

ESOTERIC WRITINGS

OF

T. SUBBA ROW

THE THEOSOPHICAL PUBLISHING HOUSE

Adyar, Chennai 600 020, India

Wheaton, IL, USA

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First Edition 1951

First to Third Reprints 1972-1994

Second Edition 2002

ISBN 81-7059-364-6

Printed at the Vasanta Press
The Theosophical Society
Adyar, Chennai 600 020, India

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

WHILST presenting this little volume to the public, we cannot but pay due tribute to the memory of one who had done such good service to the cause of occult science. The late lamented Mr. T. Subba Row, B.A., B.L., of the Madras University, was one of the highest occultists of Southern India. We tried our utmost to collect as many facts relating to his life as we could possibly get from his relatives and friends, to enable us to write a short sketch of his life to go with this book. But, we regret to say, our endeavours in this direction have been without fruit. We have, therefore, had no alternative but to reproduce the notice of his death taken by Col. H. S. Olcott, in *The Theosophist*, in its place.

Mr. Subba Row was a member of The Theosophical Society, and was highly respected not only by all its members, but also by Madame H. P. Blavatsky, for his great erudition and proficiency in almost all the branches of occult science. Madame Blavatsky used always to consult him whenever there were difficult and intricate problems to be solved. And we know she had, at one time, sent the manuscripts of her most valuable

work, *The Secret Doctrine*, to him for correction and alteration; but he declined to undertake the work because he believed the world was not yet prepared to accept the disclosures of those secrets which had been, for good reason, hitherto kept within the knowledge of the sacred few.

Mr. T. Subba Row had written no book on occult science, but he has left behind him a series of lectures and articles which he used every now and then to contribute to *The Theosophist*, and which display the real depth of his knowledge, and his worth as an occultist. He, in the year 1887, at the Convention of The Theosophical Society, held at Adyar, Madras, gave a course of lectures to assist Theosophists and others in their study of the Philosophy of *Bhagavad-Gītā*. We all know how difficult to understand is the Philosophy of the *Gītā*, notwithstanding the commentaries written thereon in Samskrit as well as in many modern Eastern and even Western languages. The reason of this is obvious. Everyone acquainted with the description of the great war between the Pāṇḍavas and the Kauravas knows that the *Bhagavad-Gītā* was preached by Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa to his friend and disciple Arjuna, because of the disinclination expressed by the latter to fight on the battlefield. This description, as a matter of course, as there was no time to be lost, must have been recited in a short space of time, in the form of aphorisms in short sentences, conveying a deep hidden meaning. Śrī Kṛṣṇa knew that Arjuna was able accurately to

comprehend in all its fullness the significance of this teaching.

Mr. Subba Row has written a commentary on this philosophy, and has done his best to make it as elucidative, consistent, and clear as possible. These lectures are available in a separate book, and the readers will find on its study what an amount of learning the lecturer must have had:

These very lectures are conspicuous for the fact of having created between Mr. Subba Row and Madame Blavatsky a difference of opinion regarding the Kośas (कोशाः) or principles of which the human being is formed. This resulted in a written controversy between them, which the reader will find reprinted in this book.

Though most of the articles reproduced here are of controversial character, the reader will find them of sterling worth and merit on account of the originality of thought displayed and the able treatment of the various points controverted. And, moreover, they teem with learned and useful suggestions for progress of the students of occult science. Those who had read and studied these articles in the various numbers of *The Theosophist*, as they appeared from time to time, had more than once requested us to reprint them in a collected form for the benefit of students of occult learning.

Besides these articles, we are in possession of several notes of a miscellaneous character, regarding the private instructions given by Mr. T. Subba Row to

the "chosen few" who had the good fortune to be in close contact with him. But we are sorry to say that they are incomplete, and were given by him only under the pledge of secrecy. It has, therefore, been thought desirable not to publish them. Mr. Subba Row had also made contributions to the local newspapers and magazines, but we think it unnecessary to reprint these, as they are solely on questions political and social.

Here we cannot help thanking our respected brother, the Hon'ble Mr. Subramania Iyer for the valuable help, pecuniary and otherwise, he has rendered us in publishing some of our works.

Bombay, 1st April, 1895.

T. T.

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF THE LATE

T. SUBBA ROW, B.A., B.L., F.T.S.

(By Col. H. S. Olcott in *The Theosophist*)

THE announcement, I am now compelled to make of the death of this brilliant young Indian mystical philosopher, will shock the Theosophical reading public. Wherever our work has extended, there has his reputation spread. He was an intellectual phenomenon, and his mental history goes as far as anything conceivable to support the theory of palingenesis. The facts bearing upon the case, as I derived them from his venerable mother on the day of the cremation, will presently be given. When he last visited the Headquarters, the first week in April last, the mysterious cutaneous disease to which he ultimately succumbed, had begun to show itself in an outbreak of boils. Neither he nor either of us dreamt that it was at all serious. But shortly after he had to keep to his room, then to his lounge, and he never went out again save once, when he was taken to a different house for change of air. In the beginning of June he sent me a touching request to come and see him, which of course, I did. He was a piteous sight: his body a mass of sores from crown to sole, and he not able to bear even a sheet over him,

nor to lie in any comfortable position, nor get sound sleep. He was depressed and despairing, and begged me to try if I could not help him a little by mesmerism. I did try with all my will, and it seemed with some success, for he began to mend from that evening, and at my third visit he and I thought he was convalescent, and so informed his unhappy family. But suddenly there came a relapse, his disease finished its course rapidly, and, on Tuesday, the 24th June, at 10 p.m., he expired, without a word or a sign to those about him.

The last worldly business he attended to was to declare on the morning of the 24th in the presence of his relatives and friends, among them, Dewan Bahadur P. Srinivasa Rao, that he had authorized his wife to adopt a son after his death—there being no issue of his marriage.

At noon on that day, he said his Guru called him to come, he was going to die, he was now about beginning his *tapas* (mystical invocations), and he did not wish to be disturbed. From that time on, he spoke to no one. When he died, a great star fell from the firmament of Indian contemporary thought. Between Subba Row, H. P. Blavatsky, Damodar and myself there was a close friendship. He was chiefly instrumental in having us invited to visit Madras in 1882, and in inducing us to choose this city as the permanent Headquarters of The Theosophical Society. Subba Row was in confidential understanding with us about

Damodar's mystical pilgrimage towards the North, and more than a year after the latter crossed into Tibet, he wrote him about himself and his plans. Subba Row told me of this long ago, and reverted to the subject the other day at one of my visits to his sick-bed. A dispute,—due in a measure to third parties—which widened into a breach, arose between H. P. B. and himself about certain philosophical questions, but to the last he spoke of her, to us and to his family, in the old friendly way. When we last saw each other we had a long talk about esoteric philosophy, and he said that as soon as he could get out, he would come to Headquarters and draft several metaphysical questions that he wished Mr. Fawcett to discuss with him in *The Theosophist*. His interest in our movement was unabated to the last, he read *The Theosophist* regularly and was a subscriber to H. P. B.'s *Lucifer*.

Our great Vedāntin was of the Niyogi sect of the Smārtā (Advaita) Brahmans. He was born on the 6th July, 1856. At the time of his death he was aged but nearly 34 years. His native country was the Godavari District on the Coromandal Coast of India; his vernacular tongue the Telugu. His grandfather was the Sheristadar of the District, and his maternal uncle was Diwan (Prime Minister) to the Rajah of Pithapur. His father died when he was but a six months baby, and the uncle brought him up. He first attended the Coconada Hindu School, where he was not at all suspected of possessing any surprising talent. He

passed his first Matriculation examination at the Hindu School, Coconada, then under the direction of Mr. J. Kenny. From thence he passed in 1872, into the Madras Presidency College, where his career was a brilliant one, and ended in his passing B.A. in 1876 as the first of the University in his class. In the latter part of the same year that astute statesman, Sir T. Madhava Row, then Diwan of Baroda, offered him the Registrarship of the High Court of that State, and Subba Row stopped there about a year, but then returned to Madras and prepared himself for and passed the B.L. examination, number 4 in the class. Having adopted the law as his profession, he served his apprenticeship under Messrs. Grant and Laing and was enrolled a Vakil (Pleader) of the High Court in the latter part of 1880. His practice became lucrative, and might have been made much more so had he given less attention to philosophy; however, as he told me, he was drawn by an irresistible attraction. As an example of his extraordinary cleverness, his friends cite his successful passing of the examination in geology for the Statutory Civil Service in 1885, though it was a new subject to him, and he had had only a week for preparation. He leaves a young widow of 24 years, and an aged mother—herself a learned Brahman lady—who mourns the loss of her great son, the pride of her soul, most bitterly. The cremation took place at 9 o'clock on the morning after his death. Our brother, Judge P. Srinivasa Row, was with him at

the last, and T. Vijiaraghava Charlu saw him two hours before the event occurred.

It is remarked above that T. Subba Row gave no early signs of possessing mystical knowledge: even Sir T. Madhava Row did not suspect in him while he was serving under him at Baroda. I particularly questioned his mother on this point, and she told me that her son first talked metaphysics after forming a connection with the Founders of The Theosophical Society: a connection which began with a correspondence between himself and H. P. B. and Damodar, and became personal after our meeting him, in 1882, at Madras. It was as though a storehouse of occult experience, long forgotten, had been suddenly opened to him; recollection of his last preceding birth came in upon him; he recognized his Guru, and thenceforward held intercourse with him and other Mahātmas; with some, personally at our Headquarters, with others elsewhere and by correspondence. He told his mother that H. P. B. was a great Yogi, and that he had seen many strange phenomena in her presence. His stored-up knowledge of Samskrit literature came back to him, and his brother-in-law told me that if you would recite any verse of the *Gītā*, *Brahma Sūtras* or *Upanishads*, he could at once tell you whence it was taken and in what connection employed. Those who had the fortune to hear his lectures on *Bhagavad Gītā* before the T.S. Convention of 1886 at Adyar, can well believe this, so perfect seemed his mastery of that peerless work.

For a man of his abilities, he left scarcely any monument in the shape of publications, the papers he contributed to these pages and the one-volume Report of his four Adyar Lectures being almost his entire literary remains. As a conversationalist he was most brilliant and interesting; an afternoon's sitting with him was as edifying as the reading of a solid book. But this mystical side of his character he showed only to kindred souls. What may seem strange to some is the fact that, while he was obedient as a child to his mother in worldly affairs, he was strangely reticent to her, as he was to all his relatives and ordinary acquaintances, about spiritual matters. His constant answer to her importunities for occult instruction was that he "dared not reveal any of the secrets entrusted to him by his Guru". *He lived his occult life alone.* That he was habitually so reserved, gives the more weight to the confidential statements he made to the members of his own household.

H. S. O.

The above, having been considered in family-council, was endorsed as follows: "Read and found correct—D. T. R., Brother-in-Law of T. Subba Row."—*Theosophist*.

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SECTION I

ORIGINAL ARTICLES

I. THE TWELVE SIGNS OF THE ZODIAC

THE division of the Zodiac into different signs dates from immemorial antiquity. It has acquired a world-wide celebrity and is to be found in the astrological systems of several nations. The invention of the Zodiac and its signs has been assigned to different nations by different antiquarians. It is stated by some that, at first, there were only ten signs, that one of these signs was subsequently split up into two separate signs, and that a new sign was added to the number to render the esoteric significance of the division more profound and at the same time to conceal it more perfectly from the uninitiated public. It is very probable that the real philosophical conception of the division owes its origin to some particular nation, and the names given to the various signs might have been translated into the languages of other nations. The principal object of this article, however, is not to decide which nation had the honour of inventing the signs in question, but to indicate *to some extent* the real philosophical meaning involved therein and the way to discover the rest of the meaning which yet remains undisclosed.

But from what is herein stated, an inference may fairly be drawn that, like so many other philosophical myths and allegories, the invention of the Zodiac and its signs owes its origin to ancient India.

What then is the real origin of these signs, the philosophical conception which the Zodiac and its signs are intended to represent? Do the various signs merely represent the shape or configuration of the different constellations included in the divisions, or, are they simply masks designed to veil some hidden meaning? The former supposition is altogether untenable for two reasons, namely:

I. The Hindus were acquainted with the precession of the equinoxes as may be easily seen from their works on Astronomy and from the almanacs published by Hindu astronomers. Consequently they were fully aware of the fact that the constellations in the various Zodiacal divisions were not fixed. They could not, therefore, have assigned particular shapes to these shifting groups of fixed stars with reference to the divisions of the Zodiac. But the names indicating the Zodiacal signs have been allowed to remain unaltered. It is to be inferred, therefore, that the names given to the various signs have no connection whatever with the configurations of the constellations included in them.

