case of entire absorption by the astral principles of all the expiring life’s recollections and affinities. The destiny of the astral reliquæ in either case has been the subject of abundant discussion of late, but the point to which attention may be specially called now is the mystery of dual consciousness on the comprehension of which the comprehension of the actual course of events must depend. Occult pupils are taught to realise the possibility of dual consciousness by practically developing it during life, exercising the inner clairvoyant faculties on one set of observations or ideas and the physical senses with their appropriate intellectual faculties on another set of observations or ideas at the same time, but to ordinary people the double perceptions rarely come by Nature, not,

at all events, with any such intensity as to render their character apparent. On the other hand, the possibility of dual consciousness in life for one person is not beyond the range of ordinary imagination; and by dwelling on the notion it is not difficult to realise the way in which one human individual, as we know him in life, may divide up into two conscious individuals at death, neither of which is in any way a new invention, while each is distinctly conscious (so far as its consciousness is distinct at all) of identity with the late physically living entity.

A correct appreciation of all this serves a double purpose; it solves once for all those apparently conflicting passages in occult writing which seem at different times to attribute such different destinies to the human entity and enables one to comprehend the general scheme of human evolution and the whole vast phantasmagoria of existence through which the enduring principles which constitute our higher individuality are passing, while remaining equally prepared to investigate the side paths of super-material development along which the intermediate principles of our nature may travel, after quitting the most transitory principles that are built up to serve their brief purpose from the physical elements of the earth. And in the phenomena of dual consciousness lies the clue to that mystery on which the continuity of our higher existence depends. For many people it must remain irrational to say that any person now living, with his recollections bounded by the years of his childhood, is the same person as some one of quite a novel nationality and epoch who lived thousands of years ago, or the same that will reappear after a similar lapse of time under some entirely new conditions in the future. But one of his elements of dual consciousness is the same, and the other element is only a temporary efflorescence of the first. The feeling “I am I” is the same through the three lives and through all the hundreds; for that feeling is more deeply seated than the feeling “I am John Smith, so high, so heavy, with such and such property and relations.” Is it inconceivable,—as a notion in the mind,—that John Smith, inheriting the gift of Tithonus, changing his name from time to time, marrying afresh every other generation or so, losing property here, coming into possession of property there, and getting interested as time goes on in very various pursuits, might utterly forget in a few thousand years all circumstances connected with the present life of John Smith, just as if the incidents of that life for him had never taken place? And yet the Ego would be the same. If this is conceivable in the imagination, what can be inconceivable in the individual continuity of an *intermittent* life interrupted and renewed at regular intervals, and varied with passages through a purer condition of existence.

M. LE BON has been making a series of very important experiments on putrefaction, with regard to its effect on living animals in general, and on mankind in particular. Among other results, he has proved that the very small quantity of products of advanced putrefaction, necessary to kill an animal by simple mixture with air, proves these volatile alkaloids to be extremely poisonous. M. le Bon has ascertained that these are so to man. The experiments explain the evils arising from bodies long buried, and prove that the atmosphere of cemeteries (contrary to what has been affirmed on the score of there being few microbes present) may be very dangerous. This is, indeed, alarming, and should be a strong argument in favour of the compulsory introduction of cremation, or some other sanitary method of disposing of the dead, rather than by burying them and causing positive danger to the living. According to M. le Bon’s theory the common practice of visiting cemeteries and grave-yards ought to be discouraged as much as possible.—*The Pioneer*, September 23, 1882.

creed true, and who would have eagerly seized upon the smallest bit of evidence that he could have paraded before the natives in support of his case. He saw and describes other wonders in Tibet—which are carefully suppressed in the American edition, but which by some of his rabidly orthodox critics are ascribed to the devil. Readers of *Isis Unveiled*, will find some of these wonders described and discussed, especially in the first volume; where we have tried to show their reconciliation with natural law.

The subject of the Kum Bum tree has been brought back to our recollection by a review, in *Nature*, Vol. xxvii, p. 171, by Mr. A. H. Keane, of Herr Kreitner's just-published Report of the Expedition to Tibet under Count Szechenyi, a Hungarian nobleman, in 1877-80. The party made an excursion from Sining-fu to the monastery of Kum Bum "for the purpose of testing Huc's extraordinary account of the famous tree of Buddha." They found "neither image [of Buddha on the leaves], nor letters, but a waggish smile playing around the corner of the mouth of the elderly priest escorting us. In answer to our enquiries he informed us that a long time ago, the tree really produced leaves with Buddha's image, but that at present the miracle was of rare occurrence. A few God-favoured men alone were privileged to discover such leaves." That is quite enough for this witness: a Buddhist priest, whose religion teaches that there are no persons favoured by any God, that there is no such being as a God who dispenses favours, and that every man reaps what he has sown, nothing less and nothing more—made to say such nonsense: this shows what this explorer's testimony is worth to his adored sceptical science! But it seems that even the waggishly-smiling priest did tell them that good men can and do see the marvellous leaf-letters, and so, in spite of himself, Herr Kreitner rather strengthens than weakens the Abbé Huc's narrative. Had we never personally been able to verify the truth of the story, we should have to admit that the probabilities favor its acceptance, since the leaves of the Kum Bum tree have been carried by pilgrims to every corner of the Chinese Empire (even Herr Kreitner admits this), and if the thing were a cheat, it would have been exposed without mercy by the Chinese opponents of Buddhism, whose name is Legion. Besides, nature offers many corroborative analogies. Certain shells of the waters of the Red Sea (?) are said to have imprinted upon them the letters of the Hebrew alphabet; upon certain locusts are to be seen certain of the English alphabet; and in the *Theosophist*, vol. ii, p. 91, an English correspondent translates from *Licht Mehr Licht* an account, by Sheffer, of the strangely distinct marking of some German butterflies (*Vanissa Atalanta*) with the numerals of the year 1881. Then again, the cabinets of our modern Entomologists teem with specimens which show that nature is continually producing among animals examples of the strangest mimicry of vegetable growths—as, for instance, caterpillars which look like tree-bark, mosses and dead twigs, insects that cannot be distinguished from green leaves, &c. Even the stripes of the tiger are mimicries of the stalks of the jungle grasses in which he makes his lair. All these separate instances go to form a case of probable fact as to the Huc story of the Kum Bum tree, since they show that it is quite possible for nature herself without miracle to produce vegetable growths in the form of legible characters. This is also the view of another correspondent of *Nature*, a Mr. W. T. Thiselton Dyer, who, in the number of that solid periodical for January 4th, after sunning up the evidence, comes to the conclusion that "there really was in Huc's time a tree with markings on the leaves, which the imagination of the pious assimilated to Tibetan characters." Pious what? He should remember that we have the testimony, not from some pious and credulous Tibetan Buddhist, but from an avowed enemy of that faith, M. Huc, who went to Kum Bum to show up the hum-

bug, who did "his best in that direction to discover the slightest trace of human trick" but whose "baffled mind could not retain the slightest suspicion." So until Herr Kreitner and Mr. Dyer can show the candid Abbé's motive to lie to the disadvantage of his own religion, we must dismiss him from the stand as an unimpeached and weighty witness. Yes, the letter-tree of Tibet is a fact; and moreover, the inscriptions in its leaf-cells and fibres are in the *Samsar*, or sacred language used by the Adepts, and in their totality comprise the whole Dharma of Buddhism and the history of the world. As for any fanciful resemblance to actual alphabetical characters, the confession of Huc that they are so beautifully perfect, "that the type foundries of Didot [a famous typographic establishment of Paris] contain nothing to excel them," settles that question most completely. And as for Kreitner's assertion that the tree is of the lilac species, Huc's description of the colour and cinnamon-like fragrance of its wood, and shape of its leaves, show it to be without probability. Perhaps that waggish old monk knew common mesmerism and "biologized" Count Szechenyi's party into seeing and not seeing whatever he pleased, as the late Prof. Bushell made his Indian subjects imagine whatever he wished them to see. Now and again one meets with such "wags."

#### SHAM ASCETICISM.

THE *Surya Prakash*, of Surat, says that a Hindu ascetic, in company with a few of his disciples, has recently arrived at that place. He does not receive alms, but only accepts drugs like *ganja* and *sooka*. He does not require any food. On the wooden shoes that he wears, and on the bench and on the planks of the cot he sleeps upon, are fixed "some hundreds and thousands" of pointed nails. A large crowd of people, among them being European ladies and gentleman, daily assemble to witness the self-imposed infliction. The ascetic appears to be a very learned man.

The *Indian Mirror* in noticing the case, sententiously remarks: "Such is asceticism in India. It is asceticism in name only." It is right; a *Sadhu* who uses *ganja* and *sooka*—intoxicant drugs—is but a sham ascetic. Instead of leading his followers to Moksha, he does but drag them along with himself into the ditch, notwithstanding his walking and sleeping on spikes. A pretty business that, for a religious teacher!

#### FRAGMENTS OF OCCULT TRUTH.

BY A LAY CHELA.

No. VI.

DEVACHAN.

It was not possible to approach a consideration of the states into which the higher human principles pass at death, without first indicating the general framework of the whole design which is worked out in the course of the evolution of man. The great majority of the blunders made by ordinary theological speculation on this subject are due to ignorance of this general design. People have been led to regard the present physical life as the only one of its kind which a human soul is called upon to pass through. They have next found themselves obliged to provide in Heaven or some sphere of punishment for all the rest of eternity, as they are reluctant to contemplate the notion of final annihilation even for their mere personal entities,—unable to understand that unless specially qualified for perpetuation, they might tire of such entities in progress of milleniums. Thus the Heaven of vulgar theology,—not to speak of the Hell,—is a congeries of inconsistent conceptions as fatally at war with each other as with the facts of the earth life they are supposed to supplement. Heaven is treated as a place in which life is infinitely prolonged—an eternity which has a beginning but no end—

and found enjoyable in the highest degree. But each person is simply himself or herself as on earth in a new spiritual body, with recollection of the past life on earth, and perception of the continued life in progress here for the living friends and relatives left behind. Now a Heaven which constituted a watch tower from which the occupants could still survey the miseries of the earth, would really be a place of acute mental suffering for its most sympathetic, unselfish and meritorious inhabitants. If we invest them in imagination with such a very limited range of sympathy that they could be imagined as not caring about the spectacle of suffering after the few persons to whom they were immediately attached, had died and joined them, still they would have a very unhappy period of waiting to go through before survivors reached the end of an often long and toilsome existence below. And even this hypothesis would be further vitiated by making Heaven most painful for occupants who were most unselfish and sympathetic, whose reflected distress would thus continue on behalf of the afflicted race of mankind generally, even after their personal kindred had been rescued by the lapse of time. The only escape from this dilemma for believers in a conventional Heaven, lies in the supposition that Heaven is not yet opened for business, so to speak, and that all people who have ever lived from Adam downwards are still lying in a death-like, annihilation-like, trance, waiting for the resurrection at the end of the world. [The resurrection by the bye has an occult meaning which the present explanations may help to elucidate, but of that more anon]. Which of these hypotheses is most favoured by ordinary theology we do not pretend to say, but Heaven must be recognised by that doctrine as either, open or not open yet for the reception of souls, and then one of the two lines of speculation above roughly indicated must be followed.

None the less, of course, would theology deny that either statement of the case was correct. No statement of any case which ordinary theology favours, ever is admitted to be correct by theologians if it is put in plain language which conveys a definite conception. Now this brings us to a point of great importance in regard to these fragmentary teachings. The statements which have to be made are susceptible of being expressed in the plainest possible terms. The language of occult philosophy may be as precise as that of physical science. It has not always been so, because a great deal of it has been employed to disguise the statements put forward, just as early astronomers would sometimes record their discoveries by means of anagrams perfectly destitute of meaning on the surface. But the obscurity of occult writing has never been due to the cloudiness or confusion of the ideas under treatment. Thoroughly understood, all occult knowledge, within the range of ordinary human understanding, can be presented to the reader in language as lucid as a diamond, and no more than the facets of the diamond, need the edges of its separate assertions be blurred to make them fit.

The facts about the spiritual condition of life which for each human individuality travelling round the great circle of evolution, intervenes between every one of its separate incarnations, are thus susceptible like the facts of objective existence, with which these essays have chiefly hitherto been dealing, of intelligible expression in terms which need not provide by intentional obscurity for any possible necessity of later withdrawal or qualification. But of course the conditions of lives which are not objective are not so easily grasped as those which are paralleled by our own, and statements which may be perfectly definite as far as they go, may nevertheless be incomplete. The world of effects is a strange and unfamiliar territory for most of us, and untrained imaginations might not follow a close description of its features. However, there are living men, be it remembered, to whom its territory is not unfamiliar to whom its

minutest details are no longer strange. From these the information comes, which we are about to lay before the reader.\* Rejecting the unscientific name which has become encrusted with too many misconceptions to be convenient, let us keep to the oriental designation of that region or state into which the higher principles of human creatures pass at death. "Devachan," to begin with, makes no offer of *eternal* accommodation to the finite personalities of dying men.