II. The names assigned to these signs by the ancient Samskrit writers and their esoteric or literal meanings are as follows:

The names of the signs	The esoteric literal meanings
1. Meṣam ..	Ram or <i>Aries</i> .
2. R̥ṣabham ..	Bull or <i>Taurus</i> .
3. Mithunam ..	Twins or <i>Gemini</i> (male and female).
4. Karkāṭakam ..	Crab or <i>Cancer</i> .
5. Siṃham ..	Lion or <i>Leo</i> .
6. Kanyā ..	Virgin or <i>Virgo</i> . ¹
7. Tulā ..	Balance or <i>Libra</i> .
8. Vṛścikam ..	Scorpion or <i>Scorpio</i> .
9. Dhanus ..	Archer or <i>Sagittarius</i> .
10. Makaram ..	Crocodile or <i>Capricornus</i> .
11. Kumbham ..	Waterbearer or <i>Aquarius</i> .
12. Minam ..	Fish or <i>Pisces</i> .

The figures of the constellations included in the signs at the time the division was first made do not at all resemble the shapes of the animals, reptiles and other objects denoted by the names given them. The truth of this assertion can be ascertained by examining the configurations of the various constellations. Unless the shape of the crocodile² or the crab is called up

¹ Virgo-Scorpio, when none but the initiates knew there were 12 signs. Virgo-Scorpio was then followed (for the profane) by *Sagittarius*. At the middle or junction-point where now stands *Libra* and at the sign now called *Virgo*, two mystical signs were inserted which remained unintelligible to the profane.—ED., *Theosophist*.

² This constellation was never called Crocodile by the Western ancient astronomers who described it as a horned goat and called it so—*Capricornus*.—ED., *Theosophist*.

by the observer's imagination, there is very little chance of the stars themselves suggesting to his idea that figure, upon the blue canopy of the starry firmament.

If, then, the constellations have nothing to do with the origin of the names by which the Zodiacal divisions are indicated, we have to seek for some other source which might have given rise to these appellations. It becomes my object to unravel a portion of the mystery connected with these Zodiacal signs, as also to disclose a portion of the sublime conception of the ancient Hindu philosophy which gave rise to them. The signs of the Zodiac have more than one meaning. From one point of view they represent the different stages of creation up to the time the present material universe with the five elements came into phenomenal existence. As the author of *Isis Unveiled* has stated in the second volume of her admirable work, "the key should be turned *seven times*" to understand the whole philosophy underlying these signs. But I shall wind it only once and give the contents of the *first chapter* of the History of Creation. It is very fortunate that the Samskrit names assigned to the various divisions by the Āryan philosophers contain within themselves the key to the solution of the problem. Those of my readers who have studied to some extent the ancient Mantra and the Tantra Śāstras¹ of India, will have seen that very often Samskrit words

¹ Works on Incantation and Magic.

are made to convey a certain hidden meaning by means of certain well-known pre-arranged methods and a tacit convention, while their literal significance is something quite different from the implied meaning. The following are some of the rules which may help an enquirer in ferreting out the deep significance of the ancient Samskrit nomenclature used in the old Āryan myths and allegories:

1. Find out the synonyms of the word used which have other meanings.
2. Find out the numerical value of the letters composing the word according to the methods given in ancient Tāntrik works.
3. Examine the ancient myths or allegories, if there are any, which have any special connection with the word in question.
4. Permute the different syllables composing the word and examine the new combinations that will thus be formed and their meanings, etc., etc.

I shall now apply some of the above-given rules to the names of the twelve signs of the Zodiac.

I. *Meṣam*. One of the synonyms of this word is *Aja*. Now, *aja* literally means that which has no birth and is applied to the Eternal Brahman in certain portions of the Upaniṣads. So the first sign is intended to represent *Parabrahmam*, the self-existent, eternal, self-sufficient cause of all.

II. *Rṣabham*. This word is used in several places in the Upaniṣads and the Veda to mean *Pranava*

(Aum). Śaṅkarācārya has so interpreted it in several portions of his commentary.¹

III. *Mithunam*. As the word plainly indicates, this sign is intended to represent the first androgyne, the *Ardhanārīśvara*, the bi-sexual Sephira-Adam Kadmon.

IV. *Karkāṭakam*. When the syllables are converted into the corresponding numbers according to the general mode of transmutation so often alluded to in Mantra Śāstra, the word in question will be represented by ////. This sign then is evidently intended to represent the sacred *Tetragram*; the Parabrahmatāarakam; the Praṇava resolved into four separate entities corresponding to its *four Mātrās*; the *four Avasthas* indicated by Jāgrat (waking) Avastha, Svapna (dream) Avastha, Suṣupti (deep sleep) Avastha, and Turiya (the last state, i.e., Nirvāṇa) Avastha, (as yet in potentiality); the *four states of Brahman* called Vaiśvānara, Taijasa (or Hiranyagarbha), Prajña, and Īśvara and represented by Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Maheśvara, and Sadāśiva; the *four aspects of Parabrahman* as Sthūlam, Sūkṣmam, Bījam and Sākṣi; the *four stages or conditions of the sacred word* named Parā, Paśyanti, Madhyama and Vaikhari; Nādam, Bindu, Śakti and Kalā. This sign completes the first quaternary.

V. *Siṃham*. This word contains a world of occult meaning within itself; and it may not be prudent on my part to disclose the whole of its meaning

¹ Example: “*Rṣabhasya—candasām rṣabhasya pradhānasya Praṇava-sya.*”

in this article. It will be sufficient for the purpose of this article to give a general indication of its significance.

Two of its synonymous terms are *Pañcāsyam* and *Hari*, and its number in the order of the Zodiacal divisions (being the 5th sign) points clearly to the former synonym. This synonym—*Pañcāsyam*—shows that the sign is intended to represent the *five Brahmas*, namely—*Īśānam*, *Aghōram*, *Tatpuruṣam*, *Vāmadevam*, and *Sadyojātam*—the *five Buddhas*. The second synonym shows it to be *Nārāyaṇa*, the *Jīvātma* or *Pratyagātma*. (The *Sukharahasya Upaniṣad* will show that the ancient Āryan philosophers looked upon *Nārāyaṇa* as the *Jīvātma*.¹ The *Vaiṣṇavites* may not admit it. But as an *Advaiti*, I look upon *Jīvātma* as identical with *Paramātma* in its real essence when stripped of its fictitious attributes created by *Ajñānam* or *Avidyā*—ignorance.) The *Jīvātma* is correctly placed in the 5th sign counting from *Meṣam*, as the 5th sign is the *putrasthānam*, or the son's house, according to the rules of Hindu Astrology. The sign in question represents *Jīvātma*—the son of *Paramātma* as it were. (I may also add that it represents the real Christ, the anointed pure spirit, though the missionaries may frown at this interpretation.)² I will only add here that unless the

¹ In its lowest or most material state, as the life-principle which animates the material bodies of the animal and vegetable worlds, etc.—ED., *Theosophist*.

² Nevertheless it is a true one. The *Jīvātma* in the Microcosm (man) is the same spiritual essence which animates the Macrocosm (universe), the differentiation, or specific difference between the

nature of this sign is fully comprehended it will be impossible to understand the real order of the next three signs and their full significance. The elements or entities that have merely a potential existence in this sign become distinct, separate entities in the next three signs. Their union into a single entity leads to the destruction of the phenomenal universe, and the recognition of the pure spirit, and their separation has the contrary effect. It leads to material earth-bound existence and brings into view the picture gallery of *avidyā* (ignorance) or *māyā* (illusion). If the real orthography of the name by which the sign in question is indicated is properly understood it will readily be seen that the next three signs are not what they ought to be. Kanyā or Virgo and Vṛścikam or Scorpio should form one single sign, and Tulā must follow the said sign if it is at all necessary to have a separate sign of the name. But a separation between Kanyā and Vṛścikam was effected by interposing the sign Tulā between the two. The object of this separation will be understood on examining the meaning of the three signs.

VI. *Kanyā* means a virgin and represents Śakti or Mahāmāyā. The sign in question is the 6th Rāśi or division and indicates that there are six primary two Jivātmas presenting itself but in the two states or conditions of the same and one Force. Hence "this son of Paramātma" is an eternal correlation of the Father-Cause. Puruṣa manifesting himself as Brahman of the "golden egg" and becoming Virāḍjā—the universe. We are "all born of Aditi from the water" (*Hymns of the Maruts*, X, 632) and "Being was born from not-being" (*Rg Veda*, Maṇḍala 1, Sūkta 166).—Ed., *Theosophist*.

forces in nature. These forces have different sets of names in Samskrit philosophy. According to one system of nomenclature they are called by the following names: (1) Parāśakti; (2) Jñānaśakti; (3) Icchāśakti (will-power); (4) Kriyāśakti; (5) Kuṇḍalinīśakti; and (6) Mātrkāśakti.¹ The six

¹ Parāśakti: Literally the great or supreme force or power. It means and includes the powers of light and heat.

Jñānaśakti: Literally the power of intellect or the power of real wisdom or knowledge. It has two aspects:

I. The following are some of its manifestations when placed under the influence or control of material conditions:

(a) The power of the mind in interpreting our sensations, (b) its power in recalling past ideas (memory) and raising future expectations. (c) Its power as exhibited in what are called by modern psychologists "the laws of association" which enables it to form persisting connections between various groups of sensations and possibilities of sensations and thus generate the notion or idea of an external object. (d) Its power in connecting our ideas together by the mysterious link of memory and thus generating the notion of self or individuality.

II. The following are some of its manifestations when liberated from the bonds of matter:

(a) Clairvoyance. (b) Psychometry.

Icchāśakti: Literally, the power of the will. Its most ordinary manifestation is the generation of certain nerve currents which set in motion such muscles as are required for the accomplishment of the desired object.

Kriyāśakti: The mysterious power of thought which enables it to produce external, perceptible, phenomenal result by its own inherent energy. The ancients held that any idea will manifest itself externally if one's attention is deeply concentrated upon it. Similarly an intense volition will be followed by the desired result.

A Yogi generally performs his wonders by means of Icchāśakti and Kriyāśakti.

Kuṇḍalinīśakti: Literally, the power or force which moves in a serpentine or curved path. It is the universal life-principle which

forces are in their unity represented by the Astral Light.¹

VII. *Tulā*. When represented by numbers according to the method above alluded to, this word will be converted into 36. This sign, therefore, is evidently intended to represent *the 36 Tattvams*. (The number of Tattvams is different according to the views of different philosophers; but by Śākteyas generally and by several of the ancient Ṛṣis such as Agastya,

everywhere manifests itself in nature. This force includes in itself the two great forces of attraction and repulsion. Electricity and magnetism are but manifestations of it. This is the power or force which brings about that "continuous adjustment of *internal relations to external relations*" which is the essence of life according to Herbert Spencer and that "continuous adjustment of *external relations to internal relations*" which is the basis of transmigration of souls or punarjanman (rebirth) according to the doctrines of the ancient Hindu philosophers.

A Yogi must thoroughly subjugate this power or force before he can attain Mokṣam. This force is, in fact, the great serpent of the Bible.

Mātrkāśakti: Literally, the force or power of letters or speech or music. The whole of the ancient Mantra Śāstra has this force or power in all its manifestations for its subject-matter. The power of the Word which Jesus Christ speaks of is a manifestation of this Śakti. The influence of music is one of its ordinary manifestations. The power of the mirific ineffable name is the crown of this Śakti.

Modern science has but partly investigated the first, second and fifth of the forces or powers above named, but it is altogether in the dark as regards the remaining powers.

¹ Even the very name of *Kanyā* (Virgin) shows how all the ancient esoteric systems agreed in all their fundamental doctrines. The Kabalists and the Hermetic philosophers call the Astral Light the "heavenly or celestial Virgin". The Astral Light in its unity is the 7th. Hence the seven principles diffused in every unity or the six and ONE—two triangles and a crown.—ED., *Theosophist*.

Dūrvāsa and Paraśurāma, etc., the number of Tattvams has been stated to be 36.) Jīvātma differs from Paramātmā, or to state the same things in other words, "Baddha" differs from "Mukta"¹ in being encased as it were within these thirty-six Tattvams, while the other is free. This sign prepares the way to earthly Adam, to Nara. As the emblem of Nara it is properly placed as the 7th sign.

VIII. *Vṛścikam*. It is stated by ancient philosophers that the sun when located in this Rāśi or division is called by the name of *Viṣṇu* (see the 12th Skandha of *Bhāgavata*). The sign is intended to represent *Viṣṇu*. *Viṣṇu* literally means *that which is expanded*—expanded as *Viśvam* or Universe. Properly speaking, *Viśvam* itself is *Viṣṇu* (see Śaṅkarācārya's commentary on *Viṣṇusahasranāmam*). I have already intimated that *Viṣṇu* represents the Svapnāvastha or the Dream State. The sign in question properly signifies the universe in thought or the universe in the divine conception.

It is properly placed as the sign opposite to Rṣabham or Praṇava. Analysis from Praṇava downwards leads to the universe of thought, and synthesis from the latter upwards leads to Praṇava (Aum). We have now arrived at the ideal state of the universe previous to its coming into material existence. The expansion of the Bijam or primitive germ into the

¹ As the Infinite differs from the Finite, and the Unconditioned from the Conditioned.—ED., *Theosophist*.

universe is only possible when the thirty-six Tattvams¹ are interposed between the Māyā and Jīvātma. The dream state is induced through the instrumentality of these Tattvams. It is the existence of these Tattvams that brings *Haṃsa* into existence. The elimination of these Tattvams marks the beginning of the synthesis towards Praṇava and Brahman and converts *Haṃsa* into *Soham*. As it is intended to represent the different stages of creation from Brahman downwards to the material universe, the three signs Kanyā, Tulā, and Vṛścikam are placed in the order in which they now stand as three separate signs.

IX. *Dhanus* (*Sagittarius*). When represented in numbers, the name is equivalent to 9, and the division in question is the 9th division counting from Meṣam. The sign, therefore, clearly indicates the nine Brahmās—the nine Prajāpatīs who assisted the Demiurgus in constructing the material universe.

X. *Makaram*. There is some difficulty in interpreting this word; nevertheless it contains within itself the clue to its correct interpretation. The letter *ma* is equivalent to number 5 and *kara* means hand. Now in Samskrit *tribhujam* means a triangle, *bhujam* or *karam* (both are synonymous) being understood to mean a side. So Makaram or Pañcakaram means a pentagon.²

¹ 36 is three times 12, or 9 Tetraktis, or 12 Triads, the most sacred number in the Kabalistic and Pythagorean numerals.—ED., *Theosophist*.

² See the article in the August (1881) number, "The Five-Pointed Star," where we stated that the five-pointed star

Now, Makaram is the 10th sign and the term *Daśadiśā* is generally used by Samskrit writers to denote the faces or sides of the universe. The sign in question is intended to represent the faces of the universe and indicates that the figure of the universe is bounded by pentagons. If we take the pentagons as regular pentagons (on the presumption or supposition that the universe is symmetrically constructed) the figure of the material universe will, of course, be a Dodecahedron, the geometrical model imitated by the Demiurgus in constructing the material universe. If Tulā was subsequently invented and if, instead of the three signs Kanyā, Tulā and Vṛścikam, there had existed formerly only one sign combining in itself Kanyā and Vṛścikam, the sign now under consideration was the 8th sign under the old system, and it is a significant fact that Samskrit writers generally speak also of *aṣṭadiśā* or eight faces bounding space. It is quite possible that the number of *diśā* might have been altered from eight to ten when the formerly existing Virgo-Scorpio was split up into three separate signs.

Again, *kara* may be taken to represent the projecting triangles of the five-pointed star. This figure may also be called a kind of regular pentagon. (see Todhunter's *Spherical Trigonometry*, p. 143). If this interpretation is accepted, the Rāśi or sign in question or pentagram represented the five limbs of man.—ED., *Theosophist*.

represents the "Microcosm". But the "microcosm" or the world of thought is really represented by Vṛścikam. From an objective point of view the "microcosm" is represented by the human body. Makaram may be taken to represent simultaneously both the microcosm and the macrocosm, as external objects of perception.

In connection with this sign I shall state herein a few important facts which I beg to submit for the consideration of those who are interested in examining the ancient occult sciences of India. It is generally held by the ancient philosophers that the macrocosm is similar to the microcosm in having a Sthūla Śarīram and a Sūkṣma Śarīram. The visible universe is the Sthūla Śarīram of Viśvam; the ancient philosophers held that as a substratum for this visible universe there is another universe—perhaps we may call it the universe of Astral Light—the real universe of Noumena, the soul as it were of this visible universe. It is darkly hinted in certain passages of the Veda and the Upaniṣads that this hidden universe of Astral Light is to be represented by an Icosahedron. The connection between an Icosahedron and a Dodecahedron is something very peculiar and interesting though the figures seem to be so very dissimilar to each other. The connection may be understood by the undermentioned geometrical construction. Describe a Sphere about an Icosahedron; let perpendiculars be drawn from the centre of the Sphere on its faces and produced to meet

the surface of the Sphere. Now, if the points of intersection be joined, a Dodecahedron is formed within the Sphere. By a similar process an Icosahedron may be constructed from a Dodecahedron. (See Todhunter's *Spherical Trigonometry*, p. 141, art. 193.) The figure constructed as above described will represent the universe of matter and the universe of Astral Light as they actually exist. I shall not now, however, proceed to show how the universe of Astral Light may be considered in the light of an Icosahedron. I shall only state here that this conception of the Aryan philosophers is not to be looked upon as mere "theological twaddle" or as the outcome of wild fancy. The real significance of the conception in question can, I believe, be explained by reference to the psychology and the physical science of the ancients. But I must stop here and proceed to consider the meaning of the remaining two signs.

XI. *Kumbham* (or *Aquarius*). When represented by numbers, the word is equivalent to 14. It can be easily perceived, then, that the division in question is intended to represent the *caturdaśa bhuvanam* or the fourteen lokams spoken of in Samskrit books.

XII. *Mīnam* (or *Pisces*). This word again is represented by 5 when written in numbers and is evidently intended to convey the idea of *pañcamahābhūtams* or the five elements. The sign also suggests that water (not the ordinary water, but the universal solvent of the ancient alchemists,) is the most important amongst the said elements.

I have now finished the task which I have set to myself in this article. My purpose is not to explain the ancient theory of creation itself, but to show the connection between that theory and the Zodiacal divisions. I have herein brought to light but a very small portion of the philosophy imbedded in these signs. The veil that was dexterously thrown over certain portions of the mystery connected with these signs by the ancient philosophers *will never be lifted up for the amusement or edification of the uninitiated public.*

Now to summarise the facts stated in this article, the contents of the first chapter of the history of the Universe are as follows:

- (1) The Self-existent, eternal Brahman.
- (2) Praṇava (Aum).
- (3) The androgyne Brahman, or the bisexual Sephira—Adam Kadmon.
- (4) The sacred Tetragram—the four *mātrās* of Praṇava—the four *avasthās*—the four states of Brahman—the Sacred Tārakam.
- (5) The five Brahmas—the five Buddhas—representing in their totality the Jīvātma.
- (6) The Astral Light—the Holy Virgin—the six forces in nature.
- (7) The thirty-six Tattvams born of Avidyā.
- (8) The Universe in thought—the Svapna Avasthā—the microcosm looked at from a subjective point of view.

- (9) The nine Prajāpatis—the assistants of the Demiurgus.¹
- (10) The shape of the material Universe in the mind of the Demiurgus—the Dodecahedron.
- (11) The fourteen Lokams.
- (12) The five elements.

The history of creation of this world from its beginning up to the present time is composed of *seven* chapters. The *seventh* chapter is not yet completed.

Triplicane, Madras,
14th September, 1881.

¹ The nine Kabalistic Sephiroth emanated from Sephira; the 10th and the head Sephiroth are identical. Three trinities or triads with their emanative principle form the Pythagorean mystic Decad, the sum of *all* which represents the whole Cosmos. —Ed., *Theosophist*.

II. ŚRĪ ŚĀṆKARĀCĀRYA'S DATE AND DOCTRINE

It is always difficult to determine with precision the date of any particular event in the ancient history of India; and this difficulty is considerably enhanced by the speculations of European Orientalists whose labours in this direction have but tended to thicken the confusion already existing in popular legends and traditions, which were often altered or modified to suit the necessities of sectarian controversy. The causes that have produced this result will be fully ascertained on examining the assumptions on which these speculations are based. The writings of many of these Orientalists are often characterised by an imperfect knowledge of Indian literature, philosophy and religion and of Hindu traditions, and a contemptuous disregard for the opinions of Hindu writers and pandits. Very often, facts and dates are taken by these writers from the writings of their predecessors or contemporaries on the assumptions that they are correct without any further investigation by themselves. Even when a writer gives a date with an expression of doubt as to its accuracy, his follower frequently quotes the same date

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as if it were absolutely correct. One wrong date is made to depend upon another wrong date, and one bad inference is often deduced from another inference equally unwarranted and illogical. And consequently if the correctness of any particular date given by these writers is to be ascertained, the whole structure of Indian Chronology constructed by them will have to be carefully examined. It will be convenient to enumerate some of the assumptions above referred to, before proceeding to examine their opinions concerning the date of Śāṅkarācārya.

I. Many of these writers are not altogether free from the prejudices engendered by the pernicious doctrine, deduced from the Bible, whether rightly or wrongly, that this world is only six thousand years old. We do not mean to say that any one of these writers would now seriously think of defending the said doctrine. Nevertheless it had exercised a considerable influence on the minds of Christian writers when they began to investigate the claims of Asiatic Chronology. If an antiquity of five or six thousand years is assigned to any particular event connected with the ancient history of Egypt, India or China, it is certain to be rejected at once by these writers without any inquiry whatever regarding the truth of the statement.

II. They are extremely unwilling to admit that any portion of the Vedas can be traced to a period anterior to the date of the Pentateuch, even when the arguments brought forward to establish the priority of

the Vedas are such as would be convincing to the mind of an impartial investigator untainted by Christian prejudices. The maximum limit of Indian antiquity is, therefore, fixed for them by the Old Testament, and it is virtually assumed by them that a period between the date of the Old Testament on the one side and the present time on the other, should necessarily be assigned to every book in the whole range of Vedic and Samskrit literature, and to almost every event of Indian history.

III. It is often assumed without reason that every passage in the Vedas containing philosophical or metaphysical ideas must be looked upon as a subsequent interpolation, and that every book treating of a philosophical subject must be considered as having been written after the time of Buddha or after the commencement of the Christian Era. Civilisation, philosophy and scientific investigation had their origin, in the opinion of these writers, within the six or seven centuries preceding the Christian Era, and mankind slowly emerged, for the first time, from "the depths of animal brutality" within the last four or five thousand years.

IV. It is also assumed that Buddhism was brought into existence by Gautama Buddha. The previous existence of Buddhism, Jainism and Arhat philosophy is rejected as an absurd and ridiculous invention of the Buddhists who attempted thereby to assign a very high antiquity to their own religion. In consequence of this erroneous impression on their part, every Hindu book referring to the doctrines of Buddhists is declared to

have been written subsequent to the time of Gautama Buddha. For instance, Mr. Weber is of opinion that Vyāsa, the author of *Brahma-Sūtras*, wrote them in the 5th century after Christ. This is indeed a startling revelation to the majority of Hindus.

V. Whenever several works treating of various subjects are attributed to one and the same author by Hindu writings or traditions, it is often assumed, and apparently without any reason whatever in the majority of cases, that the said works should be considered as the production of different writers. By this process of reasoning they have discovered two Bādarāyaṇas (Vyāsas), two Patañjalis, and three Vararucis. We do not mean to say that in every case identity of names is equivalent to identity of persons. But we cannot but protest against such assumptions when they are made without any evidence to support them, merely for the purpose of supporting a foregone conclusion or establishing a favourite hypothesis.

VI. An attempt is often made by these writers to establish the chronological order of the events of ancient Indian history by means of the various stages in the growth or development of the Samskrit language and Indian literature. The time required for this growth is often estimated in the same manner in which a geologist endeavours to fix the time required for the gradual development of the various strata composing the earth's crust. But we fail to perceive anything like a proper method in making these calculations. It will be wrong

to assume that the growth of one language will require the same time as that of another within the same limits. The peculiar characteristics of the nation to whom the language belongs must be carefully taken into consideration in attempting to make any such calculation. The history of the said nation is equally important. Anyone who examines Max Müller's estimation of the so called Sūtra, Brāhmaṇa, Mantra and Kāṇḍa periods, will be able to perceive that no attention has been paid to these considerations. The time allotted to the growth of these four "Strata" of Vedic literature is purely arbitrary.

We have enumerated these defects in the writings of European Orientalists for the purpose of showing to our readers that it is not always safe to rely upon the conclusions arrived at by these writers regarding the dates of ancient Indian history.