It has already been explained that when the four higher principles escape from the body, *i. e.*, from the lower triad,—they divide in accordance with the affinities that have been engendered in them during their corporate life. The lower *reliquiae* remain in the *Kama loka* or immediate vicinity or atmosphere of the earth, and the higher two invested with a certain amount of consciousness by having assimilated all which is adapted to a superior state of existence, from the 5th principle, *Manas*, or "animal" soul, pass into a temporary period of oblivion† from which they are, so to speak, born into "Devachan." Now in Devachan, that which survives is not merely the individual monad, which survives through all the changes of the whole evolutionary scheme, and flits from body to body, from planet to planet, and so forth;—that which survives in Devachan is the man's own self-conscious personality,‡ under some restrictions indeed, which we will come to directly, but still it is the same personality as regards its higher feelings, aspirations, affections, and even tastes as it was on earth. Those feelings and tastes of course which were purely sensual will drop off, but, to suggest a whole range of ideas by means of one illustration, a soul in Devachan, if the soul of a man who was passionately devoted to music would be continuously enraptured by the sensations music produces. The person whose happiness of the higher sort on earth had been entirely centred in the exercise of the affections will miss none, in Devachan of those whom he or she loved. But, at once it will be asked, if some of these are not themselves fit for Devachan, how then? The answer is that does not matter. For the person who loved them *they will be there*. It is not necessary to say much more to give a clue to the position. Devachan is a subjective state. It will seem as real, as the chairs and tables round us;—and remember that above all things to the profound philosophy of occultism, are the chairs and tables, and the whole objective scenery of the world,—unreal and—merely transitory delusions of sense. As real as the realities of this world to us, and even more so, will be the realities of Devachan to those who go into that state.

Now we fancy very few Western thinkers at the first glance will welcome this account of the heaven awaiting them beyond the grave, but we are not weaving merely pleasant fancies, we are describing natural facts, and to say that a condition of things is unacceptable to the imagination, is to say nothing in disproof of its actuality. As regards Devachan, however, a patient consideration of the place in nature which it occupies will show that this subjective isolation of each human unit is the only condition which renders possible any thing which can be described as a felicitous spiritual existence after death for mankind at large, and "Devachan" is as much a purely and absolutely felicitous condition for all who attain it as "Avitchi"—is the reverse of it. There is no inequality or injustice in the system; Devachan is by no means the same thing for the good and the indifferent alike, but it is not a life of responsibility, and therefore there is no logical place in it for suffering any more than in "Avitchi" there is any room for enjoyment or *repent-*

\* The information is supplemented by a copious appendix which please consult.—*Ed.*

† Called in No. 1 of Fragments "gestation."

‡ See Appendix A.—Perchance, the "essence" of self-conscious personality would be a more comprehensive term.—*Ed.*

ance.\* It is a life of *effects*, not of *causes*; a life of being paid your earnings, not of labouring for them. Therefore it is impossible to be during that life cognizant of what is going on on earth. Under the operation of such cognition there would be no true happiness possible in the state after death. But there is no true happiness possible, people will say, in the state of monotonous isolation now described! The objection is merely raised from the point of view of an imagination that cannot escape from its present surroundings. To begin with, about monotony: no one will complain of having experienced monotony during the minute or moment or half hour as it may have been of the greatest happiness he may have enjoyed in life. Most people have had some happy moments at all events to look back to for the purpose of this comparison, and let us take even one such minute or moment, too short to be open to the least suspicion of monotony, and imagine its sensations immensely prolonged without any external events in progress to mark the lapse of time. There is no room in such a condition of things for the conception of weariness. The unalloyed unchangeable sensation of intense happiness goes on and on, not for ever, because the causes which have produced it are not infinite themselves, but for very long periods of time until the efficient impulse has exhausted itself. [See Appendix B.] As physical existence has its cumulative intensity from infancy to prime, and its diminishing energy thenceforward to dotage and death, so the dream-life of Devachan is lived correspondentially. There is the first flutter of psychic life, the attainment of prime, the gradual exhaustion of force passing into conscious lethargy, semi-unconsciousness, oblivion and—not death but birth! birth into another personality and the resumption of action which daily begets new congeries of causes that must be worked out in another term of Devachan.

"It is not a reality then, it is a mere dream," objectors will urge; the soul so bathed in a delusive sensation of enjoyment which has no reality all the while is being cheated by Nature, and must encounter a terrible shock when it wakes to its mistake." But in the nature of things, it never does or can wake. The waking from Devachan is its next birth into objective life, and the draught of Lethe has then been taken. Nor as regards the isolation of each soul is there any consciousness of isolation whatever; nor is there ever possibly a parting from its chosen associates. Those associates are not in the nature of companions who may wish to go away, or friends who may tire of the friend that loves them even if he or she does not tire of them. Love, the creating force, has placed their living image before the personal soul which craves for their presence, and that image will never fly away [See Appendix C.]

There is a sense of unreality about the whole affair, to some people, which is painful to their mind at first no doubt; but this is certainly much more due to an imperfect grasp of the nature of the existence described on the part of people used merely to objective experiences, than to any inherent demerits in the scheme of existence provided for souls in their transition state in Devachan.

And we must remember that by the very nature of the system described there are infinite varieties of well-being in Devachan, suited to the infinite varieties of merit in mankind. If "the next world" really were the objective Heaven which ordinary theology preaches, there would be endless injustice and inaccuracy in its operation. People to begin with would be either admitted or excluded, and the differences of favour shown to different guests within the all-favoured region, would not sufficiently provide for differences of merit in this

life. But the real Heaven of our earth adjusts itself to the needs and merits of each new arrival with unfailing certainty. Not merely as regards the duration of the blissful state which is determined by the causes engendered during objective life, but as regards the intensity and amplitude of the emotions which constitute that blissful state, the Heaven of each person who attains the really existent Heaven is precisely fitted to his capacity for enjoying it. It is the creation of his own aspirations and faculties. More than this it may be impossible for the uninitiated comprehension to realize. But this indication of its character is enough to show how perfectly it falls into its appointed place in the whole scheme of evolution [See Appendix D.]

Devachan being a condition of mere subjective enjoyment, the duration and intensity of which is determined by the merit and spirituality of the earth-life last past there is no opportunity while the soul inhabits it, for the punctual requital of evil deeds. But Nature does not content herself with either forgiving sins in a free and easy way, or damning sinners outright, like a lazy master too indolent, rather than too good-natured, to govern his household justly. The karma of evil, be it great or small, is as certainly operative at the appointed time as the karma of good. But the place of its operation is not Devachan, but either a new rebirth, or *Avitchi*—a state to be reached only in exceptional cases and by exceptional natures.\* The subject being of paramount importance it may be left for a separate Fragment [See Appendix E]. Generally, the re-birth into objective existence is the event for which the karma of evil patiently waits; and then, it irresistibly asserts itself, not that the karma of good exhausts itself in Devachan leaving the unhappy monad to develop a new consciousness with no material beyond the evil deeds of its last personality. The re-birth will be qualified by the merit as well as the demerit of the previous life, but the Devachan existence is a rosy sleep,—a peaceful night with dreams more vivid than day, and imperishable for many centuries and ages, as the loftiest mountains of the earth for the time abandoned.

It will be seen that the Devachan state is only one of the conditions of existence which go to make up the whole spiritual or relatively spiritual complement of our earth life. Observers of spiritualistic phenomena would never have been perplexed as they have been if there were no other but the Devachan state to be dealt with. For once in Devachan there is very little opportunity for communication between a spirit, then wholly absorbed in its own sensations and practically oblivious of the earth left behind, and its former friends still living. Whether gone before or yet remaining on earth those friends, if the bond of affection has been sufficiently strong will be with the happy spirit still, to all intents and purposes for him, and as happy blissful, innocent, as the disembodied dreamer himself. It is possible, however, for yet living persons to have visions of Devachan, though such visions are rare, and only one-sided,—the entities in Devachan, sighted by the earthly *clairvoyant* being quite unconscious themselves of undergoing such observation. The spirit of the clairvoyant ascends into the condition of Devachan in such rare visions, and thus becomes subject to the vivid delusions of that existence. It is under the impression that the spirits with which it is in Devachanic bonds of sympathy have come down to visit earth and itself, while the converse operation has

\* The fine parable in Luke about Lazarus, the beggar, the rich man, and "Father Abraham," would fall through, we are afraid, in the light of esoteric teachings. The only important truth therein contained is the statement about the "great gulf fixed" between Devachan, and Avitchi, and the earth. See Luke xvi. v. 20—30.—Ed.

\* While the ordinary, common place sinner will reap the fruits of his evil deeds in a following reincarnation, the exceptional criminal, the—so to speak aristocrat of sin has *avitchi* in prospect. Most of our everyday transgressions being due rather to circumstances over which we have little or no control, as well as to the utter vanity of the request—"Lead us not into temptation," the Law of Retribution is there, with its finer sense of discriminative justice than ever found on earth, to act always unerringly in producing effects strictly adequating their real causes.

really taken place. The clairvoyant's spirit has been raised towards those in Devachan. Thus many of the subjective spiritual communications—most of them when the sensitives are pure-minded,—are real, though it is most difficult for the uninitiated medium to fix in his mind the true and correct pictures of what he sees and hears. In the same way some of the phenomena called psychography (though more rarely) are also real. The spirit of the sensitive getting odylised, so to say, by the aura of the spirit in the Devachan becomes for a few minutes that departed personality, and writes in the handwriting of the latter, in his language and in his thoughts as they were during his lifetime. The two spirits become blended in one, and the preponderance of one over the other during such phenomena, determines the preponderance of personality in the characteristics exhibited. Thus, it may incidentally be observed, what is called *rapport*, is in plain fact, an identity of molecular vibration between the astral part of the incarnate medium and the astral part of the disincarnate personality.

Meanwhile the average communicating "spirit" of the seance room is the denizen of that intervening region between Earth-life and Devachan which has been already referred to as *Kama loka*. On the subject of "shells" or Elementaries, so much has been written of late that this branch of the subject may be passed over lightly now. The upper *duad* having won, in the struggle which takes place after death in the *Kama loka* between the two sets of principles, the lowest of all with a remnant of the 5th its more brutal memories and instincts alone remaining, continues to roam the earth's atmosphere for a time—an empty shell though alive for a while to a certain extent. A word or two of explanation however is required in reference to the complete two principled being which remains in the *Kama loka*, when the upper *duad* does *not* win in the struggle for possession of the late personality. It might be imagined that such a being would be far more potent for the purposes of communication with still living people, than the shell, and so it might be if it remained in "*Kama loka*," but the fact is that in such cases the surviving personality is promptly drawn into the current of its future destinies and these have nothing to do with this earth's atmosphere or with Devachan, but with that "eighth sphere" of which occasional mention will be found in older occult writings. It will have been unintelligible to ordinary readers hitherto why it was called the "eighth" sphere, but since the explanation in these Fragments of the 7 fold constitution of our planetary system, the meaning will be clear enough. The spheres of the cyclic process of evolution are seven in number, but there is an eighth in connection with our earth,—our earth being, it will be remembered, the turning point in the cyclic chain,—and this eighth sphere is out of circuit, a *cul de sac* and the bourne from which it may be truly said no traveller returns.

It will readily be guessed that the only sphere connected with our manwantaric chain, which is lower than our own, in the scale that has spirit at the top and matter at the bottom, must itself be no less visible to the eye and to optical instruments, than the earth itself, and as the duties which this sphere has to perform in our planetary system are immediately associated with this earth, there is not much mystery left now in the riddle of the eighth sphere, nor as to the place in the sky where it may be sought. The conditions of existence there, however, are topics on which the adepts are very reserved in their communications to uninitiated pupils, and concerning these we have for the present no further information to give.

One statement though it is definitely made, *viz*, that such a total degradation of a personality as may suffice to draw it, after death, into the attraction of the eighth sphere, is of very rare occurrence. From the vast majority of lives there is something which the higher principles may draw to themselves, something to redeem the page of existence just passed from total destruction, and here it

must be remembered that the recollections of life in Devachan very vivid as they are, as far as they go, touch only those episodes in life which are productive of the elevated sort of happiness of which alone Devachan is qualified to take cognisance, whereas the life from which for the time being the cream is thus skimmed, will be remembered eventually, in all its details quite fully. That complete remembrance is only achieved by the individual at the threshold of a far more exalted spiritual state than that which we are now concerned with, and which is attained far later on in the progress of the vast cycles of evolution. Each one of the long series of lives that will have been passed through will then be, as it were, a page in a book to which the possessor can turn back at pleasure,—even though many such pages will then seem to him most likely, very dull reading, and will not be frequently referred to. It is this revival eventually of recollection concerning all the long forgotten personalities that is really meant by the doctrine of the Resurrection of which the modern prayer books make so sad a hash. But we have no time at present to stop and unravel the enigmas of symbolism as bearing upon the teachings at present under conveyance to the reader. It may be worthwhile to do this as a separate undertaking at a later period, but meanwhile to revert to the narrative of how the facts stand, it may be explained that in the whole book of pages,—when at last the "resurrection" has been accomplished, there will be no entirely infamous pages; for even if any given spiritual individuality has occasionally during its passage through this world been linked with personalities so deplorably and desperately degraded that they have passed completely into the attraction of the lower vortex that spiritual individuality in such cases will have retained in its own affinities, no trace or taint of them. Those pages will, as it were, have been clearly torn out from the book. And as at the end of the struggle after crossing the *Kama loka* the spiritual individuality will have passed into the unconscious gestation state from which skipping the Devachan state it will be directly reborn into its next life of objective activity, all the self consciousness connected with that existence will have passed into the lower world, there eventually to "perish everlastingly;" an expression of which as of so many more modern theology has proved a faithless custodian, making pure nonsense out of psycho-scientific facts.