In examining the various quotations and traditions selected by European Orientalists for the purpose of fixing Śaṅkarācārya's date, special care must be taken to see whether the person referred to was the very first Śaṅkarācārya who established the Advaita doctrine, or one of his followers who became the Adhipati of the various Maṭhams established by him and his successors. Many of the Advaita Maṭhādhipatis who succeeded him (especially at the Śringeri Maṭham) were men of considerable renown and were well known throughout India during their time. They are often referred to under the general name of Śaṅkarācārya.

Consequently, any reference made to any one of these Maṭhādhipatis is apt to be mistaken for a reference to the first Śaṅkarācārya himself.

Mr. Barth, whose opinion regarding Śaṅkara's date is quoted by the *London Theosophist* against the date assigned to that teacher in Mr. Sinnett's book on *Esoteric Buddhism*, does not appear to have carefully examined the subject himself. He assigned no reason for the date given and does not even allude to the existence of other authorities and traditions which conflict with the date adopted by him. The date which he assigns to Śaṅkara appears in an unimportant footnote appearing on page 89 of his book on *The Religions of India*, which reads thus: "Śaṅkarācārya is generally placed in the 8th century; perhaps we must accept the 9th rather. The best accredited tradition represents him as born on the 10th of the month Mādhava in A.D. 788. Other traditions, it is true, place him in the 2nd and 5th centuries. The author of the *Dabistan*, on the other hand, brings him as far down as the commencement of the 14th." Mr. Barth is clearly wrong in saying that Śaṅkara is generally placed in the 8th century. There are as many traditions for placing him in some century before the Christian Era as for placing him in some century after the said era, and it will also be seen from what follows that in fact evidence preponderates in favour of the former statement. It cannot be contended that the generality of Orientalists have any definite opinions of their own on the subject under

consideration. Max Müller does not appear to have ever directed his attention to this subject. Monier Williams merely copies the date given by Mr. Wilson, and Mr. Weber seems to rely upon the same authority without troubling himself with any further enquiry about the matter. Mr. Wilson is probably the only Orientalist who investigated the subject with some care and attention; and he frankly confesses that the exact period at which "he [Śaṅkara] flourished can by no means be determined" (page 201 of vol. I of his *Essays on the Religion of the Hindus*). Under such circumstances the footnote above quoted is certainly very misleading. Mr. Barth does not inform his readers wherefrom he obtained the tradition referred to and what reasons he has for supposing that it refers to the first Śaṅkarācārya and that it is "the best accredited tradition". When the matter is still open to discussion, Mr. Barth should not have adopted any particular date if he is not prepared to support it and establish it by proper arguments. The other traditions alluded to are not intended, of course, to strengthen the authority of the tradition relied upon. But the wording of the footnote in question seems to show that all the authorities and traditions relating to the subject are comprised therein, when, in fact, the most important of them are left out of consideration, as will be shown hereafter. No arguments are to be found in support of the date assigned to Śaṅkara in the other portions of Mr. Barth's book, but there are a few isolated passages

which may be taken either as inferences from the statement in question or arguments in its support; which it will be necessary to examine in this connection.

Mr. Barth has discovered some connection between the appearance of Śaṅkara in India and the commencement of the persecution of the Buddhists which he seems to place in the 7th and 8th centuries. On page 89 of his book he speaks of "the great reaction on the offensive against Buddhism which was begun in the Deccan in the 7th and 8th centuries by the schools of Kumārila and Śaṅkara"; and on page 135, he states that the "disciples of Kumārila and Śaṅkara organised into military bands, constituted themselves the rabid defenders of orthodoxy". The force of these statements is, however, considerably weakened by the author's observations on pages 89 and 134 regarding the absence of any traces of Buddhist persecution by Śaṅkara in the authentic documents hitherto examined and the absurdity of legends which represent him as exterminating Buddhists from the Himālaya to Cape Comorin.

The association of Śaṅkara with Kumārila in the passages above cited is ridiculous. It is well known to almost every Hindu that the followers of Pūrva Mīmāṃsa (Kumārila commented on the Sūtras) were the greatest and the bitterest opponents of Śaṅkara and his doctrine, and Mr. Barth seems to be altogether ignorant of the nature of Kumārila's views and Pūrva Mīmāṃsa and the scope and aim of Śaṅkara's Vedāntic philosophy. It is impossible to say what evidence the

author has for asserting that the great reaction against the Buddhists commenced in the 7th and 8th centuries and that Śaṅkara was instrumental in originating it. There are some passages in his book which tend to show that this date cannot be considered as quite correct. On page 153 he says that Buddhism began persecution even in the time of Aśoka.

Such being the case, it is indeed very surprising that the orthodox Hindus should have kept quiet for nearly ten centuries without retaliating on their enemies. The political ascendancy gained by the Buddhists during the reign of Aśoka did not last very long; and the Hindus had the support of every powerful king before and after the commencement of the Christian Era. Moreover, the author says on page 132 of his book that, Buddhism was in a state of decay in the 7th century. It is hardly to be expected that the reaction against the Buddhists would commence when their religion was already in a state of decay. No great religious teacher or reformer would waste his time and energy in demolishing a religion already in ruins. But, what evidence is there to show that Śaṅkara was ever engaged at this task? If the main object of his preaching was to evoke a reaction against Buddhism, he would no doubt have left us some writings specially intended to criticise its doctrines and expose its defects. On the other hand, he does not even allude to Buddhism in his independent works. Though he was a voluminous writer, with the exception of a few remarks on the

theory advocated by some Buddhists regarding the nature of perception contained in his commentary on the *Brahma-Sūtras*, there is not a single passage in the whole range of his writings regarding the Buddhists or their doctrines; and the insertion of even these few remarks in his commentary was rendered necessary by the allusions contained in the *Sūtras* which he was interpreting. As, in our humble opinion, these *Brahma-Sūtras* were composed by Vyāsa himself (and not by an imaginary Vyāsa of the 5th century after Christ evolved by Mr. Weber's fancy), the allusions therein contained relate to the Buddhism which existed previous to the date of Gautama Buddha. From these few remarks it will be clear to our readers that Śaṅkarācārya had nothing to do with Buddhist persecution. We may here quote a few passages from Mr. Wilson's Preface to the first edition of his *Sanskrit Dictionary* in support of our remarks. He writes as follows regarding Śaṅkara's connection with the persecution of the Buddhists: "Although the popular belief attributes the origin of the Buddhist persecution to Śaṅkarācārya, yet in this case we have some reason to distrust its accuracy. Opposed to it we have the mild character of the reformer, who is described as uniformly gentle and tolerant, and speaking from my own limited reading in Vedānta works, and the more satisfactory testimony of Ram Mohun Roy, which he permits me to adduce, it does not appear that any traces of his being instrumental to any persecution are to be found in his own

writings, all of which are extant, and the object of which is by no means the correction of the Bauddha or any other schism, but the refutation of all other doctrines besides his own, and the reformation or re-establishment of the fourth religious order." Furtheron he observes that "it is a popular error to ascribe to him the work of persecution; he does not appear at all occupied in that odious task, nor is he engaged in particular controversy with any of the Bauddhas".

From the foregoing observations it will be seen that Śaṅkara's date cannot be determined by the time of the commencement of the Buddhist persecution, even if it were possible to ascertain the said period.

Mr. Barth seems to have discovered some connection between the philosophical systems of Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja and Ānandatīrtha, and the Arabian merchants who came to India in the first century of the Hejira, and he is no doubt fully entitled to any credit that may be given him for the originality of his discovery. The mysterious and occult connection between Advaita philosophy and Arabian commerce is pointed out on page 212 of his book, and it may have some bearing on the present question, if it is anything more than a figment of his fancy. The only reason given by him in support of his theory is, however, in my humble opinion, worthless. The Hindus had prominent example of a grand religious movement under the guidance of a single teacher, in the life of Buddha, and it was not necessary for them to imitate the

adventures of the Arabian prophet. There is but one other passage in Mr. Barth's book which has some reference to Śaṅkara's date. On page 207 he writes as follows: "The Śiva, for instance, who is invoked at the commencement of the drama of Śakuntala, who is at once God, priest and offering, and whose body is the Universe, is a Vedāntic idea. This testimony appears to be forgotten when it is maintained, as is sometimes done, that the whole sectarian Vedāntism commences with Śaṅkara." But this testimony appears to be equally forgotten when it is maintained, as is sometimes done by Orientalists like Mr. Barth, that Śaṅkara lived in some century after the author of Śakuntala.

From the foregoing remarks it will be apparent that Mr. Barth's opinion regarding Śaṅkara's date is very unsatisfactory. As Mr. Wilson seems to have examined the subject with some care and attention, we must now advert to his opinion and see how far it is based on proper evidence. In attempting to fix Amara Siṃha's date (which attempt ultimately ended in a miserable failure), he had to ascertain the period when Śaṅkara lived. Consequently his remarks concerning the said period appear in his Preface to the first edition of his *Sanskrit Dictionary*. We shall now reproduce here such passages from this Preface as are connected with the subject under consideration and comment upon them. Mr. Wilson writes as follows:

"The birth of Śaṅkara presents the same discordance as every other remarkable incident amongst

the Hindus. The Kadali (it ought to be Kūdali) Brahmins, who form an establishment following and teaching his system, assert his appearance about 2,000 years since; some accounts place him about the beginning of the Christian Era, others in the 3rd or 4th century after; a manuscript history of the kings of Konga, in Colonel Mackenzie's collection, makes him contemporary with Tiru Vikrama Deva Cakravarti, sovereign of Skandapura in the Dekkan, A.D. 178; at Śringeri, on the edge of the Western Ghats, and now in the Mysore territory, at which place he is said to have founded a college that still exists, and assumes the supreme control of the Smārta Brahmins of the peninsula, an antiquity of 1,600 years is attributed to him, and common tradition makes him about 1,200 years old. *The Bhoja Prabandha* enumerates Śaṅkara among its worthies, and as contemporary with that prince; his antiquity will then be between eight and nine centuries. The followers of Madhvācārya in Tuluva seem to have attempted to reconcile these contradictory accounts by supposing him to have been born three times; first at Sivuli in Tuluva about 1,500 years ago, again in Malabar some centuries later, and finally at Pādukākṣetra, in Tuluva no more than 600 years since; the latter assertion being intended evidently to do honour to their own founder, whose date that was, by enabling him to triumph over Śaṅkara in supposititious controversy. The Vaiṣṇava Brahmins of Madura say that Śaṅkara appeared in the 9th

century of Śālivāhana or 10th of our era. Dr. Taylor thinks that, if we allow him about 900 years, we shall not be far from the truth, and Mr. Colebrooke is inclined to give him an antiquity of about 1,000 years. This last is the age which my friend Ram Mohun Roy, a diligent student of Śaṅkara's works, and philosophical teacher of his doctrines, is disposed to concur in, and he infers that 'from a calculation of the spiritual generations of the followers of Śaṅkara Svāmi from his time up to this date, he seems to have lived between the 7th and 8th centuries of the Christian Era,' a distance of time agreeing with the statements made to Dr. Buchanan in his journey through Śaṅkara's native country, Malabar, and in union with the assertion of the *Kerala Utpatti*, a work giving an historical and statistical account of the same province, and which, according to Mr. Duncan's citation of it, mentions the regulations of the castes of Malabar by this philosopher to have been effected about 1,000 years before 1798. At the same time, it must be observed, that a manuscript translation of the same work in Colonel Mackenzie's possession, states Śaṅkarācārya to have been born about the middle of the 5th century, or between thirteen and fourteen hundred years ago, differing in this respect from Mr. Duncan's statement—a difference of the less importance, as the manuscript in question, either from defects in the original or translation, presents many palpable errors and cannot consequently be depended upon. The weight of authority therefore is altogether in favour of antiquity of about

ten centuries, and I am disposed to adopt this estimate of Śaṅkara's date, and to place him in the end of the 8th and beginning of the 9th centuries of the Christian Era."

We will add a few more authorities to Mr. Wilson's list before proceeding to comment on the foregoing passage.

In a work called *The Biographical Sketches of Eminent Hindu Authors*, published at Bombay in 1860 by Janardan Ramachanderjee, it is stated that Śaṅkara lived 2,500 years ago, and that, in the opinion of some people, 2,200 years ago. The records of the Kumbakonam Maṭham give a list of nearly sixty-six Maṭhādhīpatis from Śaṅkara down to the present time, and show that he lived more than 2,000 years ago.

The Kūdali Maṭham referred to by Mr. Wilson, which is a branch of the Śṛṅgeri Maṭham, gives the same date as the latter Maṭham, their traditions being identical. Their calculation can safely be relied upon as far as it is supported by the dates given on the places of Samādhi (something like a tomb) of the successive Gurus of the Śṛṅgeri Maṭham; and it leads us to the commencement of the Christian Era.