As already indicated, and as the common sense of the matter would show there are great varieties of states in Devachan, and each personality drops into its befitting place there. Thence consequently he emerges in his befitting place in the world of Causes, this Earth or another as the case may be, when his time for rebirth comes. Coupled with survival of the affinities comprehensively described as *karma*—the affinities both for good and evil engendered by the previous life, this process will be seen to accomplish nothing less than an explanation of the problem which has always been regarded as so incomprehensible,—the inequalities of life. The conditions on which we enter life are the consequences of the use we have made of our last set of conditions. They do not impede the development of fresh karma, whatever they may be, for this will be generated by the use we make of them in turn. Nor is it to be supposed that every event of a current life which bestows joy or sorrow is old karma bearing fruit. Many may be the immediate consequences of acts in the life to which they belong—ready-money transactions with Nature, so to speak of which it may hardly be necessary to make any entry in her books. But the great inequalities of life as regards the start in it, which different human beings make, is a manifest consequence of old karma, the infinite varieties of which always keep up a constant supply of recruits for all the manifold varieties of human condition.



We have spoken of the three conditions in the world of effects,—the state in which the principles liberated from the body are still in Kama loka, and physically in the atmosphere of the earth, the state of Devachan and the intervening state of gestation or preparation for the latter. But the reader's conceptions on the subject will necessarily be vague without some indications as to the periods of time with which passage through these states is concerned. Consciousness in the Kama loka even is not immediately reawakened after death. When a man dies, his soul or fifth principle becomes unconscious and loses all remembrance of things internal as well as external. Whether his stay in Kama loka has to last but a few moments, hours, days, weeks, months or years, whether he dies a natural or a violent death; whether this occurs in youth or age, and whether the ego has been good, bad or indifferent, his consciousness leaves him as suddenly as the flame leaves the wick when it is blown out. When life has retired from the last particle of the brain matter, his perceptive faculties become extinct for ever, and his spiritual powers of cognition and volition become for the time being as extinct as the others. His *mayavi rupa* may be thrown into objectivity as in the case of apparitions after death, but unless it is projected by a conscious or intense desire to see or appear to some one shooting through the dying brain, the apparition will be simply automatic. The revival of consciousness in Kama loka is obviously, from what has been already said—a phenomenon that depends on the characteristic of the principles passing, unconsciously at the moment, out of the dying body. It may become tolerably complete under circumstances by no means to be desired, or it may be obliterated by a rapid passage into the gestation state leading to Devachan. This gestation state may be of very long duration in proportion to the ego's spiritual stamina, and Devachan accounts for the remainder of the period between death and the next physical rebirth. The whole period is of course of very varying length in the case of different persons, but rebirth in less than a thousand to fifteen hundred years is spoken of as almost impossible, while the stay in Devachan which rewards a very rich Karma, is sometimes said to extend to enormous periods.

In conclusion it may be added that this is a mere sketch of the state of things under examination, as complete as the writer is in a position to make it at present, but requiring a great deal of amplification as regards details which will no doubt become possible at some future time. Meanwhile the outline, as far as it goes, may be relied upon as correctly drawn.

## APPENDIX TO "DEVACHAN."

### APPENDIX A.

It may be worth the reader's while to learn what Colonel H. S. Olcott has to say in his Buddhist Catechism (14th Thousand) of the intrinsic difference between "individuality" and "personality." Since he wrote not only under the approval of the High Priest, but also under the direct instruction of his Guru (Spiritual Master), his words will have weight for the student of Occultism. This is what he says, in his Appendix:—

"Upon reflection, I have substituted 'personality' for 'individuality' as written in the first edition. The successive appearances upon one or many earths, or 'descents into generation' of the *tanhaically*-coherent parts (Skandhas) of a certain being, are a succession of personalities. In each birth the *personality* differs from that of the previous or next succeeding birth. Karma, the *deus ex machina*, masks (or shall we say, reflects?) itself now in the personality of a sage, again as an artisan and so on throughout the string of births. But though personalities ever shift, the one line of life along which they are strung like beads runs unbroken.

"It is ever *that particular line*, never any other. It is therefore individual, an individual vital undulation which began in Nirvana or the subjective side of Nature, as the light or heat undulation through æther began at its dynamic source; is careering through the objective side of Nature, under the impulse of *Karma* and the creative direction of *Tanha*; and tends through many cyclic changes back to Nirvana. Mr. Rhys Davids calls that which passes from personality to personality along the individual chain, 'character' or 'doing.' Since 'character' is not a mere metaphysical abstraction but the sum of one's mental qualities and moral propensities, would it not help to dispel what Mr. Rhys Davids calls, 'the desperate expedient of a mystery' [*Buddhism*, p. 101] if we regarded the life undulation as individuality and each of its series of natal manifestations as a separate personality? The perfected individual, Buddhistically speaking, is a Buddha, I should say; for a Buddha is but the rare flower of humanity, without the least supernatural admixture. And as countless generations ('Four Asankheyyas and a hundred thousand cycles,' Fausböll and Rhys Davids' *Buddhist Birth Stories*, p. 13) are required to develop a man into a Buddha, and the iron will to become one runs throughout all the successive births, what shall we call that which thus wills and perseveres? *Character?* or *Individuality?* an individuality but partly manifested in any one birth, but built up of fragments from all the births?

"The denial of 'soul' by Buddha (see *San'yutto Nikaya*, the Sutta Pitaka) points to the prevalent delusive belief in an independent transmissible personality; an entity that could move from birth to birth unchanged, or go to a place or state where, as such perfect entity, it could eternally enjoy or suffer. And what he shows is that the 'I am I' consciousness is, as regards permanency logically impossible, since its elementary constituents constantly change, and the 'I' of one birth differs from the 'I' of every other birth. But everything that I have found in Buddhism accords with the theory of a gradual evolution of the perfect man, viz., a Buddha through numberless natal experiences. And in the consciousness of that person who at the end of a given chain of beings attains Buddha-hood, or who succeeds in attaining the fourth stage of Dhyana, or mystic self-development, in any one of his births anterior to the final one, the scenes of all these serial births are perceptible. In the Jatakattahavannana, so well translated by Mr. Rhys Davids, an expression continually recurs which I think rather supports such an idea, viz: 'Then the blessed one made manifest an occurrence hidden by change of birth,' or 'that which had been hidden by, &c.' Early Buddhism then, clearly held to a permanency of records in the Akasa, and the potential capacity of man to read the same when he has evolved to the stage of true individual ENLIGHTENMENT." (pp. 54—57.)

### APPENDIX B.

Having been asked:—"How then? Is there no change of occupation for souls in *Devachan*? Is one moment of earthly sensation only, selected for perpetuation?"—our MASTERS reply in the negative. No; *Devachan* is no monotonous condition, in which some one or even two or more moments of earthly sensations are indefinitely perpetuated—stretched so to say, throughout æons. For, this would be contrary to all analogies and antagonistic to the law of cause and effect under which results are proportioned to antecedent energies. There are two fields of causal manifestations—the objective and subjective. The grosser energies—those which operate in the denser condition of matter—manifest objectively in the next physical life, their outcome being the new personality of each birth marshaling within the grand cycle of the evolving individuality. It is but the moral and spiritual activities that find their sphere of effects in *Devachan*. And thought and fancy being limitless, how can it be argued for one moment that

there is any thing like monotony in the state of *Devachan*? Few are the men whose lives were so utterly destitute of feeling, love, or of a more or less intense predilection for some one line of thought as to be made unfit for a proportionate period of *Devachanic* experience,—beyond their earthly life. So, for instance, while the vices, physical and sensual attractions, say, of a great philosopher, but a bad friend, and a selfish man—may result in the birth of a new and still greater intellect, but at the same time a most miserable man, reaping the *Karmic* effects of all the causes produced by the “old” being and whose make-up was inevitable from the preponderating proclivities of that being in the preceding birth, the intermedial period between the two physical births *cannot* be—in nature’s exquisitely well adjusted laws—but a *hiatus* of unconsciousness. There can be no such dreary blank as kindly promised, or rather implied by Christian Protestant theology to the “departed souls,” which, between death and “resurrection” have to hang on in space, in mental catalepsy awaiting the “Day of Judgment.” Causes produced by mental and spiritual energy being far greater and more important than those that are created by physical impulses—their effects have to be—for weal or woe—proportionately as great. Lives on this earth or other earths, affording no proper field for such effects, and every labourer being entitled to his own harvest—they have to expand in—either *Devachan* or *Avitchi*.\* Bacon, for instance, whom a poet called—

“The brightest, wisest, meanest of mankind”

—might re-appear in his next incarnation as a greedy money-getter, with extraordinary intellectual capacities. But, however great the latter, they would find no proper field in which that particular line of thought pursued during his previous life-time by the founder of modern philosophy could reap all its dues. It would be but the astute lawyer, the corrupt attorney-general, the ungrateful friend, and the dishonest Lord-chancellor who might find, led on by his Karma, a congenial new soil in the *body* of the money-lender, and re-appear as a new *Shylock*. But where would Bacon, the incomparable thinker, with whom philosophical inquiry upon the most profound problems of nature was his “first and last, and only love,” where would this “intellectual giant of his race”—once disrobed of his lower nature—go to? Have all the effects of that magnificent intellect to vanish and disappear? Certainly not. Thus his moral and spiritual qualities would also have to find a field in which their energies could expand themselves. *Devachan* is such field. Hence—all the great plans of moral reform, of intellectual research into abstract principles of nature, all the divine, spiritual aspirations that had so filled the brightest part of his life, would, in *Devachan*, come to fruition; and the abstract entity, known in the preceding birth as Francis Bacon, and that *may* be known in its subsequent re-incarnation as a despised usurer—that Bacon’s own creation, his Frankenstein, the son of his *Karma*—shall in the meanwhile occupy itself in this inner world, also of its own preparation, in enjoying the effects of the grand beneficial, spiritual causes sown in life. It would live a purely and spiritually conscious existence—a dream of realistic vividness—until Karma being satisfied in that direction and the ripple of force reaching the edge of its sub-cyclic basin, the being should move into its next area of causes—either in this same world or another according to his stage of progression. Therefore, there is “a change of occupation,” a continual change—in *Devachan*. For that dream-life is but the fruition, the harvest time of those psychic seedgerms dropped from the tree of physical existence in our moments of dream and hope; fancy-glimpses of bliss and happiness stifled in an ungrateful social soil, blooming in the rosy dawn of *Devachan*, and ripening under its ever fructifying sky. If man had but one single moment of ideal experience, not even then

could it be, as erroneously supposed, the indefinite prolongation of that “single moment.” That one note struck from the lyre of life would form the key-note of the beings’ subjective state and work out into numberless harmonic tones and semi-tones of psychic phantasmagoria. There, all unrealized hopes, aspirations, dreams—become fully realized, and the dreams of the objective become the realities of the subjective existence. And there, behind the curtain of *Maya*, its vaporous and deceptive appearances are perceived by the INITIATE, who has learned the great secret how to penetrate thus deep into the ARCA OF BEING.....

#### APPENDIX C.

Objectors of that kind will be simply postulating an incongruity: an intercourse of entities in *Devachan* which applies only to the mutual relationship of physical existence! Two sympathetic souls, both disembodied, will each work out its own *Devachanic* sensations, making the other a sharer in its subjective bliss. This will be as real to them, naturally, as though both were yet on this earth. Nevertheless, each is dissociated from the other as regards personal or corporeal association. While the latter is the only of its kind that is recognized by our earth experience as an *actual* intercourse, for the *Devachanee* it would be not only some thing unreal but could have no existence for it in any sense, not even as a delusion: a physical body or even a *Mayavi-rupa* remaining to its spiritual senses as invisible as it is itself to the physical senses of those who loved it best on earth. Thus even though one of the “sharers” were alive and utterly unconscious of that intercourse in his waking state, still every dealing with him would be to the *Devachanee* an absolute reality. And what *actual* companionship could there ever be other than the purely idealistic one as above described, between two *subjective* entities which are not even as material as that ethereal body-shadow—the *Mayavi-rupa*? To object to this on the ground that one is thus “cheated by nature” and to call it “a delusive sensation of enjoyment which has no reality” is to show oneself utterly unfit to comprehend the conditions of life and being outside of our material existence. For how can the same distinction be made in *Devachan*—i. e. outside of the conditions of earth-life between what we call a reality, and a factitious or an artificial counterfeit of the same, in this, our world? The same principle cannot apply to the two sets of conditions. Is it conceivable that what we call a reality in our embodied, physical state will exist under the same conditions as an actuality for a disembodied entity? On earth, man is dual—in the sense of being a thing of matter and a thing of spirit; hence the natural distinction made by his mind—the analyst of his physical sensations and spiritual perceptions—between an actuality and a fiction: though, even in this life the two groups of faculties are constantly equilibrating each other, each group when dominant seeing as fiction or delusion what the other believes to be most real. But in *Devachan* our Ego has ceased to be dualistic, in the above sense, and become a spiritual, mental entity. That which was a fiction, a dream in life, and which had its being but in the region of “fancy” becomes under the new conditions of existence—the only possible reality. Thus, for us, to postulate the possibility of any other reality for a *Devachanee* is to maintain an absurdity, a monstrous fallacy, an idea unphilosophical to the last degree. The actual is that which is acted or performed *de facto*: “the reality of a thing is proved by its actuality.” And the suppositious and artificial having no possible existence in that *devachanic* state, the logical sequence is that every thing in it is actual and real. For, again whether overshadowing the five principles during the life of the personality, or entirely separated from the grosser principles by the dissolution of the body—the sixth principle, or our “Spiritual Soul,” has no substance,—it is ever *Arupa*; nor is it confined to one

\* The lowest states of *Devachan* interchain with those of *Avitchi*,

place with a limited horizon of perceptions around it. Therefore whether *in* or *out* of its mortal body, it is ever distinct, and free from its limitations; and if we call its *devachanic* experiences "a cheating of nature," then we should never be allowed to call "reality" any of those purely abstract feelings that belong entirely to, and are reflected and assimilated by, our *higher* soul, such : *f. i.*, as an ideal perception of the beautiful, profound philanthropy, love, &c., as well as every other purely spiritual sensation that during life fills our inner being with either immense joy or pain.

#### APPENDIX D.

"Devachan" is of course a *state* not a *locality*, as much as "Avitchi"—its antithesis [which please not to confound with *Hell*]. Esoteric Buddhist philosophy has three principal *lokas* so-called—namely (1) *Kama loka*, (2) *Rupa-loka*; and (3) *Arupa loka*; or in their literal translation and meaning—[1] world of desires or passions, of unsatisfied earthly cravings—the abode of "Shells" and Victims, of Elementaries and Suicides; [2] the world of Forms, *i. e.*, of shadows more spiritual, having form and objectivity but no substance; and [3] the *formless* world, or rather the world of no-Form, the incorporeal, since its denizens can have neither body, shape, nor colour for us mortals, and in the sense that we give to these terms. These are the three spheres of ascending spirituality in which the several groups of subjective and semi-subjective entities find their attractions. The time having not yet come to speak of the latter two, we will merely notice the first one, namely the *Kama-loka*. Thence it is, that all, but the remaining shells, the suicides and the victims of premature violent deaths, go according to their attractions and powers either into the *Devachanic* or the *Avitchi* state, which two states form the numberless sub-divisions of "Rupa" and "Arupa" *lokas*; that is to say, that such states not only vary in degree, or in their presentation to the subject entity as regards form, colour, &c.,—but that there is an infinite scale of such states, in their progressive spirituality and intensity of feeling; from the lowest in the *Rupa*, up to the highest and the most exalted in the *Arupa-loka*. The student must bear in mind that *personality* is the synonym for limitation; and that the more selfish, the more contracted the person's ideas, the closer will he cling to the lower spheres of being, the longer loiter on the plane of selfish social intercourse.

#### APPENDIX E.

To use an antiphrasis—"Avitchi" is a state of the most *ideal spiritual* wickedness, something akin to the state of Lucifer, so superbly described by Milton. Not many though, are there who can reach it, as the thoughtful reader will perceive. And if it is urged that since there is *Devachan* for nearly all; for the good, the bad, and the indifferent, the ends of harmony and equilibrium are frustrated, and the law of Retribution and of impartial, implacable Justice hardly met and satisfied by such a comparative scarcity if not absence of its antithesis, then the answer will show *that it is not so*. "*Evil* is the dark son of Earth (matter) and *Good*—the fair daughter of Heaven" (or Spirit) says the Chinese philosopher; hence the place of punishment for most of our sins is the Earth—its birth place and play-ground. There is more apparent and relative, than actual evil even on earth, and it is not given to the *hoi polloi* to reach the fatal grandeur and eminence of a "Satan" every day. See foot-notes in art. "Death," by Eliphas Levi (October *Theosophist*, Vol. III,) the editorial answer to the art: "Death and Immortality" (November *Theosophist*, p. 28); and the words used by the author, when speaking of those who are immortal in good by identification with God (or Good), and immortal in evil by identification with Satan (Evil). Although the general rule applies but to "Sorcerers," *i. e.* adepts

in Black Magic, real Initiates and sons of Evil, generally known as "the Brothers of the Shadow," yet there are exceptions to that rule as to every other. Occasionally men reaching the apex of evil become "unconscious" sorcerers; they identify themselves with "Satan," and then *Avitchi* becomes their Fate. Happy they are when thereby they avoid a worse punishment—a *loka* from which indeed, no traveller—either returns or, once within its dark precincts—pursues his journey!

#### UNDER THE SHADOW OF GREAT NAMES.

THE common vice of trying to palm off upon the world the crude imaginings or rhapsodical concoctions of one's own brain, by claiming their utterance as under divine inspiration, prevails largely among our esteemed friends, the Spiritualists. Many clever persons known as "trance speakers" and "inspirational writers" keep the thing up at a lively rate, turning out oration after oration and book after book as coming from the great dead, the planetary spirits, and even from God. The great names of antiquity are invoked to father feeble books, and no sooner is it known that a prominent character is deceased than some mediums pretend to be his telephones, to discourse platitudes before sympathetic audiences. Shakespeare's imagination pictured to his mind the mighty Cæsar, turned to clay, being made "to stop a hole to keep the wind away"; but had he made a forecast of our Modern Spiritualism, he would have found an even worse satire upon the impermanency of human greatness, in the prospect of the dead Cæsar being forced to say stupidities that, alive, he would not have tolerated in one of his foot-soldiers. Some of our more optimistic friends of the spiritualistic party postulate a halcyon time when mediumistic utterances will be judged according to their intrinsic merit, like other oratorical and literary productions, and it is to be hoped they may not deceive themselves. The number of bright minds that are occupying themselves with this great subject is assuredly on the increase, and with such men as M. A. (Oxon), Mr. Massey, Mr. Roden Noel, and others of that class, spiritualistic literature is always being enriched. But at the same time we see no diminution as regards bogus platform sermons claiming to come from Judge Edmonds, Robert Dale Owen, Epes Sargent, and Professors Hare and Mapes, or books ascribed to the inspiration of Jehovah and his ancient Spirits. Our poor Mr Bennett, of the *Truth-seeker*, had scarcely had time to die before he was paraded as a spirit-control by an American medium. The future has a gloomy look indeed to us when we think that, despite their best endeavours to the contrary, the Founders of the Theosophical Society are quite as liable as either of the eminent gentlemen abovementioned—with all of whom the writer was personally acquainted, and neither of whom, in all probability, ever communicated one word that their alleged mediums attribute to them—to an involuntary *post-mortem* recantation of their most cherished and avowed ideas. We have been prompted to these remarks by a convincing demonstration, by the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, that a recent "trance address" by our dear deceased friend, Epes Sargent, through a certain medium, was a sheer fabrication. A comparison of the same with Mr. Sargent's last and greatest spiritualistic work, "The Scientific Basis of Spiritualism," shows beyond question that he could never have inspired any such mediumistic oration. While it is yet time, both the founders of the Theosophical Society place upon record their solemn promise that they will let trance mediums severely alone after they get to "the other side." If after this, any of the talking fraternity take their names in vain, they hope that at least their theosophical *confreres* will unearth this paragraph and warn the trespassers off their astral premises. So far as we have observed the best trance speakers have been those who bragged least about their controls. "Good wine needs no bush," says the adage.

\*\*\*\* Arriving safely in New York, I proceeded directly to the Archbishop, who appointed me to give a mission in three French settlements. I reached *at night, no one being aware of my arrival*..... On the following morning a man stopped me on the street, and asked me very politely if I was not a Catholic priest, and, upon my replying in the affirmative, he exclaimed :

"OH, THEN, IT IS TRUE—TOO TRUE: IT IS THE DEVIL!"

In reply to my request for an explanation of this strange expression, he said: "Oh, Father! my daughter has been possessed by the devil for many years; I see it all now!"

"You must not believe that so easily," I replied.

"How can I doubt it," he answered, "when only last night she told me that a 'black coat' had come to—, and repeated it this morning, saying: 'You must go; you will find him; you must bring him. Oh!' said she (or rather the devil), 'how foolish I have been to take possession of this girl! Now I shall suffer; he comes to torment and expel me.' † I was so struck by the talk that I started mechanically rather than believing that I should actually find you; but now that you are here, will you not kindly come and judge for yourself? It is only five miles distant: you can return again this evening. I came on horseback, but I will saddle another horse while you are taking breakfast." I assented.

During our ride he acquainted me with all the particulars of the case.

"When my daughter was three years of age—she is now fifteen—she went, as was her custom, to play with the child of a widow at a neighbouring house; the woman gave her some toast and molasses; when she returned home, she complained of uneasiness in the stomach, and from that time forward became melancholy, and lost the cheerfulness and good health she had previously enjoyed. She was strange in her motions; not positively ill, but always complaining of a weight on her stomach. She would not perform as usual little services about the house, but would act in an awkward and whimsical manner. Such has been the state of the child during the past twelve years." I learned later that the mother—who, on one occasion, during the feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin, gave the girl some *blessed tea* to drink, when suddenly she broke out in a rage, slapped her mother, and exclaimed: "Oh! I am found out—I must speak now! but thou shalt pay for it." Then the father, gently interposing, said: "What is that?"—calling her by name—"you strike your mother!"

"It is not—who is here, it is I," was the answer, in a rough, hollow voice, and growling like a dog.

"Who art thou?" said the father.

"I am the devil," was the answer, in similar tones.

"If thou art the cursed one," replied the father, "give the reason why thou hast taken possession of my daughter."

"No," said he, "I won't. What a fool I have been to come here! Now I must be tormented; he is coming; he is on the sea" (words which were not then understood. I was, indeed, on sea at that time, having embarked at Havre as above mentioned, just the day previous). For a month she was more or less in fits of rage. About the end of February she said again: "He has arrived at last, he will come soon." When asked whom she meant, she replied: "He that must expel me; and there shall be two." So much I learned of the facts that preceded my arrival. The mother then repeated what her husband had already told me about the girl's reference to me during the previous evening.

\* Our motive for the suppression of names in this relation will be obvious when we state that most, if not all, of the persons are still living. However, neither the narrator, who is well known to us, nor the other priest who witnessed the manifestations, would object to have their names given if it were thought expedient.—*Ed. C. M.*

† Now really that must have been an idiotic devil! For had he but kept quiet, no one, least of all the new comer, could have ever found him out; hence would not have turned him out of his chosen premises.—*Ed. T.*

I was truly surprised at this narrative, seeing clearly that the devil meant me. I said that I would see the girl, but first I recommended myself to God by kneeling down and reciting the *VENI CREATOR*.

(To be continued.)

## FRAGMENTS OF OCCULT TRUTH.

BY A LAY CHIELA.

No. VII.

### THE HUMAN LIFE WAVE.

PREVIOUS essays will have given the reader a general idea of the way in which the great evolutionary life-wave sweeps round and round the seven worlds which compose the planetary chain of which our earth is a part. Further assistance may now be offered with the view of expanding this general idea, into a fuller comprehension of the processes to which it relates. And no one additional chapter of the great story will do more towards rendering its character intelligible, than an explanation of certain phenomena connected with the progress of worlds, that may be conveniently called *Obscurations*.

Students of occult philosophy who enter on that pursuit with minds already abundantly furnished in other ways, are very liable to misinterpret its earlier statements. Every thing cannot be said at once, and the first broad explanations are apt to suggest conceptions in regard to details which are most likely to be erroneous with the most active-minded and intelligent thinkers. Such readers are not content with shadowy outlines even for a moment. Imagination fills in the picture, and if its work is undisturbed for any length of time, the author will be surprised afterwards to find that later information is incompatible with that which he had come to regard as having been distinctly taught in the beginning. Now in these *Fragments* the writer's effort is to convey the information in such a way that hasty weed growths of the mind may be prevented as far as possible, but in this very effort it is necessary sometimes to run on quickly in advance, leaving details,—even very important details to be picked up during a second journey over the old ground. So now the reader must be good enough to go back to the explanation given in Fragment IV. of the evolutionary progress through the whole planetary chain.