No definite information is given by Mr. Wilson regarding the nature, origin or reliability of the account which place Śaṅkara in the 3rd or 4th century of the Christian Era or at its commencement; nor does it clearly appear that the history of the kings of Konga referred to unmistakably alludes to the very first Śaṅkarācārya. These traditions are evidently opposed to the

conclusion arrived at by Mr. Wilson, and it does not appear on what grounds their testimony is discredited by him. Mr. Wilson is clearly wrong in stating that an antiquity of 1,600 years is attributed to Śaṅkara by the Śṛṅgeri Maṭham. We have already referred to the account of the Śṛṅgeri Maṭham, and it is precisely similar to the account given by the Kūdali Brahmins. We have ascertained that it is so from the agent of the Śṛṅgeri Maṭham at Madras, who published only a few days ago (1883) the list of teachers preserved at the said Maṭham with the dates assigned to them. And further we are unable to see which "common tradition" makes Śaṅkara "about 1,200 years old". As far as our knowledge goes there is no such common tradition in India. The majority of people in Southern India have, up to this time, been relying on the Śṛṅgeri account, and in Northern India there seems to be no common tradition. We have but a mass of contradictory accounts.

It is indeed surprising that an Orientalist of Mr. Wilson's pretension should confound the poet named Śaṅkara and mentioned in *Bhoja Prabandha* with the great Advaita Teacher. No Hindu would ever commit such a ridiculous mistake. We are astonished to find some of these European Orientalists quoting now and then some of the statements contained in such books as *Bhoja Prabandha*, *Kathā-sarit-sāgara*, *Rāja-taraṅgini* and *Pañcatantra* as if they were historical works. In some other part of his Preface Mr. Wilson himself says that this *Bhoja Prabandha* is altogether untrustworthy,

as some of the statements contained therein did not harmonise with his theory about Amarasiṃha's date; but now he *misquotes* its statements for the purpose of supporting his conclusion regarding Śaṅkara's date. Surely, consistency is not one of the prominent characteristics of the writings of the majority of European Orientalists. The person mentioned in *Bhoja Prabandha* is always spoken of under the name of Śaṅkara *Kavi*, and he is nowhere called Śaṅkarā-cārya, and the Advaita Teacher is never mentioned in any Hindu work under the appellation of Śaṅkara *Kavi*.

It is unnecessary for us to say anything about the Madhva traditions, or the opinion of the Vaiṣṇava Brahmins of Madura, regarding Śaṅkara's date. It is, in our humble opinion, hopeless to expect anything but falsehood regarding Śaṅkara's history and philosophy from the Madhvas and the Vaiṣṇavas. They are always very anxious to show to the world at large that their doctrines existed before the time of Śaṅkara, and that the Advaita doctrine was a deviation from their pre-existing orthodox Hinduism. And consequently they have assigned to him an antiquity of less than 1,500 years.

It does not appear why Dr. Taylor thinks that he can allow Śaṅkara about 900 years, or on what grounds Mr. Colebrooke is inclined to give him an antiquity of about 1,000 years. No reliance can be placed on such statements before the reason assigned therefor are thoroughly sifted.

Fortunately, Mr. Wilson gives us the reason for Ram Mohun Roy's opinion. We are inclined to believe that Ram Mohun Roy's calculation was made with reference to the Śrīṅgeri list of teachers or Gurus, as that was the only list published up to this time, and as no other Maṭham, except perhaps the Kumbakonam Maṭham, has a list of Gurus coming up to the present time in uninterrupted succession. There is no necessity for depending upon his calculation (which from its very nature cannot be anything more than mere guesswork) when the old list preserved at Śrīṅgeri contains the date assigned to the various teachers. As these dates have not been published up to the present time, and as Ram Mohun Roy had merely a string of names before him, he was obliged to ascertain Śaṅkara's date by assigning a certain number of years on the average to every teacher. Consequently, his opinion is of no importance whatever when we have the statement of the Śrīṅgeri Maṭham which, as we have already said, places Śaṅkara in some century before the Christian Era. The same remarks will apply to the calculation in question, even if it were made on the basis of the number of teachers contained in the list preserved in the Kumbakonam Maṭham.

Very little importance can be attached to the oral evidence adduced by some unknown persons before Dr. Buchanan in his travels through Malabar; and we have only to consider the inferences that may be drawn from the accounts contained in *Kerala Utpatti*. The

various manuscript copies of this work seem to differ in the date they assign to Śaṅkarācārya; even if the case were otherwise, we cannot place any reliance upon this work for the following among other reasons:

I. It is a well-known fact that the customs of Malabar are very peculiar. Their defenders have been, consequently, pointing to some great Ṛṣi or some great philosopher of ancient India as their originator. Some of them affirm (probably the majority) that Paraśurāma brought into existence some of these customs and left a special Smṛti for the guidance of the people of Malabar; others say that it was Śaṅkarācārya who sanctioned these peculiar customs. It is not very difficult to perceive why these two persons were selected by them. According to the Hindu Purāṇas, Paraśurāma lived in Malabar for some time, and according to Hindu tradition Śaṅkara was born in that country. But it is extremely doubtful whether either of them had anything to do with the peculiar customs of the said country. There is no allusion whatever to any of these customs in Śaṅkara's work. He seems to have devoted his whole attention to religious reform and it is very improbable that he should have ever directed his attention to the local customs of Malabar. While attempting to revive the philosophy of the ancient Ṛṣis, it is not likely that he should have sanctioned the customs of Malabar which are at variance with the rules laid down in Smṛtis of

those very Ṛṣis; and as far as our knowledge goes he left no written regulations regarding the castes of Malabar.

II. The statements contained in *Kerala Utpatti* are opposed to the account of Śaṅkara's life given in almost all the Śaṅkara Vijayams (Biographies of Śaṅkara) examined up to this time, namely Vidyāranya's *Śaṅkara Vijayam*, Ītsukhācārya's *Śaṅkara Vijayavilāsam*, Baihat *Śaṅkara Vijayam*, etc. According to the account contained in these works Śaṅkara left Malabar in his eighth year and returned to his native village when his mother was on her death-bed, when he remained there only for a few days. It is difficult to see at what period of his life-time he was engaged in making regulations for the castes of Malabar.

III. The work under consideration represents Malabar as the seat of Bhaṭṭapada's triumphs over the Buddhists, and says that this teacher established himself in Malabar and expelled the Buddhists from that country. This statement alone will be sufficient to show to our readers the fictitious character of the account contained in this book. According to every other Hindu work, this great teacher of Pūrva Mīmāṃsa was born in Northern India; almost all his famous disciples and followers were living in that part of the country, and according to Vidyāranya's account he died at Allahabad.

For the foregoing reasons we cannot place any reliance upon this account of Malabar.

From the traditions and other accounts which we have hitherto examined, Mr. Wilson comes to the conclusion that Śaṅkarācārya lived in the end of the 8th and the beginning of the 9th centuries of the Christian Era. The accounts of the Śṛṅgeri, Kūdali and Kumbakonam Maṭhams, and the traditions current in the Bombay Presidency, as shown in the biographical sketches published at Bombay, place Śaṅkara in some century before the Christian Era. On the other hand, *Kerala Utpatti*, the information obtained by Dr. Buchanan in his travels through Malabar, and the opinion expressed by Dr. Taylor and Mr. Colebrooke, concur in assigning to him an antiquity of about 1,000 years. The remaining traditions referred to by Mr. Wilson are as much opposed to his opinion as to the conclusion that Śaṅkara lived before Christ. We shall now leave it to our readers to say whether, under such circumstances, Mr. Wilson is justified in asserting that "the weight of authority is altogether in favour" of his theory.

We have already referred to the writings of almost all the European Orientalists who have expressed an opinion upon the subject under discussion; and we need hardly say that Śaṅkara's date is yet to be ascertained.

We are obliged to comment at length on the opinions of European Orientalists regarding Śaṅkara's date, as there will be no probability of any attention being paid to the opinion of Indian and Tibetan Initiates when it is generally believed that the question

has been finally settled by their writings. The Adepts referred to by the *London Theosophist* are certainly in a position to clear up some of the problems in Indian religious history. But there is very little chance of their opinions being accepted by the general public under the present circumstances, unless they are supported by such evidence as is within the reach of the outside world. As it is not always possible to procure such evidence, there is very little use in publishing the information which is in their possession until the public are willing to recognise and admit the antiquity and trustworthiness of their traditions, the extent of their powers and the vastness of their knowledge. In the absence of such proof as is above indicated, there is every likelihood of their opinions being rejected as absurd and untenable; their motives will, no doubt, be questioned and some people may be tempted to deny even the fact of their existence. It is often asked by Hindus as well as by Englishmen why these Adepts are so very unwilling to publish some portion at least of the information they possess regarding the truths of physical science. But in doing so, they do not seem to perceive the difference between the method by which they obtain their knowledge and the process of modern scientific investigation by which the facts of nature are ascertained and its laws are discovered. Unless an Adept can prove his conclusions by the same kind of reasoning as is adopted by the modern scientist, they remain undemonstrated to the outside world. It is of

course impossible for him to develop in a considerable number of human beings such faculties as would enable them to perceive their truth; and it is not always practicable to establish them by the ordinary scientific method unless all the facts and laws, on which his demonstration is to be based, have already been ascertained by modern science. No Adept can be expected to anticipate the discoveries of the next four or five centuries, and prove some grand scientific truth to the entire satisfaction of the educated public, after having discovered every fact and law of nature required for the said purpose by such process of reasoning as would be accepted by them. They have to encounter similar difficulties in giving any information regarding the events of the ancient history of India.

However, before giving the exact date assigned to Śaṅkarācārya by the Indian and Tibetan Initiates, we shall indicate a few circumstances by which his date may be approximately determined. It is our humble opinion that the Śaṅkara Vijayams hitherto published can be relied upon as far as they are consistent with each other regarding the general outlines of Śaṅkara's life. We cannot, however, place any reliance whatever upon Ānandagiri's *Śaṅkara Vijayam* published at Calcutta. The Calcutta edition not only differs in some very material points from the manuscript copies of the same work found in Southern India, but is opposed to every other Śaṅkara Vijayam hitherto examined. It is quite clear from its style and some of the statements contained

therein that it was not the production of Ānandagiri, one of the four chief disciples of Śaṅkara and the commentator on his *Upaniṣad Bhāṣyam*. For instance, it represents Śaṅkara as the author of a certain verse which is to be found in Vidyāraṇya's *Adhikaraṇaratna-mālā* written in the 14th century. It represents Śaṅkara as giving orders to two of his disciples to preach the Viśiṣṭādvaita and the Dvaita doctrines which are directly opposed to his own doctrine. The book under consideration says that Śaṅkara went to conquer Maṇḍana-miśra in a debate followed by Sureśvarācārya, though Maṇḍanamīśra assumed the latter name at the time of initiation. It is unnecessary for us here to point out all the blunders and absurdities of this book. It will be sufficient to say that in our opinion it was not written by Ānandagiri, and that it was the production of an unknowing author, who does not appear to have been even tolerably well acquainted with the history of the Advaita doctrine. Vidyāraṇya's (or of Śāyaṇācārya, the great commentator of the Vedas) *Śaṅkara Vijayam* is decidedly the most reliable source of information as regards the main features of Śaṅkara's biography. Its authorship has been universally accepted and the information contained therein was derived by its author, as may be seen from his own statements, from certain old biographies of Śaṅkara existing at the time of its composition. Taking into consideration the author's vast knowledge and information, and the opportunities he had for collecting materials for his work when he was

the head of the Śringeri Maṭham, there is every reason to believe that he had embodied in his work the most reliable information he could obtain. Mr. Wilson, however, says that the book in question is, "much too poetical and legendary" to be acknowledged as a great authority. We admit that the style is highly poetical, but we deny that the work is legendary. Mr. Wilson is not justified in characterising it as such on account of its description of some of the wonderful phenomena shown by Śaṅkara. Probably the learned Orientalists would not be inclined to consider the Biblical account of Christ in the same light. It is not the peculiar privilege of Christianity to have a miracle-worker for its first propagator. In the following observation we shall take such facts as are required from this work.