Some few words were said even in that Fragment, concerning the manner in which the life impulse passed on from planet to planet in "rushes or gushes; not by an even continuous flow." Now the course of evolution in its earlier stages is so far continuous that the preparation of several planets for the final tidal wave of humanity may be going on simultaneously. Indeed the preparation of all the seven planets may, at one stage of the proceedings, be going on simultaneously, but the important point to remember is that the main wave of evolution,—the foremost growing wave,—cannot be in more than one place at a time. The process goes on in the way which may now be described, and which the reader may be the better able to follow, if he constructs either on paper or in his own mind a diagram consisting of seven circles (representing the worlds,) arranged in a ring. Calling them A, B, C, &c., it will be observed from what has been already stated that circle (or globe) D, stands for our earth. Now the kingdoms of Nature as known to occultists, be it remembered, are seven in number, three, having to do with astral and elementary forces, preceding the grosser material kingdoms in the order of their development. Kingdom 1 evolves on globe A, and passes on to B, as kingdom 2 begins to evolve on A. Carry out this system and of course it will be seen that

kingdom 1 is evolving on globe G, while kingdom 7, the human kingdom, is evolving on globe A. But now what happens as kingdom 7 passes on to globe B. There is no eighth kingdom to engage the activities of globe A. The great processes of evolution have culminated in the final tide wave of humanity,—which as it sweeps on, leaves a temporary lethargy of nature behind. When the life wave goes on to B, in fact, globe A passes for the time, into a state of obscurity. This state is not one of decay, dissolution or anything that can properly be called death. Decay itself, though its aspect is apt to mislead the mind, is a condition of activity in a certain direction, this consideration affording a clue to the meaning of a great deal which is otherwise meaningless, in that part of Hindu mythology which relates to the deities presiding over destruction. The obscurity of a world is a total suspension of its activity: this does not mean that the moment the last human monad passes on from any given world, that world is paralysed by any convulsion, or subsides into the enchanted trance of a Sleeping Palace. The animal and vegetable life goes on as before, for a time, but its character begins to recede instead of to advance. The great life-wave has left it and the animal and vegetable kingdoms gradually return to the condition in which they were found when the great life-wave first reached them. Enormous periods of time are available for this slow process by which the obscured world settles into sleep, for it will be seen that obscurity in each case lasts six times\* as long as the period of each world's occupation by the human life-wave. That is to say, the process which is accomplished as above described in connexion with the passage of the life-wave from globe A to globe B, is repeated all along the chain. When the wave passes to C, B is left in obscurity as well as A. Then D receives the life wave, and A, B, C are in obscurity. When the wave reaches G, all the preceding six worlds are in obscurity. Meanwhile the life-wave passes on in a certain regular progression, the symmetrical character of which is very satisfactory to scientific instincts. The reader will be prepared to pick up the idea at once, in view of the explanations already given of the way in which humanity evolves through seven great races, during each round period on a planet,—that is to say, during the occupation of such planet by the tidal wave of life. The fourth race is obviously the middle race of the series. As soon as this middle point is turned, and the evolution of the fifth race on any given planet begins, the preparation for humanity begins on the next. The evolution of the fifth race on D for example, is commensurate with the evolution, or rather with the revival of the mineral kingdom on E, and so on. That is to say, the evolution of the sixth race on D, coincides with the revival of the vegetable kingdom on E, the seventh race on D, with the revival of the animal kingdom on E, and then when the last monads of the seventh race on D, have passed into the subjective state or world of effects, the human period on E begins and the 1st race begins its development there. Meanwhile the twilight period on the world preceding D, has been deepening into the night of obscurity in the same progressive way, and obscurity there has definitely set in when the human period on D, is past its half way point. But just as the heart of a man beats and respiration continues, no matter how profound his sleep, there are processes of vital action which go on in the resting world even during the most profound depths of its repose. And these preserve, in view of the next return of the human wave, the results of the evolution that preceded its first arrival. Recovery for the reawakening planet is a larger process than its subsidence into rest, for it has to attain a higher degree of perfection against

the return of the human life-wave, than that at which it was left when the wave last went onward from its shore. But with every new beginning, Nature is infused with a vigour of its own—the freshness of a morning,—and the later obscurity period, which is a time of preparation and hopefulness as it were, invests evolution itself with a new momentum. By the time the great life wave returns, all is ready for its reception.

In the first essay on this subject it was roughly indicated, that the various worlds making up our planetary chain were not all of the same materiality. Putting the conception of spirit at the north pole of the circle and that of matter at the south pole, the worlds of the descending arc vary in materiality and spirituality, like those of the ascending arc. This variation must now be considered more attentively if the reader wishes to realise the whole processes of evolution more fully than heretofore.

Besides the earth, which is at the lowest material point, there are only two other worlds of our chain which are visible to physical eyes,—the one behind and the one in advance of it. These two worlds, as a matter of fact, are Mars and Mercury,—Mars being behind and Mercury in advance of us,—Mars in a state of entire obscurity now as regards the human life-wave, Mercury just beginning to prepare for its next human period.\*

The two planets of our chain that are behind Mars, and the two that are in advance of Mercury, are not composed of an order of matter which telescopes can take cognisance of. Four out of the seven are thus of an ethereal nature, which people who can only conceive matter in its earthly form, will be inclined to call immaterial. But they are not really immaterial at all. They are simply in a finer state of materiality than the Earth, but their finer state does not in any way defeat the uniformity of Nature's design in regard to the methods and stages of their evolution. Within the scale of their subtle "invisibility," the successive rounds and races of mankind pass through their stages of greater and less materiality just as on this Earth; but whoever would comprehend them, must comprehend this Earth first, and work out their delicate phenomena by correspondential inferences. Let us return therefore to the consideration of the great life-wave, in its aspects on this planet.

Just as the chain of worlds treated as a unity, has its north and south, its spiritual and material pole,—working

\* It may be worth while here to remark for the benefit of people who may be disposed, from physical science reading, to object that Mercury is too near the Sun, and consequently too hot to be a suitable place of habitation for Man,—that in the official report of the Astronomical Department of the United States on the recent "Mount Whitney observations," statements will be found that may check too confident criticisms of occult science along that line. The report in question was republished in *Nature*, and for the most part, within the last six months, in some of the Indian newspapers. The results of the Mount Whitney observations on selective absorption of solar rays showed, according to the official reporter, that it would no longer be impossible to suggest the conditions of an atmosphere which should render Mercury habitable, at the one extreme of the scale, and *Saturn* at the other. We have no concern with *Saturn* at present, nor if we had to explain on occult principles the habitability of Mercury, should we set to work with calculations about selective absorption. The fact is that ordinary science makes at once too much and too little of the Sun, as the store-house of force for the solar system,—too much in so far as the heat of planets has a great deal to do with another influence quite distinct from the Sun, an influence which will not be thoroughly understood till more is known than at present about the correlations of heat and magnetism, and of the magnetic, meteoric dust, with which inter-planetary space is pervaded. However it is enough,—to rebut any objection that might be raised against the explanations now in progress, from the point of view of loyal devotees of last year's science,—to point out that such objections would be already out of date. Modern science is very progressive,—this is one of its greatest merits,—but it is not a meritorious habit with modern scientists to think, at each stage of its progress, that all conceptions incompatible with the stage reached, must necessarily be absurd. If the present essay had been written twelve months ago, and remember that as regards the information it contains it might have been written twelve milleniums ago,—we could have said nothing more than the sentence last written, had some one argued in reference to Mercury, that Mr. Proctor had summed up all that could be said on the question, and had given judgment against its habitability. As it happens in this matter, Mount Whitney has risen up to refute the Proctorian judgment,—refuting it by wrong arguments indeed, but by arguments that will be acceptable in the Proctorian arena.

\* Or we may say five times, allowing for the half period of morning which precedes and the half period of evening which follows the day of full activity.



from spirituality down through materiality, up to spirituality again,—so the rounds of mankind constitute a similar series which the chain of globes itself might be taken to symbolise. In the evolution of man in fact, on any one plane as on all, there is a descending and an ascending arc; spirit, so to speak, transforming itself into matter, and matter resolving itself into spirit. The lowest or most material point in the cycle thus becomes the inverted apex of physical intelligence, which is the masked manifestation of spiritual intelligence. Each round of mankind evolved on the downward arc (as each race of each round if we descend to the smaller mirror of the cosmos) must thus be more physically intelligent than its predecessor, and each in the upward arc must be invested with a more refined form of mentality commingled with greater spiritual intuitiveness. In the first Round therefore we find man, a relatively etherial being compared even on earth with the state he has now attained here, not intellectual but super-spiritual. Like the animal and vegetable shapes around him, he inhabits an immense but loosely organised body. In the second Round he is still gigantic and etherial, but growing firmer and more condensed in body—a more physical man, but still less intelligent than spiritual. In the third Round he has developed a perfectly concrete and compacted body, at first the form rather of a giant ape than of a true man, but with intelligence coming more and more into the ascendant. In the last half of the third Round his gigantic stature decreases, his body improves in texture, and he begins to be a rational man. In the fourth Round intellect, now fully developed, achieves enormous progress. The dumb races with which the Round begins, acquire human speech as we understand it. The world teems with the results of intellectual activity and spiritual decline. At the half way point of the fourth Round here, the polar point of the whole seven-world period is passed. From this point onwards the spiritual ego begins its real struggle with body and mind to manifest its transcendental powers. In the fifth Round the struggle continues, but the transcendental faculties are largely developed, though the struggle between these on the one hand, with physical intellect and propensity is fiercer than ever, for the intellect of the fifth Round as well as its spirituality is an advance on that of fourth. In the sixth Round humanity attains a degree of perfection both of body and soul,—of intellect and spirituality, which ordinary mortals of the present epoch will not readily realise in their imaginations. The most supreme combinations of wisdom, goodness and transcendental enlightenment which the world has ever seen or thought of, will represent the ordinary type of manhood. Those faculties which now, in the rare efflorescence of a generation, enable some extraordinarily gifted persons to explore the mysteries of Nature and gather the knowledge of which some crumbs are now being offered (through these writings and in other ways) to the ordinary world, will then be the common apanage of all. As to what the seventh Round will be like, the most communicative occult teachers are solemnly silent. Mankind in the seventh Round will be something altogether too god-like for mankind in the fourth Round to forecast its attributes.

During the occupation of any planet by the human life-wave, each individual monad is inevitably incarnated many times. This has been partly explained already in Fragment No. V. If one existence only be passed by the monad in each of the branch races through which it must pass at least once, the total number accomplished during a Round period on one planet, would be 343,—the third power of 7. But as a matter of fact each monad is incarnated twice in each of the branch races, and also comes in, necessarily for some few extra incarnations as well. For reasons which is not easy for the outsider to divine, the possessors of occult knowledge are especially reluctant to give out numerical facts relating to cosmogony,

though it is hard for the uninitiated to understand why these should be withheld. At present, for example, we shall not be able to state what is the actual duration, in years, of the Round period. But a concession which only those who have long been students of occultism by the old method will fully appreciate, has been made about the numbers with which we are immediately concerned; and this concession is valuable at all events, as it helps to elucidate an interesting fact connected with evolution, on the threshold of which we have now arrived. This fact is that while the earth, for example, is inhabited as at present, by fourth Round humanity, by the wave of human life, that is to say, on its fourth journey round the circle of the worlds, there may be present among us some few persons, few in relation to the total number, who, properly speaking, belong to the fifth Round. Now, in the sense of the term at present employed, it must not be supposed that by any miraculous process, any individual unit has actually travelled round the whole chain of worlds once more often than his compeers. Under the explanations just given as to the way the tide-wave of humanity progresses, it will be seen that this is impossible. Humanity has not yet paid its fifth visit even to the planet next in advance of our own. But individual monads may outstrip their companions as regards their individual development, and so become exactly as mankind generally will be when the fifth Round has been fully evolved. And this may be accomplished in two ways. A man born as an ordinary fourth Round man, may, by processes of occult training, convert himself into a man having all the attributes of a fifth Round man and so become what we may call an artificial fifth-Rounder. But independently of all exertions made by man in his present incarnation, a man may also be born a fifth-Rounder, though in the midst of fourth Round humanity, by virtue of the total number of his previous incarnations.

If  $x$  stands for the normal number of incarnations which in the course of nature a monad must go through during a round period on one planet, and  $y$  for the margin of extra incarnations into which by a strong desire for physical life he may force himself during such a period, then, as a matter of fact,  $24\frac{1}{2} (x \times y)$  may exceed  $28x$ ; that is to say, in  $3\frac{1}{2}$  Rounds a monad may have accomplished as many incarnations as an ordinary monad would have accomplished in four complete Rounds. In less than  $3\frac{1}{2}$  Rounds the result could not have been attained, so that it is only now that we have passed the half way point of evolution on this half way planet, that the fifth-Rounders are beginning to drop in.