It is generally believed that a person named Govinda Yogi was Śaṅkara's Guru, but it is not generally known that this Yogi was in fact Patañjali—the great author of the *Mahābhāṣya* and the *Yoga-Sūtras*—under a new name. A tradition current in Southern India represents him as one of the chelas of Patañjali; but it is very doubtful if this tradition has anything like a proper foundation. But it is quite clear from the 94th, 95th, 96th, 97th verses of the fifth chapter of Vidyāraṇya's *Śaṅkara Vijayam* that Govinda Yogi and Patañjali were identical. According to the immemorial custom observed amongst Initiates, Patañjali assumed the name of Govinda Yogi at the time of his initiation by

Gauḍapāda. It cannot be contended that Vidyāraṇya represented Patañjali as Śaṅkara's Guru merely for the purpose of assigning some importance to Śaṅkara and his teaching. Śaṅkara is looked upon as a far greater man than Patañjali by the Advaitins, and nothing can be added to Śaṅkara's reputation by Vidyāraṇya's assertion. Moreover Patañjali's views are not altogether identical with Śaṅkara's views; it may be seen from Śaṅkara's writings that he attached no importance whatever to the practices of Haṭha Yoga regarding which Patañjali composed his *Yoga-Sūtras*. Under such circumstances, if Vidyāraṇya had the option of selecting a Guru for Śaṅkara he would no doubt have represented Vyāsa himself (who is supposed to be still living) as his Guru. We see no reason therefore to doubt the correctness of the statement under examination. Therefore, as Śaṅkara was Patañjali's chela and as Gauḍapāda was his Guru, his date will enable us to fix the dates of Śaṅkara and Gauḍapāda. We may here point out to our readers a mistake that appears on page 148 of Mr. Sinnett's book on *Esoteric Buddhism* as regards the latter personage. He is there represented as Śaṅkara's Guru; Mr. Sinnett was informed, we believe, that he was Śaṅkara's Paramaguru, and not having properly understood the meaning of this expression, Mr. Sinnett wrote that he was Śaṅkara's Guru.

It is generally admitted by Orientalists that Patañjali lived before the commencement of the Christian Era. Mr. Barth places him in the 2nd century before

the Christian Era, accepting Goldstucker's opinion, and Monier Williams does the same thing. W. Weber, who seems to have carefully examined the opinions of all the other Orientalists who have written upon the subject, comes to the conclusion that "we must for the present rest satisfied with placing the date of composition of the *Bhāṣya* between 140 B.C. and A.D. 60, a result which, considering the wretched state of the chronology of Indian literature generally, is, despite its indefiniteness, of no mean importance". And yet even this date rests upon inferences drawn from one or two unimportant expressions contained in Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya*. It is always dangerous to draw such inferences, and especially so when it is known that, according to the tradition current amongst Hindu grammarians, some portions of *Mahābhāṣya* were lost and the gaps were subsequently filled up by subsequent writers. Even supposing that we should consider the expressions quoted as written by Patañjali himself, there is nothing in those expressions which would enable us to fix the writer's date. For instance, the connection between the expression "*arunād yavanah sāketam*," and the expedition of Menander against Ayodhya between 144 and 120 B.C. relied upon by Goldstucker, is merely imaginary. There is nothing in the expression to show that the allusion contained therein points necessarily to Menander's expedition. We believe that Patañjali is referring to the expedition of Yavanas against Ayodhya during the lifetime of Sagara's father described in

Harivaṃśa. This expedition occurred long before Rāma's time and there is nothing to connect it with Menander. Goldstucker's inference is based upon the assumption that there was no other Yavana expedition against Ayodhya known to Patañjali, and it will be easily seen from *Harivaṃśa* (written by Vyāsa) that the said assumption is unwarranted. Consequently the whole theory constructed by Goldstucker on this weak foundation falls to the ground. No valid inferences can be drawn from the mere names of kings contained in *Mahābhāṣya* even if they are traced to Patañjali himself, as there would be several kings in the same dynasty bearing the same name. From the foregoing remarks it will be clear that we cannot fix, as Weber has done, 140 B.C. as the maximum limit of antiquity that can be assigned to Patañjali. It is now necessary to see whether any other such limit has been ascertained by Orientalists. As Pāṇini's date still remains undetermined the limit cannot be fixed with reference to his date. But it is assumed by some Orientalists that Pāṇini must have lived at sometime subsequent to Alexander's invasion, from the fact that Pāṇini explains in his grammar the formation of the word *yavanāni*. We are very sorry that European Orientalists have taken the pains to construct theories upon this basis, without ascertaining the meaning assigned to the word *yavana* and the time when the Hindus first became acquainted with the Greeks. It is unreasonable to assume without proof that this acquaintance commenced

at the time of Alexander's invasion. On the other hand, there are very good reasons for believing that the Greeks were known to the Hindus long before this event. Pythagoras visited India according to the traditions current amongst Indian Initiates, and he is alluded to in Indian astrological works under the name of Yavanācārya. Moreover it is not quite certain that the word *yavana* was strictly confined to the Greeks by the ancient Hindu writers. Probably it was first applied to the Egyptians and the Ethiopians; it was probably extended first to the Alexandrian Greeks and subsequently to the Greeks, Persians and Arabians. Besides the Yavana invasion of Ayodhya described in *Harivaṃśa*, there was another subsequent expedition to India by Kāla Yavana (Black Yavana) during Kṛṣṇa's lifetime described in the same work. This expedition was probably undertaken by the Ethiopians. Anyhow, there are no reasons whatever, as far as we can see, for asserting that Hindu writers began to use the word *yavana* after Alexander's invasion. We can attach no importance whatever to any inferences that may be drawn regarding the dates of Pāṇini and Kātyāyana (both of them lived before Patañjali) from the statements contained in *Kathā-Sarit-Sāgara*, which is nothing more than a mere collection of fables. It is now seen by Orientalists that no proper conclusions can be drawn regarding the dates of Pāṇini and Kātyāyana from the statements made by Hiuan Tshang, and we need not therefore say anything here regarding the said

statements. Consequently the dates of Pāṇini and Kātyāyana still remain undetermined by European Orientalists. Goldstucker is probably correct in his conclusion that Pāṇini lived before Buddha, and the Buddhists' accounts agree with the traditions of the Initiates in asserting that Kātyāyana was a contemporary of Buddha. From the fact that Patañjali must have composed his *Mahābhāṣya* after the composition of Pāṇini's *Sūtras* and Kātyāyana's *Vārtika* we can only infer that it was written after Buddha's birth. But there are a few considerations which may help us in coming to the conclusion that Patañjali must have lived about the year 500 B.C. Max Müller fixed the Sūtra period between 500 B.C. and 600 B.C. We agree with him in supposing that the period probably ended with 500 B.C., though it is uncertain how far it extended into the depths of Indian antiquity. Patañjali was the author of the *Yoga-Sūtras*, and this fact has not been doubted by any Hindu writer up to this time. Mr. Weber *thinks*, however, that the author of the *Yoga-Sūtras*, might be a different man from the author of the *Mahābhāṣya*, though he does not venture to assign any reason for his supposition. We very much doubt if any European Orientalist can ever find out the connection between the first Āhnika of the *Mahābhāṣya* and the real secrets of Haṭha Yoga contained in the *Yoga-Sūtras*. No one but an Initiate can understand the full significance of the said Āhnika; and the "eternity of the Logos" or Śabda is one of

the principal doctrines of the ancient Gymnosophists of India who were generally Haṭha Yogis. In the opinion of Hindu writers and Pandits, Patañjali was the author of three works, namely *Mahābhāṣya*, *Yoga-Sūtras*, and a book on Medicine and Anatomy; and there is not the slightest reason for questioning the correctness of this opinion.

We must, therefore, place Patañjali in the Sūtra period, and this conclusion is confirmed by the traditions of the Indian Initiates. As Śaṅkarācārya was a contemporary of Patañjali (being his chela) he must have lived about the same time. We have thus shown that there are no reasons for placing Śaṅkara in 8th or 9th century after Christ as some of the European Orientalists have done. We have further shown that Śaṅkara was Patañjali's chela and that his date should be ascertained with reference to Patañjali's date. We have also shown that neither the year 140 B.C. nor the date of Alexander's invasion can be accepted as the maximum limit of antiquity that can be assigned to him, and we have lastly pointed out a few circumstances which will justify us in expressing an opinion that Patañjali and his chela Śaṅkara belonged to the Sūtra period. We may perhaps now venture to place before the public the exact date assigned to Śaṅkarācārya by Tibetan and Indian Initiates. According to the historical information in their possession, he was born in the year 510 B.C. (51 years and 2 months after the date of Buddha's Nirvāṇa), and we believe that satisfactory

evidence in support of this date can be obtained in India if the inscriptions at Kāñcīpuram, Śrīngeri, Jaggannāth, Benares, Kashmere and various other places visited by Śaṅkara are properly deciphered. Śaṅkara built Kāñcīpuram, which is considered as one of the most ancient towns in Southern India; and it may be possible to ascertain the time of its construction if proper enquiries are made. But even the evidence now brought before the public supports the opinion of the Initiates above indicated. As Gauḍapāda was Śaṅkarācārya's Guru's Guru, his date entirely depends on Śaṅkara's date; and there is every reason to suppose that he lived before Buddha. As this article has already become very lengthy we will now bring it to a close. Our remarks about Buddha's date and Śaṅkarācārya's doctrine will appear hereafter.

III. AGE OF LORD BUDDHA'S DEATH

INSCRIPTION DISCOVERED BY GENERAL A. CUNNINGHAM

WE have carefully examined the new inscription discovered by General A. Cunningham on the strength of which the date assigned to Buddha's death by Buddhist writers has been declared to be incorrect; and we are of opinion that the said inscription confirms the truth of the Buddhist tradition instead of proving it to be erroneous. The above-mentioned archaeologist writes as follows regarding the inscription under consideration in the first volume of his report: "The most interesting inscription (at Gaya) is a long and perfect one dated in the era of the Nirvāṇa or death of Buddha. I read the date as follows: *Bhagavati parinirvritti samvat 1819 karttike badi 1 budhi*—that is 'in the year 1819 of the Emancipation of Bhagavata on Wednesday, the first day of the waning moon of Kārtik'. If the era here used is the same as that of the Buddhists of Ceylon and Burma, which began in 543 B.C., the date of this inscription will be 1819-543 = A.D. 1276. The style of the letters is in keeping with this date, but is quite incompatible with

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that derivable from the Chinese date of the era. The Chinese place the death of Buddha upwards of 1,000 years before Christ, so that according to them, the date of this inscription would be about A.D. 800, a period much too early for the style of character used in the inscription. But as the day of the week is here fortunately added, the date can be verified by calculation. According to my calculation the date of the inscription corresponds with Wednesday, the 17th September, A.D. 1342. This would place the Nirvāṇa of Buddha in 477 B.C., which is the very year that was first proposed by myself as the most probable date of that event. This corrected date has since been adopted by Professor Max Müller."

The reasons assigned by some Orientalists for considering this so-called "corrected date" as the real date of Buddha's death have already been noticed and criticised in a preceding article;¹ and now we have only to consider whether the inscription in question disproves the old date.

Major-General Cunningham evidently seems to take it for granted, as far as his present calculation is concerned, that the number of days in a year is counted in the Magadha country by Buddhist writers in general on the same basis on which the number of days in a current English year is counted; and this wrong assumption has vitiated his calculation and led him to

¹ See "Replies to Inquiries suggested by *Esoteric Buddhism*," *Theosophist*, vol. V, pp. 35-43.

a wrong conclusion. Three different methods of calculation were in use in India at the time when Buddha lived, and they are still in use in different parts of the country. These methods are known as Sauramānam, Cāndramānam and Bārhaspatyamānam. According to the Hindu works on Astronomy a Sauramānam year consists of 365 days, 15 *ghaḍias* and 31 *vighaḍias*; a Cāndramānam year has 360 days; and a year on the basis of Bārhaspatyamānam has 361 days and 11 *ghaḍias* nearly. Such being the case, General Cunningham ought to have taken the trouble of ascertaining before he made his calculation the particular *mānam* employed by the writers of Magadha and Ceylon in giving the date of Buddha's death, and the *mānam* used in calculating the years of the Buddhist Era mentioned in the inscription above quoted. Instead of placing himself in the position of the writer of the said inscription and making the required calculation from that standpoint, he made the calculation on the same basis on which an English gentleman of the 19th century would calculate time according to his own calendar.

If the calculation were correctly made, it would have shown him that the inscription in question is perfectly consistent with the statement that Buddha died in the year 543 B.C. according to Bārhaspatyamānam (the only *mānam* used in Magadha and by Pāli writers in general). The correctness of this assertion will be clearly seen on examining the following calculation.

543 years according to Bārhaspatyamānam are equivalent to 536 years and 8 months (nearly) according to Sauramānam.

Similarly 1891 years according to the former *mānam* are equivalent to 1798 years nearly according to the latter *mānam*.