It is not possible in the nature of things that a monad can do more than outstrip his companions by more than one Round. This consideration notwithstanding Buddha was a sixth Round man, but this fact has to do with a great mystery outside the limits of the present calculation. Enough for the moment to say that the evolution of a Buddha relates to something more than mere incarnations within the limits of one planetary chain.

Since large numbers of lives have been recognised in the above calculations as following one another in the successive incarnations of an individual monad, it is important here, with the view of averting misconceptions to point out that the periods of time over which these incarnations range are so great that vast intervals separate them, numerous as they are. As stated above, we cannot just now give the actual duration of the Round-periods. Nor indeed could any figures be quoted as indicating the duration of all Round-periods equally, for these vary in length within very wide limits. But here is a simple fact which has been definitely stated on the highest occult authority we are concerned with. The present *race* of humanity, the present 5th *race* of the 4th Round period, began to evolve about one million of years ago. Now it is not yet finished; but supposing that a million years had constituted the complete life of the race, how would it have been divided up for each in-

individual monad? In a race there must be rather more than 100, and there can hardly be 120 incarnations for an individual monad. But say even there have been already 120 incarnations for monads in the present race already. And say that the average life of each incarnation was a century, even then we should only have 12,000 years out of the million spent in physical existence, against 988,000 years spent in the subjective sphere, or there would be an average of more than 8,000 years between each incarnation.\* Certainly these intervening periods are of very variable length, but they cannot contract to anything less than about 1,500 years, in any case,—leaving out of account of course the case of adepts who have placed themselves quite outside the operation of the ordinary law,—and 1,500 years if not a quite impossibly short, would be an extraordinarily brief interval between two rebirths.

### THE CAVE OF THE ECHOES.

#### A STRANGE BUT A TRUE STORY.†

IN one of the distant governments of the Russian empire in a small town, on the very borders of Siberia, a mysterious tragedy occurred some twenty-five years ago.

About six versts from the little town of P——, famous for the wild beauty of its scenery, and for the wealth of its inhabitants—generally proprietors of mines and iron foundries—stood an aristocratic mansion. Its household consisted of the master, a rich old bachelor, and his brother, a widower and the father of two sons and three daughters. It was known that the proprietor, Mr. Izvertzoff, had adopted his brother's children, and, having formed an especial attachment for his eldest nephew, Nicholas, he had made him the sole heir to his numerous estates.

Time rolled on. The uncle was getting old, the nephew coming of age. Days and years had passed in monotonous serenity, when, on the hitherto clear horizon of the quiet family, appeared a cloud. On an unlucky day one of the nieces took it into her head to study the zither. The instrument being of purely Teutonic origin, and no teacher for its speciality residing in the neighbourhood, the indulgent uncle sent to St. Petersburg for both. After diligent research only one Professor could be found willing to trust himself in such close proximity to Siberia. It was an old German artist, who, sharing equally his earthly affections between his instrument and a pretty blonde daughter, would part with neither. And thus it came to pass that, one fine morning, the old Professor arrived at the mansion with his music-box under one arm and his fair Munchen leaning on the other.

From that day, the little cloud began growing rapidly; for, every vibration of the melodious instrument found a responsive echo in the old bachelor's heart. Music awakens love, they say, and the work begun by the zither was completed by Munchen's blue eyes. At the expiration of six months the niece had become an expert zither-player, and the uncle was desperately in love.

One morning, gathering his adopted family around him, he embraced them all very tenderly, promised to remember them in his will, and wound up by declaring his unalterable resolution to marry the blue-eyed Munchen. After which he fell upon their necks and wept in silent rapture. The family, understanding that they were cheated out of the inheritance, also wept; but it was for another cause. Having thus wept, they consoled themselves and tried their best to rejoice, for the old gentleman was sincerely beloved by all. Not all of them rejoiced though. Nicholas, who had been himself smitten to the heart by the pretty German, and found himself at once defrauded of his belle and his uncle's money, neither rejoiced nor consoled himself, but disappeared for a whole day.

Meanwhile, Mr. Izvertzoff had given orders to prepare his travelling carriage for the following morning. It was whispered that he was going to the Government town, at some distance from there, with the intention of altering his will. Though very wealthy, he had no superintendent on his estate, but kept his books himself. The same evening, after supper, he was heard in his room scolding angrily at his servant, who had been in his service for over thirty years. This man, Ivan, was a native of Northern Asia, from Kamtchatka. Brought up by the family in the Christian religion, he was thought very much attached to his master. A few days later, when the first tragic circumstance I am about to relate, had brought all the Police force to the spot, it was remembered that Ivan was drunk on that night; that his master, who had a horror of this vice, had paternally thrashed him and turned him out of his room; and that Ivan had been seen reeling out of the door and heard to mutter threats.

There was on the vast domain of Mr. Izvertzoff a curious cavern, which excited the curiosity of all who visited it. It exists to this day, and is well known to every inhabitant of P. \* \* \* A pine forest, which begins nearly at the garden gate, climbs in steep terraces up to a long range of rocky hills, which it covers with a broad belt of impenetrable vegetation. The grotto leading to this place which is known as the "Cave of the Echoes," was situated about half a mile from the mansion, from which it appeared as a small excavation in the hill side, almost hidden by luxuriant plants, but not so as to prevent any person entering it from being readily seen from the terrace of the house. Entering the grotto, the explorer finds at the rear a narrow cleft, having passed which he emerges into a lofty cavern, feebly lighted through fissures in a ceiling fifty feet high. The cavern itself is immense, and could easily hold between two and three thousand people. A part of it was then paved with flags, and often used in the summer as a ball-room by picnic-parties. Of an irregular oval, it gradually narrows into a broad corridor, which runs for several miles under ground, intercepted here and there by other chambers, as large and lofty as the ball-room, but, unlike the first, impassable otherwise than in a boat, as they are always full of water. These natural basins have the reputation of being unfathomable.

On the margin of the first of these, was a small platform, with several mossy rustic seats arranged on it, and it is from this spot that all the phenomenal echoes are heard in all their weirdness. A word pronounced in a whisper or a sigh seems caught up by endless mocking voices, and instead of diminishing in volume, as honest echoes do, the sound grows louder at every successive repetition, until at last it bursts forth like the repercussion of a pistol-shot, and recedes in a plaintive wail down the corridor.

On the evening in question M. Izvertzoff had mentioned his intention to have a dancing party in this cave on his wedding day, which he had fixed for an early date. On the following morning, while preparing for his departure, he was seen by his family entering the grotto, accompanied only by the Siberian. Half an hour later Ivan returned to the mansion for a snuff-box, which his master had forgotten in his room, and went back with it to the cave. An hour later the whole house was startled with his loud cries. Pale and dripping with water, Ivan rushed in like a mad man and declared that M. Izvertzoff was nowhere to be found in the cave. Thinking he had fallen into the lake, he had dived into the first basin in search of him, and got nearly drowned himself.

The day passed in vain attempts to find the body. The Police filled the house, and louder than the rest in his despair seemed Nicholas, the nephew, who had returned home only to receive the sad tidings.

A dark suspicion fell upon Ivan, the Siberian. He had been struck by his master the night before, and had

\* See in this connection page 35 of Vol. I of *Isis Unveiled*, beginning at the last paragraph of page 34.

† This story is given from the narrative of an eye-witness, a Russian gentleman, very pious, and fully trustworthy. Moreover, the facts are copied from the police records of P——. The eye-witness in question attributes it of course partly to divine interference and partly to the Evil One.—Ed.

tions, the quantity has no real importance. Thus, for instance, when alcohol has to be inhaled, it makes no difference in the result obtained whether its surface covers an area of one square inch or that of a large plate.

In the next number it is proposed to show the enormous light that Yæger's discoveries of this new application of the chronoscope throws upon homeopathy in general, and the doubted efficacy of the infinitesimal doses in countless dilutions—especially.

---

### FRAGMENTS OF OCCULT TRUTH.

---

BY A LAY CHELA.

---

No. VIII.

---

#### THE PROGRESS OF HUMANITY.

THE course of Nature provides, as the reader will now have seen, for the indefinite progress towards higher phases of existence of all human entities. But no less will it have been seen that by endowing these entities as they advance with ever-increasing faculties, and by constantly enlarging the scope of their activity nature also furnishes each human entity with more and more decisive opportunities of choosing between good and evil. In the earlier rounds of humanity this privilege of selection is not well developed, and responsibility of action is correspondingly incomplete. The earlier rounds of humanity in fact do not invest the Ego with spiritual responsibility at all in the large sense of the term which we are now approaching. The devachanic periods which follow each objective existence in turn dispose fully of its merits, demerits, and the most deplorable personality which the Ego during the first half of its evolution can possibly develop is merely dropped out of the account as regards the larger undertaking, while the erring personality itself pays its relatively brief penalty, and troubles nature no more. But the second half of the great evolutionary period is carried on on different principles. The phases of existence which are now coming into view, cannot be entered upon by the Ego without positive merits of its own appropriate to the new development in prospect; it is not enough that the now fully responsible and highly gifted being which man becomes, at the great turning point of his career should float idly on the stream of progress; he must begin to swim, if he wishes to push his way forward.

Debarred by the complexity of the subject from dealing with all its features simultaneously, our survey of nature has so far contemplated the seven rounds of human development, which constitute the whole planetary undertaking with which we are concerned as a continuous series throughout which it is the natural destiny of humanity in general to pass. But it will be remembered that humanity in the sixth round has been spoken of as so highly developed that the sublime faculties and attributes of the highest adeptships are the common apurage of all; while in the seventh round the race has almost emerged from humanity into divinity. Now every human being in this stage of development will still be identified by an uninterrupted connexion, with all the personalities which have been strung upon that thread of life from the beginning of the great evolutionary process. Is it conceivable that the character of such personalities, is of no consequence in the long run, and that two god-like beings might stand side by side in the seventh round, developed, the one from a long series of blameless and serviceable existences, the other from an equally long series of evil and grovelling lines! That surely could not come to pass, and we have to ask now how do we find the congruities of nature preserved compatibly with the appointed evolution of humanity to the higher forms of existence which crown the edifice.

Just as childhood is irresponsible for its acts, the earlier races of humanity are irresponsible for theirs; but there comes the period of full growth, when the complete development of the faculties which enable the individual man to choose between good and evil, in the single life with which he is for the moment concerned, enable the continuous Ego also to make its final selection. That period, that enormous period for nature, is in no hurry to catch its creature in a trap in such a matter as this,—is barely yet beginning, and a complete round period around the seven worlds will have to be gone through before it is over until the middle of the fifth period is passed on this Earth, the great question—to be or not to be for the future—is not irrevocably settled. We are coming now into the possession of the faculties which render man a fully responsible being, but we have yet to employ those faculties during the maturity of our Ego-hood in the manner which shall determine the vast consequences hereafter.

It is during the first half of the fifth round that the struggle principally takes place. Till then the ordinary course of life may be a good or a bad preparation for the struggle, but cannot fairly be described as the struggle itself. And now we have to examine the nature of the struggle, so far merely spoken of as the selection between good and evil. That is in no way an inaccurate, but it is an incomplete, definition.

The ever-recurring and ever-threatened conflict between intellect and spirituality is the phenomenon to be now examined, the common place conceptions which these two words denote must of course be expanded to some extent before the occult conception is realised, for European habits of thinking are rather apt to set up in the mind an ignoble image of spirituality as an attribute of the character rather than of the mind itself,—a pale goody-goodness hour of an attachment to religious ceremonial and of devout aspirations, no matter to what whimsical notions of Heaven and Divinity in which the “spiritually-minded” person may have been brought up. Spirituality in the occult sense has little or nothing to do with feeling devout; it has to do with the capacity of the mind for assimilating knowledge at the fountain head of knowledge itself,—of absolute knowledge,—instead of by the circuitous and laborious process of ratiocination.

The development of pure intellect, the ratiocinative faculty, has been the business of European nations for so long, and in this department of human progress they have achieved such magnificent triumphs that nothing in occult philosophy will be less acceptable to European thinkers at first, and while the ideas at stake are imperfectly grasped, than the first aspect of the occult theory concerning intellect and spirituality,—but this does not arise so much from the under-tendency of occult science to depreciate intellect as from the under-tendency of modern western speculation to depreciate spirituality. Broadly speaking, so far western philosophy has had no opportunity of appreciating spirituality; it has not been made acquainted with the range of the inner faculties of man; it has merely groped blindly in the direction of a belief that such inner faculties existed, and Kant himself, the greatest modern exponent of that idea, does little more than contend that there is such a faculty as intuition,—if we only find how to work with it.