As the Christian Era commenced on the 3102 in the year of Kaliyuga (according to Sauramānam,) Buddha died in the year 2565 of Kaliyuga and the inscription was written in the year 4362 of Kaliyuga (according to Sauramānam). And now the question is whether according to the Hindu almanac, the first day of the waning moon of Kārtik coincided with a Wednesday.

According to Sūryasiddhānta the number of days from the beginning of Kaliyuga up to midnight on the 15th day of increasing moon of Aśvini is 1,593,072 (the number of Adhikamāsas (extra months) during the interval being 1608 and the number of Kṣayatithis 25,323.

If we divided this number by 7 the remainder would be 5. As Kaliyuga commenced with Friday, the period of time above defined closed with Tuesday, as according to Sūryasiddhānta a week-day is counted from midnight to midnight.

It is to be noticed that in place where Bārhaspatyamānam is in use Kṛṣṇapakṣam (or the dark half) commences first and is followed by Śuklapakṣam.

Consequently the next day after the 15th day of the waxing moon of Aśvini will be the 1st day of the

waning moon of Kārtik to those who are guided by the Bārhaspatyamānam calendar. And therefore the latter date, which is the date mentioned in the inscription, was Wednesday in the year 4362 of Kaliyuga.

The geocentric longitude of the sun at the time of his meridian passage on the said date being $174^{\circ} 20' 16''$ and the moon's longitude being $7^{\circ} 51' 42''$ (according to *Sūryasiddhānta*) it can be easily seen that at Gaya there was Pāḍyāmitithi (1st day of waning moon) for nearly 7 *ghaḍias* and 50 *vighaḍias* from the time of sunrise.

It is clear from the foregoing calculation that "Kārtik 1 Badi" coincided with Wednesday in the year 4362 of Kaliyuga or the year 1261 of the Christian Era, and that from the standpoint of the person who wrote the inscription the said year was the 1819th year of the Buddhist Era. And consequently this new inscription confirms the correctness of the date assigned to Buddha's death by Buddhist writers. It would have been better if Major General Cunningham had carefully examined the basis of his calculation before proclaiming to the world at large that the Buddhist accounts were untrustworthy.

IV. BUDDHISM AND ANCIENT WISDOM-RELIGION

[*Note added in reply to a correspondent*]

WE are in a position to state that Mr. Sinnett never intended to maintain that Buddhism, as popularly conceived, is the nearest approach ever made to the ancient Wisdom-Religion. His assertion simply means that the Tibetan form of exoteric Buddhism is in closer connection at present with the Esoteric Doctrine than any other popular religion on account of the presence of the great Himālayan Brotherhood in Tibet, and their constant guidance, care and supervision. The name given to Mr. Sinnett's book will not be misleading or objectionable when the close identity between the doctrines therein expounded and those of the ancient Ṛsis of India is clearly perceived. As the writer of the foregoing article seems to be in a state of doubt as to the position occupied by the septenary constitution of man as expounded by Mr. Sinnett, in the Āryan Hindu Occult System, we shall herein below state in a tabular form corresponding principles recognized by the Vedāntic teachers:

CLASSIFICATION IN ESOTERIC BUDDHISM	VEDĀNTIC CLASSIFICATION	CLASSIFICATION IN TĀRAKA RĀJA YOGA
1. Sthūla śarīra	Annamaya kośa	} Sthūlopādhi
2. Prāṇa	} Prāṇamaya kośa	
3. The Vehicle of Prāṇa		
4. Kāmarūpa	} Manomaya kośa	} Sūkṣmopādhi
5. Mind { (a) Volitions and feelings, etc.		
(b) Vijñānam		
6. Spiritual Soul	Ānandamaya kośa	Kāraṇopādhi
7. Ātmā	Ātmā	Ātmā

From the foregoing table it will be seen that the 3rd principle in the Buddhist classification is not separately mentioned in the Vedāntic division as it is merely the vehicle of Prāṇa. It will also be seen that the 4th principle is included in the 3rd kośa, as the said principle is but the vehicle of will power which is but an energy of the mind. It must also be noticed that Vijñānamayakośa is considered to be distinct from Manomayakośa, as a division is made after death between the lower part of the mind, as it were, which has a closer affinity with the 4th principle than with the 6th and its higher part, which attaches itself to the latter and which is in fact the basis for the higher spiritual individuality of man.

We may also here point out to our readers that the classification mentioned in the last column is for all

practical purposes connected with Rāja Yoga, the best and simplest. Though there are seven principles in man, there are but three distinct Upādhis, in each of which his Ātmā may work independently of the rest. These three Upādhis can be separated by an Adept without killing himself. He cannot separate the seven principles from each other without destroying his constitution.

V. NĀDIGRANTHAMS AND THEIR INTERPRETERS

For some time past I have been hearing of Nāḍigranthams and their predictions. But the reports that reached me from various quarters regarding these marvellous books, and the answers discovered therein to a variety of questions put by different people, gave me little or no information regarding their real origin and the plan on which they were constructed. Some said that they were written by Brahmā himself, while others attributed their authorship to Vyāsa; a third account says that they were written by the presiding deities of the various planets by whose names they are called, while those that have no connection with individual planets are supposed to be the production of a variety of authors, human and divine.

Putting together all the various accounts received, it appears there are fifteen different kinds of Nāḍigranthams: namely (1) SŪRYANĀḌI, (2) CANDRANĀḌI, (3) KUJANĀḌI, (4) BUDHANĀḌI, (5) ŚUKRANĀḌI, (6) GURUNĀḌI, (7) ŚANINĀḌI, (8) RĀHUNĀḌI, (9) KETUNĀḌI, (10) SARVASANGRAHANĀḌI, (11) BHĀVANĀḌI, (12) DHROUVANĀḌI, (13) SARVANĀḌI, (14) ŚUKANĀḌI, and (15) DEVĪNĀḌI. There may be perhaps one or two more Nāḍis, but all those generally referred to are included

in the foregoing list. I may mention in this connection that the books attributed to the celebrated Bhīmakavi of Vegidesa (Godavery District) may also be considered as another variety of Nāḍigranthams. It is not possible to say how many volumes of palm-leaf manuscript books are included under each heading as the possessors of these granthams are unwilling to give precise information on this point, but I have not actually seen with them more than one book of each class.

It seems incredible, however, that fifteen palm-leaf books of ordinary size should contain detailed information regarding the horoscopes and the lives of every man and woman on this planet for any length of time, or give answer to any question that may be asked regarding events past, present and future. I attempted, therefore, to ascertain whether the contents of these strange books have anything like limits with reference to time and space. Different astrologers have given me different answers. Those who professed to find in these books answers to any question that might be asked by calculation made with reference to the time of questioning, or *ārūḍhalagnam* as it is generally called, and other circumstances connected with the question and the incidents appertaining to the act of questioning, found it difficult to assign any reasonable limits to the range of information contained in their books. One of them said that the books referred to the occurrences during four yugas, and that there were certain signs given therein to indicate the yuga in which any particular

question was asked. Apparently any person coming from any part of the world may have access to the astrologer and ask him any questions he pleases. The authors of these works could not have written the books for the special use and benefit of any particular astrologer and confined their answers to the questions which would be put to him during his lifetime. But it is not admitted by these astrologers that the whole history of the human race for a period of 4,320,000 years is contained in these volumes.

We must therefore assume that the authors foresaw into whose hands their books would come during the four yugas, and knew perfectly well beforehand the circumstances connected with the persons who would put questions to these people, and that they therefore give just so much information in their books as would be actually utilized by the human race. Even if any such achievement were possible, one would naturally expect to find millions of volumes in the hands of these astrologers, as many of them are deriving a pretty large income every month from the fees paid by a large number of questioners during these few years of Kaliyuga. Even if we suppose that all the books which satisfied the requirements of past generations have been destroyed already, there must be a considerable number left for the benefit of future generations as Kaliyuga has yet to run on for nearly 427,000 years more. But these lakhs of volumes are nowhere to be found though stern logic sometimes compels these astrologers to admit

that they ought to exist. It so happens, however, that each of these men has in his possession just the number of volumes required to meet the demands of enquirers that flock to him and does not trouble himself about the rest.

The astrologers who profess to find in these Nādi-granthams the horoscopes of any people that choose to come to them, and the predictions based thereupon, have now and then attempted to set a limit to the pretensions of their granthams, especially when the extravagance of such pretensions appeared to disturb the minds of enquirers and make them assume a sceptical attitude of mind. Some said that the horoscopes of caste people only would be found in these books, while others asserted that only the horoscopes of distinguished men would find a place in their mysterious volumes. One of them is of opinion that only a pious orthodox Hindu can expect to find his horoscope in their leaves, while another hinted that the horoscopes defined in these books related to a period of one hundred years, of which a considerable portion had already elapsed. Practically, however, I have ascertained, that every man who can pay handsomely for the search can expect to find his horoscope or some kind of description of it, whether intelligible or otherwise, in these volumes.¹

¹ I am told that one trick of roguish astrologers is to insert in a Nādi extra leaves, specially prepared with reference to the expected client; such facts about his history as are accessible being etched on the leaves and an appearance of age given them by steeping them in muddy-water.—H.S.O.

I may further state here that the language used in these books is Samskrit and that the technical phraseology of Hindu astrology is to be found in almost every Śloka. They are written in every variety of character; Nāgari, Telugu, Grantha, Kanarese [Kannada] and Malayalam characters are employed indiscriminately in transcribing these books. Judging from appearance many of these books seem to be very old; but this fact is of no importance whatsoever. Even if the book is a new one it will always be asserted that it was copied from some old manuscript, and no importance whatever is attached to any particular book.

From the foregoing description of the Nāḍigranthams it is clearly not a very easy thing to account for their existence and examine their foundation to see if they have anything like a scientific basis. A thorough knowledge of all the existing systems of astrology does not enable a person to find out the process by which they could have been written, much less to produce similar works on any limited scale. It is not alleged by these astrologers that they have any occult basis or that any occult powers are needed to interpret them. There is not even room for the supposition that by some mysterious occult process, these so-called astrologers ascertain the horoscope of an enquirer and the past, present and future incidents of his life and only use these Nāḍigranthams as a veil to hide their real secret and mystify the public. And, moreover, all the circumstances connected with them

are calculated to create distrust in the mind of an honest enquirer. However, by reason of a few exaggerated and incorrect accounts of successful predictions the belief in these books is gradually gaining ground. In an article written by Mr. Chidambaram Iyer, and published in the issue of *The Theosophist* for June, 1883, it was stated that these Nāḍigranthams were of considerable scientific importance and that it would be possible by their help, to fix the first point of Aries from which the Ayanāṁśam is calculated. Nothing more has been heard since then regarding Mr. Chidambaram Iyer's investigations in this direction. These books have again been prominently brought to the notice of the public by an article on "Indian Sibylline Books," published in the May, 1885, issue of *The Theosophist*, and some fresh reports of wonderful predictions that have been circulated. I therefore thought it necessary to examine carefully one or two of these astrologers and ascertain the real value of these books—a determination strengthened by the request of my friend, Colonel Olcott. The result of my inquiries is given for what it is worth in the following paragraphs.

It will be unnecessary for me to say anything about astrology in general in this connection; and I do not intend to advance now any theoretical considerations to show that these Nāḍigranthams cannot be genuine and that such books can by no possible means be composed. No such theoretical reasoning, however sound and convincing from a scientific point of view, will

produce any impression on an ordinary mind which believes the statements made regarding these books on the strength of the marvellous reports of their predictions. So long as such reports are believed on hearsay evidence, all such considerations will be set aside on the ground that nothing would be impossible for a divine being or a Ṛṣi like Vyāsa. The following account will, however, show that these Nāḍigranthams are not always trustworthy and that a strict investigation is absolutely necessary before they can be relied upon and recommended to the public as authentic sources of information. If these books are the spurious concoctions of men who are trying to derive some advantage from the credulity and superstition of the uneducated mass of people, every effort must be made to disclose their real nature to the public.

Before proceeding further I may mention here that the Telugu Brahmin astrologer alluded to in the article on "Indian Sibylline Books" has not yet given me an opportunity of consulting his Bhīmakavi's book or his Nāḍigranthams, although I have made several attempts to obtain an interview.

The other astrologer with whom I had an interview on the 16th day of May (1885) is known by the name of Auritavak Balakrishna Josyulu and is at present residing in the Mint Street in Black Town.¹ He has been living here for the last four or five years deriving a very good income by means of his Nāḍigranthams and is reputed

¹ Now called George Town.

to be one of the most celebrated and learned astrologers of Southern India. Hearing of some of his predictions I expected to find out the real truth about these Nāḍigranthams by visiting him, and proposed to a well-known and respectable Indian gentleman here that we should both go to the astrologer in question on the date above mentioned to consult his book. My friend sent an intimation to the astrologer that he would come and see him on the next day. We accordingly went to the astrologer's house and requested him to give us an opportunity of putting to him certain questions on payment of the fee usually charged. Not expecting me there with my friend, the astrologer immediately made some enquiries about me and made the necessary preparations for giving us a sitting.