The process of working with it is occult science in its highest aspect,—the cultivation of spirituality. The cultivation of mere power over the forces of nature, the investigation of some of her subtle secrets as regards the inner principles controlling physical results, is occult science in its lowest aspects, and into that lower region of its activity mere physical science may, or even must, gradually run up. But the acquisition by mere intellect—physical science in *excelsis*—of privileges which are the proper apurages of spirituality, is one of the dangers of that struggle which decides the ultimate destiny of the human Ego. For there is one thing which intellectual processes do not help mankind to realise, and

that is the nature and supreme excellence of spiritual existence. On the contrary intellect arises out of physical causes,—the perfection of the physical brain,—and tends only to physical results,—the perfection of material welfare. Although as a concession to “weak brethren” and “religion,” on which it looks with good-humoured contempt, modern intellect does not condemn spirituality, it certainly treats the physical human life as the only serious business with which grave men, or even earnest philanthropists, can concern themselves. But obviously if spiritual existence, vivid subjective consciousness, really does go on for periods greater than the periods of intellectual physical existence in the ratio as we have seen in discerning the Devachanic condition, in the ratio of 82 to 1, at least then surely man’s subjective existence is more important than his physical existence, and intellect in error when all its efforts are bent on the amelioration of the physical existence.

These considerations show how the choice between good and evil,—which has to be made by the human Ego in the course of the great struggle between intellect and spirituality—is not a mere choice between ideas as plainly contrasted as wickedness and virtue. It is not so rough a question as that, whether a man be wicked or virtuous, which must really at the final critical turning point decide whether he shall continue to live and develope into higher phases of existence or cease to live altogether. The truth of the matter (if it is not imprudent at this state of our progress to brush the surface of a new mystery) that the question, to be or not to be, is not settled by reference to the question whether a man be wicked or virtuous *at all*. It will plainly be seen eventually that there must be evil spirituality as well as good spirituality. So that the great question of continued existence turns altogether and of necessity on the question of spirituality as compared with physicality. The point is not so much “*shall a man live, is he good enough to be permitted to live any longer as,*” “*can the men live any longer in the higher levels of existence into which humanity must at last evolve.*” Has he qualified himself to live by the cultivation of the durable portion of his nature? If not he has got to the end of his tether. The destiny which must befall him is annihilation, not necessarily suffering in a conscious existence but that dissolution that must befall the soul which has wholly assimilated itself to matter—into the eighth sphere of pure matter that Ego must descend, which is unfitted to go on any further in the upward spiral path around the planetary chain.

This is the great meaning of the occult doctrine that, “to be immortal in good, one must identify oneself with God: to be immortal in evil with Satan. These are the two poles of the world of souls; between these two poles vegetate and die without remembrance the useless portion of mankind.” The enigma, like all occult formulas, has a lesser application (fitting the microcosm as well as the macrocosm), and in its lesser significance refers to Devachan and Avitchi, and the blank destiny of colourless personalities; but in its more important bearing it relates to the final sorting out of humanity at the middle of the great fifth round, the annihilation of the utterly unspiritual Egos and the passage onward of the others to be immortal in good or immortal in evil. Precisely the same meaning attaches to “Revelations” (iii. 15-16) “I would thou wert cold or hot; so then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.” Spirituality then is not devout aspiration; it is the highest kind of intellection, that which takes cognisance of the working of nature by direct assimilation of the mind with her highest principles. The objection which physical intelligence will bring against this view is that the mind can cognise nothing except by observation of phenomena and reasoning thereon. That is the mistake: it can, and the existence of occult science is the highest proof

thereof. But there are hints pointing in the direction of such proof all around us if we have but the patience to examine their true bearings. It is idle to say, in fact merely for one thing, of the phenomena of clairvoyance,—crude and imperfect as those have been which have pushed themselves on the attention of the world—that there are no other avenues to consciousness but those of the five senses. Certainly in the ordinary world the clairvoyant faculty is an exceedingly rare one, but indicates the existence in man of a potential faculty the nature of which, as inferred from its slightest manifestation, must obviously be capable in its highest development of leading to a direct assimilation of knowledge independently of observation. One of the most embarrassing difficulties that besets the present attempt to translate the Esoteric Doctrine into plain language, is due really to the fact that spiritual perceptiveness, apart from all ordinary processes by which knowledge is acquired, is a great and grand possibility of human nature. It is by that method in the regular course of occult training that adepts impart instruction to their pupils. They awaken the dormant sense in the pupil, and through this they imbue his mind with a knowledge that such and such a doctrine is the real truth. The whole scheme of evolution which the foregoing chapters have portrayed, infiltrates into the regular Chela’s mind by reason of the fact that he is made to *see* the processes taking place by clairvoyant vision. There are no words used in his instruction at all. And adepts themselves, to whom the facts and processes of nature are familiar as our five fingers to us, find it difficult to explain in a treatise which they cannot illustrate for us, by producing mental pictures in our dormant sixth sense, the complex anatomy of the planetary system.

Certainly, it is not to be expected that mankind as yet should be generally conscious of possessing the sixth sense, for the day of its activity has not yet come. This consideration may serve to introduce a highly important fact connected with evolution which has been passed over in silence till now. Each round in turn is devoted to his perfection in man of the corresponding principle in its numerical order to its preparation for assimilation with the next. The earlier rounds have been described as concerned with man in a shadowy loosely organised, unintelligent form. The fourth round in which we are now engaged, is the round in which the fourth principle, Will, Desire, is fully developed, and in which it is engaged in assimilating itself with the fifth principle. Reason, Intelligence in the fifth round, the completely developed Reason, Intellect or soul, in which the Ego then resides, must assimilate itself to the sixth principle, spirituality, or give up the business of existence altogether.

All readers of Bhuddist literature are familiar with the constant references made there to the Arhat’s union of his soul, with “God.” This, in other words, is the premature development of his sixth principle. He forces himself right up through all the obstacles which impede such an operation in the case of a fourth-round man, into that stage of evolution which awaits the rest of humanity,—or rather as much of humanity as may reach it in the ordinary course of nature,—in the latter part of the fifth round. And in doing this it will be observed he tides himself right over the great period of danger—the middle of the fifth round. That is the stupendous achievement of the adept as regards his own personal interests. He has reached the further shore of the sea in which so many of mankind will perish. He waits there in a contentment which people cannot even realise without some glimmerings of spirituality—of the sixth sense themselves for the arrival there of his future companions. He does not wait in his physical body,—let me hasten to add to avoid misconstruction—but when at last *privileged to resign this*, in a spiritual condition which we have not yet endeavoured to describe.

## DEVACHAN.

Will you kindly permit me a question?

In Vol. 4, No. 2, on page 29, I find, that in the state described as Devachan the spiritual monad leads for very long periods an existence of unalloyed satisfaction and *conscious* enjoyment, however without activity, without exciting contrasts between pain and pleasure, without pursuit and achievement.

Now, how can a conscious existence without activity or pursuit be one of satisfaction or enjoyment? Would not annihilation be preferable to such a state of indolence? In the Christian heaven there is at least the waving of palm-leaves and harping. A poor amusement indeed; but better than nothing?—Please explain.

Hoping that my inquisitiveness will give no offence.

GEORGETOWN, } I am very respectfully,  
COLORADO, } Your obedient servant,  
January, 31. } R. HARTMANN. F. T. S.

EDITOR'S NOTE:—Our correspondent's question has been already anticipated by the important appendices added to the recent "Fragment" on Devachan. To realise the conditions of spiritual existence of any sort it is necessary to get above the plane of merely physical perceptions. One cannot see the things of the spirit with the eyes of the flesh, and one cannot successfully appreciate subjective phenomena by help only of those intellectual reflections which appertain to the physical senses. "How can a conscious existence without activity or pursuit be one of satisfaction or enjoyment?" It would only emphasise the mistaken idea which this question embodies if one were to ask instead, "how can a conscious existence without athletic sports and hunting be one of enjoyment?" The cravings of man's animal or even bodily human nature are not permanent in their character. The demands of the mind are different from those of the body. In physical life an ever recurring desire for change impresses our imagination with the idea that there can be no continuity of contentment, without variety of occupation and amusement. To realise completely the way in which, a single vein of spiritual consciousness may continue for considerable periods of time to engage the attention—not only the contented, but the delighted attention,—of a spiritual entity, is probably possible only for persons who already in life have developed certain inner faculties, dormant in mankind at large. But meanwhile our present correspondent may perhaps derive some satisfaction, from the fact,—as explained in recent essays on the subject,—that one sort of variety is developed in Devachan in a very high degree; viz., the variety which naturally grows out of the simple themes set in vibration during life. Immense growths for example, of knowledge itself are possible in Devachan, for the spiritual entity which has begun the "pursuit" of such knowledge during life. Nothing can happen to a spirit in Devachan, the key-note of which has not been struck during life; the conditions of a subjective existence are such that the importation of quite external impulses and alien thoughts is impossible. But the seed of thought once sown,—the current of thoughts once set going (the metaphor may freely be varied to suit any taste,)—and then its developments in devachan may be infinite for the sixth sense there, and the sixth principle are our instructors, and in such society there can be no isolation, as physical humanity understands the term. The spiritual ego in fact, under the tuition of his own sixth principle, need be in no fear of being dull, and would be as likely to sigh for a doll's house or a box of ninepins as for the harps and palm-leaves of the mediæval Heaven.

## THE SEVENTEEN-RAYED SUN-DISC.

[The following interesting letter was received by us from Fresno, California. As it is a private one, we can give but extracts from it.—Ed.]

EXPLORING Copan and Quinqua in Honduras and Guatemala last year, I had the good fortune to make a discovery, which I am sure will interest you. As you are aware, the most prominent sculptured monuments in Copan consist of four-sided columns of from 10 to 12 feet high. These columns represent generally only on one side large sculptured personages in high relief.

The other sides again contain ornaments and glyphic inscriptions, hitherto not read or deciphered. One pillar not previously described, however, contains only hieroglyphics arranged on all sides. It seems to be a record perhaps of laws, perhaps of historical events. This pillar is about 10 feet high, and the sides 3 and 4 feet wide respectively. But the most remarkable is that this pillar was covered by a cap in the shape of a very low truncate pyramid. On this pyramid was seen a forced dead head of colossal dimensions and surrounding the same was an expanded "sun-disc," crowning the very cap.

The rays of the sun-disc were distinctly marked. The similarity of the same and the sun-discs common in the Egyptian monuments was so marked, that it immediately struck me that the number of rays must be 17, the sacred number of the Egyptian sun-disc. Upon counting the rays they were found to be as expected—17.

Now is this a pure "coincidence" or is it another link in the broken and scattered chain, whose finding points toward an ancient connection between the Central American peoples, the Mayas and other races, and the Egyptians by means of a connecting Atlantis?

Another curiosity, naturally a "coincidence," is worthy of notice. One of these sculptured personages dressed in priestly robes and holding in his hand a small square box, has his legs above the sandals ornamented with the CRESCENT. The same sign was used by the Romans to signify immortality and similarly placed above the sandals.

Cannot your trans-Himalayan Brothers give us any clue to these hieroglyphics inscribed on the Central American Monuments? Or have you no Psychometrists who could decipher them psychometrically. If any one should be willing to try to do so, I would send him a small portion of one of the glyphs I have in my possession, and may be some good will come out of it.

E. G.

EDITOR'S NOTE:—Assuredly the discovery mentioned in the above letter,—the pillar with its 17-rayed sun-disc,—points once more to an ancient connexion between the central American peoples and the lost continent of Atlantis. The uniformity in the symbolical meanings of American antiquities, and of antiquities connected with "the wisdom religion" in Egypt or any other parts of Europe or Asia where they may be observed, is certainly far more remarkable than would be agreeable to theorists who wish to account for it by help of that hard-worked servant—coincidence. It has been traced with great patience through many different departments of archæology by Mr. Donnelly in his recent "Atlantis; or the Antediluvian World." The second part of the title of this volume, by the by, will not be quite acceptable to students of the subject who approach it from the side of occult science. The deluge is better left alone until cosmogony is more generally understood than at present. There is no one deluge that can conveniently be taken as a turning point in the world's history,—with everything before that antediluvian, and everything of later date—postdiluvian. There have been many such deluges cutting the various races of mankind at the appointed time in their development. The situation has already been referred to in the "Fragments of Occult Truth." During the occupation of the Earth for one period by the great tidal wave of humanity, seven great races are successively developed, their end being in every case marked by a tremendous cataclysm which changes the face of the earth in the distribution of land and water. The present race of mankind, as often stated, is the fifth race. The inhabitants of the great continent of Atlantis were the fourth race. When they were in their prime, the European continent was not in existence as we know it now, but none the less was there free communication between Atlantis and such portions of Europe as did exist, and Egypt. The ancient Egyptians themselves were not an Atlantic colony. Mr. Donnelly is mistaken on that point, but the wisdom Religion of the initiates was certainly identical and hence the identities of symbolical sculpture. This is what the "Himalayan Brothers" say, whether any of our psychometrists will see any further, depends on the degree of their development, at any rate, we accept the offer of our esteemed correspondent with thanks and will expect the promised portion of the glypt, before we venture to say anything further.

## KUMARILA BHATTA.

In the Editorial note in reply to a Hindu Theosophist's query, whether some Rishis of old do exist in the flesh and blood, you pertinently ask him whether he is prepared to accept literally the popular interpretation of—

(Ahalyāya jārāh surapati rabhudātmatanayām; praja natho, &c. &c.) wherein Indra is accused of adultery with Ahalya and Brahma of attempting criminal violence on the person of her own daughter; and you refer him to Kamarila Bhatta (not Kulluka Bhatta as the printer's devils make you say). For the edification of your readers, such as may not readily lay hold of the passage alluded to, I beg to transcribe the learned Bhatta's rationalistic explanation of that mythical tradition. The translation in English that follows is from the pen of Dr. Max Müller, and is taken from his history of ancient Sanskrit Literature, p. 529:—

"Prajāpati, the lord of the creation, is the name of the sun; and he is called so, because he protects all creatures. His daughter Ushas is the dawn. And when it is said that he



mesmerism, the concentrated and purified essence, so to speak, of the magnetic forces of Nature in their crude and unrefined state.

"Every living body"—writes Mons. Cazenouve—"is an electrical and magnetical apparatus with functions under atmospheric influence—the reservoir of the two electricities. Ampère has proved it. . . The habitual function of the muscles has to be attributed to the effect produced by a current the fountain head of which is none other than our WILL."

Now "M. Edard, a veritable human torpilla, finds in himself the elements which furnish him with the means of producing a well regulated vibration to the degree that is needed, in the already vibrating organism and the materials which compose his electro-magnetic apparatuses. . . ." One can imagine the results that can be produced by the intelligent guidance of the magneto-electric currents. One of the most curious of his experiments is that of the so-called "dry bath"—an invention of Mr. Edard.

A vast room in his house at Passy (near Paris), 22, Rue Dubare, that any one can visit, is devoted specially to this operation. A large automatic arm chair, is the chief electro-magnetic apparatus in the experiment and of an enormous power. The patients under treatment are placed in it. . . . Insulated by four glass cups and a thin layer of *gutta-percha* from the floor, the arm chair rests on a carpet covering 1419 sheaths of canvas filled with the oxydized ore of magnetic iron. The arm chair furnished inside with a mechanism of 36 spools and armatures of soft iron, finds itself at a given moment under the influence of a magnetic current produced by five elements (the great model of a "Gaiffe-pile" with a basis of bichromate of potassium). The heat disengaged by the arm-chair strongly disposes the patient to receive the special electro-atmospheric action proceeding from the disengagement of the ozone\* generated by a powerful statical machine of Oltz, placed in simultaneous communication with the sheaths that cover an area of 24 square metres of the floor. In this particular state of chemical activity, the oxygen acquires physiological properties that act directly upon the organism in sur-exciting its functions.

Ozone, as every one well knows, exists wherever there is an active vegetation, as in the fields, the forests, etc., whereas there is a considerable diminution of it in towns. Thus an artificial atmosphere impregnated with oxygen is being created and must act beneficially upon the patients who are dying for the need of it. . . . "Thus Mr. Edard bathes himself and his patients in this life-restoring atmosphere, saturates himself with the effluvia all charged with ozone! and thanks to the reactive force with which he himself is endowed, he excites a similar reaction in his subject. . . ."

"Another statical machine of Carre, is sometimes placed in communication with the patient. . . . Nothing so curious as to witness Mr. Edard's experiments, during the evening in dark. The whole room appears literally on fire; operator and patient, arm-chair and floor, are flashing with thousands of brilliant sparks. Under Mr. Edard's hand, the living battery, the hair of those present, like luminous rays seem moved to and fro by a gentle breeze, standing on end and being lowered in turn, while under the feet of the persons present move in luminiferous dots innumerable sparks and cracking scintillas. . . ."

The magnetic iron ore used in his apparatus is brought from Madagascar, from Naples, from the banks of the Rhine, and from two places in France, Puy-en-Velay and Souillac. But M. Edard accords preference to the ore from the last-mentioned place, although it is charged with a quartzose sand rendering it difficult of purification.

It is an established fact in science that all magnetic iron, whether artificial or natural, loses its magnetism when exposed to a very high temperature or when more

or less oxydized. But M. Edard has found out a process—the secret of which he keeps to himself—by which no elevation of temperature nor oxydisation can destroy the magnetism of the mineral in powder that he uses in his tubes, so that this property renders his electro-magnetic appliances more enduring and valuable than those which we have seen advertised elsewhere.

We conclude this short notice of the Professor's appliances by drawing the attention of our readers to an interesting experiment described by M. L. de Cazenouve, made of the vivifying efficacy of this magnetic mineral powder. An orange tree 200 years old having a girth of nearly 18 feet was found to be sluggish in growth and losing its vitality, presaging total ruin and death. M. Edard administered to it a dose of 250 grains of his powder and in a short time the tree gradually resumed its original vitality, and recovered its normal state of vigour and fruitfulness. This experiment thus establishes, nay corroborates, the fact that animal life and plant life are identical in the main and are but different phases of that mysterious Vital Force that pervades and vibrates throughout the whole universe.

We would strongly advise those of our readers who suffer from diseases pronounced incurable by their blessed, learned physicians, whose god is allopathy and themselves its prophets, to try the new apparatuses. They are extremely cheap and can be had for a few rupees.

[The Manager of this Journal will be most happy to render services in that direction to whomsoever may need them.]

#### K A R M A.

(An Appendix to *Fragments of Occult Truth*.)

WITH reference to a tenet in one of the *Fragments of Occult Truth*, a respected member of our Society—N. D. K.—writes to enquire "What Karma propels the higher Ego into the next birth," when "a highly depraved personality is dropped out."

At the outset it may be well to repeat again what has been already so often stated, namely, that the *Fragments* being but fragmentary and incomplete, must go on exhibiting difficulties and even apparent discrepancies until the whole doctrine concerning the after-state of the *Ego* is thoroughly mastered. But students with a tolerable amount of intuitive perception have had enough of philosophy given them, to enable the more advanced ones to work out many a detail: especially if they live the life which clears the inner vision. Few of these can be given in a publication that reaches the outsider as well as the student of occultism. There are secrets of initiation that it is impossible to communicate promiscuously to the world at large, for it would amount to throwing many a mind into a direful confusion, unless the whole doctrine is explained; and this no adept or even advanced neophyte would consent to do at this stage of the teaching. But this particular tenet having been already outlined, there is no further necessity of remaining silent with regard to this special detail.

The readers of Col. Olcott's *Buddhist Catechism* may well recall here with advantage the following very suggestive passages (pages 54 and 55):—

".....In each birth the personality differs from that of the previous or next succeeding birth. Karma, the *deus ex machina*, masks (or shall we say reflects?) itself now in the personality of a sage, again as an artisan, and so on throughout the string of births. But though personalities ever shift, the one line of life along which they are strung like beads, runs unbroken. . . ."

Alongside with the above quotation should be put the following from the *Fragments of Occult Truth*, No. 1 (October *Theosophist*, Vol. III, No. 1, page 19, col. 2):—

".....The time will come, no doubt, but many steps higher on the ladder, when the Ego will regain its consciousness of all its past stages of existence. . . ."

\*Oxygen in an active or highly electro-negative state, as explained by Faraday.—Ed.

If the enquirer will realise the real meaning of these two quotations, he will have the key to a correct understanding of the question as to what *Karma* propels the higher *Ego* into the next birth, when even that of a highly depraved personality is dropped out, together with the personal soul that weaved it out. It will be clear from these passages that the individuality or the spiritual monad is a thread upon which are strung various personalities. Each personality leaves its own—the higher spiritual—impressions upon the divine *Ego*, the consciousness of which returns at a certain stage of its progress, even that of the highly depraved soul that had to perish in the end. The reason for it becomes self-evident, if one reflects that however criminal and lost to every glimmer of a higher feeling, no human soul is yet born utterly depraved, and that there was a time during the youth of the sinful human personality when it had worked out some kind or other of *Karma*; and that it is this that survives and forms the basis of the *Karma* to come. To make it clearer, let us suppose that A lives to that age when a person becomes an adult and begins to bloom fully into life. No man, however vicious his natural tendency, becomes so at once. He has had therefore time to evolve a *Karma*, however faint and insignificant. Let us further imagine that at the age of eighteen or twenty A begins to give way to vice and thus gradually loses the remotest connection with his higher principle. At thirty or say forty, he dies. Now, the personality of A between fifteen and twenty is as little the personality of A from twenty to thirty, as though it were quite another man. Even the physiologists divide the physical personality into stages of seven, and show man changing atoms to the last, every seven years. The same with the inner man. The fifth principle of the sensual, highly depraved man, may and will perish, while the *Karma* of his youth, though not strong and complete enough to secure for him a bliss in *Devachan* and union with his higher principle—is yet sufficiently outlined to allow the monad a grasp on it for the next rebirth. On the other hand we are taught that it so happens sometimes that the *Karma* of a personality is not fully worked out in the birth that follows. Life is made up of accidents, and the personality that becomes may be hindered by circumstances from receiving the full due its *Karma* is entitled to, whether for good or for bad. But the Law of Retribution will never allow itself to be cheated by blind chance. There is then a provision to be made, and the accounts that could not be settled in one birth will be squared in the succeeding one. The portion of the sum-total which could not be summed up on one column is carried forward to the following. For verily the many lives of an individual monad were well compared in the *Fragment*s to the pages of an account book—THE BOOK OF LIFE or—LIVES....

Out of these impressions, then, which constitute the *Karma* of the youth, is evolved the new personality. Our botanical friends may know that the croton plant evolves out of itself another plant, when the one already evolved dies out or withers away. Nature must always progress, and each fresh attempt is more successful than the previous one. This fresh evolution is due to the latent potentiality of life it has within itself. In the same manner, although one particular personality may be so far depraved as to be entirely dissociated from the spiritual monad and go into the *eighth* sphere, where annihilation is its lot, yet the impressions of the previous personalities upon the higher *Ego* have in them potentiality enough to evolve a new physical *Ego*, like the croton plant. The connection between a man's spiritual monad and the succession of physical *Egos* with which it is temporarily associated, has been, some where in these columns, compared to the retrospective glance of a man on some past period of his earthly existence. While reviewing in his memory his work day by day—those days on which he did nothing of any importance and passed idly away, having left no impression on his mind, must be, and are to him, like a perfect blank. No

consciousness that he had passed such days remains there. In the same manner, the *Ego* when at the end of its long pilgrimage will regain consciousness of those personalities only which have made a sufficiently strong spiritual, hence indelible, mark on the monad, while the memory of the conscious acts of the particular depraved personality which goes to the eighth sphere will be entirely obliterated.

It may then be urged what stimulus is there for a man to be good and pure, if his spiritual monad is any how to progress? This is no doubt a side issue but a very important one. It must not be discussed however at this stage of our writing.

### “ESOTERIC BUDDHISM.”

MR. A. P. SINNETT, F. T. S., author of “the Occult World,” has in the press of Messrs. Trubner and Co. a new volume of Asiatic Esotericism, to which he gives the above title, and which is destined to create a much wider interest even than his other work. Its great novelty consists in its being an exposition of certain tenets of the secret doctrine of Tibetan Buddhism—that of the Arhats which, as our readers know, is but another name for the “World Religion” or Occult Doctrine underlying all the ancient faiths of mankind. It is the key alike to the veiled language of the Parsi, Hindu, Buddhist, Babylonian, Egyptian, Hebrew Grecian, Roman, and all other Scriptures. He who masters it perfectly will comprehend the essence of whatsoever religion has been evolved by humanity as the vehicle for its highest spiritual concepts. It would be exaggeration to say that the reader of Mr. Sinnett's two books may count upon finding anything more than a glimpse at this Wisdom Religion, for he is but a beginner in this branch of study. Yet, at the same time, it must be conceded that he has, under especially favouring circumstances, been able to get a clearer insight into some portions of this occult philosophy, and permitted to express it in plainer terms than any other author of modern times. The world-wide circulation of the “Occult World”—of which three editions have been sold already—is at once an evidence of the general interest now felt in these subjects, and a guarantee of the success which awaits the new, and more important, volume. In another place will be found the manager's announcement, to which intending purchasers are referred.

THE SPECIAL ATTENTION of the general reader as well as of members is called to an important article in the *Supplement* on “Chelaship.” Facts of the highest importance to all who aspire to the practical study of occult science are therein given. As the provisions of criminal statutes have no terrors for the virtuous, so the warning contained in the article will not daunt those who feel themselves equal to the great Trial.

### THE SEPTENARY PRINCIPLE IN ESOTERICISM.

SINCE the present exposition of the Arhat esoteric doctrine was begun, many who had not acquainted themselves with the occult basis of Hindu philosophy have imagined that the two were in conflict. Some of the more bigoted have openly charged the Occultists of the Theosophical Society of propagating rank Buddhist heresy; and have even gone to the length of affirming that the whole Theosophic movement was but a masked Buddhist propaganda. We were taunted by ignorant Brahmins and learned Europeans that our septenary divisions of nature and everything in it, including man, is arbitrary and not endorsed by the oldest religious systems of the East.

Fortunately, we have not been obliged to wait long for our perfect vindication. In the following number our Brother Mr. T. Subba Row, B. A., B. L., confessedly a learned Occultist and ripe scholar, will lay before the