The walls of the room in which we sat were covered with pictures of gods and goddesses and a box full of Nāḍigranthams was placed on the left side of the astrologer. He began his discourse by complimenting us and pointing out the importance of his sacred Nāḍigranthams. He explained to us that an astrologer had to get by heart and retain in his memory thousands of signs and symbols and several thousands of Samskrit verses before he could become a competent interpreter of these mysterious books. After favouring us with these remarks he proposed to send away all his servants to ensure privacy except a boy who was required to take down our questions. He then enquired about the offering brought by us which consisted of betel-leaves, areca nuts, bits of saffron

and plantains. After counting the number of things brought, with a great show of accuracy and explaining to us the method of selecting the *nāḍi* applicable to the enquiry in hand, he ordered the boy above mentioned to enter in a book the address of the questioner, the number of things brought by him and the questions proposed, after assuring himself, however, that a currency note of five rupees was placed in his hands which he was pleased to call an *aśurapatram* (paper of the *Rākṣasas* or demons). He appeared to be very particular about the point of time when the questions were declared though it did not appear what use was made of this fact in finding out the *nāḍi* or interpreting the same. He then asked me if I had any questions to put, and when I told him that I would propose my questions after seeing the result of my friend's enquiries, he appeared to be dissatisfied and said that it would be very convenient for him if I were to ask my questions also immediately and pay down my fees. I did so and the same process of calculation was gone through in my case. After these preliminary preparations were finished two books were taken out of the box and placed on a stand called *Vyāsapiṭham*. One of these books which appeared to be old was then opened; after looking at it for a while, the astrologer opened his box and took out a third book which appeared to be new, saying that the account in the old book began with the answers, but that the preface required had to be read from another book. My readers will be pleased to notice here that

no calculation was needed to select this new book and that in all probability this single book contains the prefatory remarks to every answer given to every enquirer, as no attempt was made by the astrologer to select one book from a number of such books.

When the astrologer began to read from this new book we found that the scene opened in *Vaikunṭham* with *Nārāyaṇa* sitting there with his three wives and a host of *Ṛṣis*. A considerable portion of the account was devoted to the description of the dancing of *Apsaras* and planetary deities. I may here mention that, in reply to one of my questions, the astrologer informed me that *Vyāsa* was the author of the book from which he was reading. But *Vyāsa* knew nothing about the third wife of *Nārāyaṇa* who was introduced, as is well known, into the Hindu Pantheon by the *Vaiṣṇavite* writers of Southern India in later times. The dancing or *nṛtyam* of *grahams* or planetary deities is a new idea which does not appear in any other Hindu book.

The account then stated that in the present year of *Kaliyuga* on the very date on which my friend's questions were asked, certain enquiries would be made by a *Madhva Brahmin*. The astrologer went on giving lengthy explanations of the meaning of the *Samskrit* text until he came to the description of the questioner and the enumeration of the questions. After arriving at this stage he began to propose explanations and tried to discuss the subject with us for the purpose of ascertaining the real meaning of his text. My friend hastily

produced his horoscope and placed it before the astrologer for his guidance. Seeing, however, the real difficulties of the astrologer's situation, and estimating at its true worth his anxiety to get his interpretation confirmed and cleared of all its ambiguities by the light of our statements, I requested him to go on reading the text to its end without taking the trouble to explain its meaning to us as we could understand it ourselves. This proposal was not quite agreeable to him, he, however, proceeding to describe my friend and his antecedents. The description was extremely meagre and contained nothing more than what was known about him to a considerable number of people in Madras. The description was wrong, however, in stating that my friend was a follower of Vyāsarāyamaṭham, while he was a follower of Rāghavendraswamy's Maṭham. It was also wrong in stating that his father was married thrice. I found that in four or five distinct and unambiguous statements made, two were clearly wrong, and one of the mistakes committed was just the sort of mistake which a hasty enquirer would commit. As the majority of Madhvas are the followers of Vyāsarāyamaṭham, Vyāsa seems to have made a shrewd guess that the questioner would be a follower of the same maṭham. When he came to that part of the account which described my friend's horoscope, the astrologer had the advantage of having before him the diagram of the same and squeezed out of the senseless Samskrit text some statements applicable to the horoscope under consideration.

But it would be interesting to notice in this connection that nothing was stated which was not clearly visible on the very face of the diagram, and that whenever a word or phrase was detected by me in the obscure text which indicated a reference to the horoscope in question, I found disturbance of the metre of the Samskrit verse. I then asked him in what metre the text was composed; the reply given is significant. He told me that the verses had no settled metre, but that they were so composed that it would be impossible for even the greatest Pandit to substitute one syllable for another, and that this fact was proved by him in an Assembly of Pandits at Śṛṅgeri. I need hardly say that this explanation is more damaging to the Nāḍigranthams than anything else connected with this interview. After thus defining the questioner in a very unsatisfactory, ambiguous and suspicious manner, Vyāsa took the trouble to point out at great length the articles brought by my friend and notice the additional articles which he ought to have brought, but which he had omitted to bring. Vyāsa also stated that my friend would bring Rākṣasapatram (the same as Asurapatram), thus showing that he clearly anticipated, five thousand years ago, the introduction of paper currency into India by the British Government, though the name given by him to an English currency note was not quite appropriate. It was further stated in this book that a boy would take down the question proposed by my friend. It is astonishing to find that, while

dealing with the history of the human race for several millions of years, the author of these books took the trouble to record such unnecessary details and trifling events.

When we approached expected answers, the old book was opened and the verses therein found were read. The first question related to the Theosophical Society. But unfortunately the astrologer was unable to understand the meaning of the expression. As might be expected under such circumstances, he was not very eager to give lucid explanations and comment upon the text as he did when dealing with the articles brought and the dancing in Vaikunṭham, in spite of my request that he should proceed with the text and not waste his time on such trivial things. The text was the most ridiculous rigmarole that I ever heard. Each verse contained three or four contradictory verbs of various meanings and a number of other words which seemed to refer to a puzzling variety of subjects. Their combination conveyed no meaning whatever and might be made to mean anything and everything, provided the interpreter was allowed to have his own way in the matter. But how could the astrologer interpret it in a manner that would connect his explanation with the question when he was unable to understand the question, though we allowed him a Samskrit dictionary and grammar of his own choice? He tried his best to catch any remark that we might make and proceeded in a very cautious and guarded

manner. I requested my friend, therefore, in English, not to make any remark which would, in the slightest degree, help him. The result, as might be anticipated under such circumstances, was a ridiculous failure. For a few more minutes the astrologer went on reading, now and then catching a word and looking at our faces to see if we would be foolish enough to suggest a meaning and soon dropping his eyes when his expectations were disappointed. I may notice in this connection an interesting incident that occurred. In one of the verses my friend noticed the phrase *māyāśakti* and expecting to find something in it, asked the astrologer what it meant. He interpreted it in the usual manner, but my friend said that it had no connection with his question. The clever astrologer then said that it might have some other meaning in his books; so saying he suddenly opened his box, took out another palm-leaf book, appeared to find the expression in question in the twinkling of an eye and announced to us that it meant something else. He then threw the book aside and I found that it was neither a dictionary nor a glossary and that the pretended search for the proper meaning was merely intended to have a dramatic effect.

Thoroughly disappointed with the answers given, my friend hoped that we might be more fortunate in eliciting answers to my questions. When it came to my turn to get my difficulties solved, I requested the astrologer to omit that portion of the account which

related to dancing in Vaikuntham or Kailāsam and forthwith begin to read the answers to my questions. He, however, began his account with what appeared to be a description of the question and the position of the planets at the time of questioning. The astrologer said that I must first be assured that the answers related to the very questions proposed by me by the help of the description given of myself and my circumstances. I thanked him for his kind advice so frankly given and waited for the proffered assurance. I was, however, dismayed to find that the account related to somebody else, as it did not at all harmonise with my environment. I pointed this out to the astrologer and suggested that he might not have selected the right portion of the book. He readily accepted the suggestion and after turning over a few more leaves, began to read again. But it appeared to me that so far as the astrologer was concerned the difficulty of getting at my horoscope remained as great as ever. I was asked whether I had my horoscope with me; but I was not willing to repeat my friend's blunder and consequently informed him that I had not my horoscope with me. In sheer despair, the astrologer wanted to get over the difficulty by a bold and fearless assertion. He then began to read a verse which stated that I was born when Leo was ascending, that my future career would be prosperous, and that I would be a very shrewd and discriminative man or something to that effect. But here again the Nāḍigrantham was found to be blundering hopelessly. Leo was

not in my ascendant and consequently I informed the astrologer again that he was probably reading from the wrong page. My suggestion was again accepted and a few more leaves were turned over. This time the astrologer did not venture to meddle with my horoscope, but read something which pretended to indicate the time when I put my questions. He informed me that the horoscope of the questioner would not be given in every case and that, because the time of questioning was properly defined, I must infer that the answers which followed were intended to be replies to my questions. But a fresh difficulty presented itself to my mind. In two separate places in his book, the astrologer appeared to have found an indication of the time when my questions were made known to him, but it was clear that, at that particular instant, I was the only person that questioned him. Why was the same moment noticed, then, in two different places in the Nāḍigrantham and apparently in connection with two distinct personalities? If it should be asserted that at that very moment, some other person might be proposing questions to a Nāḍigrantham astrologer at some other place, and that consequently the second account might refer to him, then, it would be necessary to find a correct indication of time as well as a proper description of the questioner to assure one's self that answers were being searched for in the right place. If so, the description of the horoscope would be indispensably necessary in every case; if, on the other hand, it should be admitted that

there could be but one questioner at a time, the discovery in two different places of the description of the same moment or *ārūḍhalagnam* would be altogether inexplicable and exceedingly suspicious. I plainly pointed out my difficulties to the astrologer and asked him for a satisfactory explanation. He was mute for a few seconds, then grew passionate and told my friend that I had spoiled the whole business. I expected that the affair would come to a disagreeable close if I should insist upon getting an explanation which, from the astrologer's standpoint, was clearly impossible. I therefore mildly told him that in putting such questions to him I was acting in conformity with his own advice and that he might proceed to read the answers without troubling himself about the matter. He then read some gibberish which had no meaning and which he was unable to explain.

Fully convinced that we ought not to waste any more time with him and wishing to bring the matter to a speedy conclusion, I asked him to explain the last verse that he had read. He went on saying that the word *lokādhya* meant the people of the world or those who have the world and so forth. I was again obliged to point out to him that the verse had nothing to do with my question. He then looked at my question and found that it had something to do with Śaṅkarācārya. Turning round he said that the word in question meant Śaṅkarācārya; my friend contended that it would be absurd to

force such a meaning into the context in an arbitrary manner after looking at the question, and suggested that in the following verses some unequivocal reference might probably be found to that great teacher; of course such reference was immediately found in the very next verse, into which an appropriate expression was introduced in defiance of grammar, logic and metre. When we came to this point even my friend lost all his confidence and was waiting for an opportunity to bring the interview to a decent close. For a few more seconds we had to wait during which time I could hardly suppress my laughter on finding the astrologer inform my friend that I knew "Vātarāyaṇa Yogam" and that I was a "Sākya" at heart, as the second question had something to do with Yoga. These words of course have no sense whatever. We prepared finally to depart and the astrologer, noticing our state of mind, offered to act according to our wishes. We did not, however, claim back the fee paid by us, but quietly took leave of him with our mind freed from all doubts regarding these notorious Nāḍigranthams.

VI. PLACES OF PILGRIMAGE IN INDIA

THE following communication, sent to me by a student of occult science, will throw some light on the significance attached to the ancient Hindu religious symbology as illustrated in the various places of pilgrimage abounding in India, and account for the high veneration in which these places are held by the masses of the Hindu population. Speaking of "pilgrimage as a means of spiritual education," the said correspondent writes as follows:

"The insistence of the later Brahmanical Scriptures on pilgrimages as a means of spiritual education is well known. At the present day there is hardly a pious Hindu, of whatever sex and in whatever part of India, who considers his or her religious duties performed without visiting the principal places of pilgrimage. In this respect the modern Hindu differs so completely from his Christian contemporaries, that the latter would hardly credit what a vast number of pilgrims annually circulate over the country to fulfil their religious obligations, and to what trouble and expense they put themselves for the purpose. With the social aspect of the question, the present paper is not concerned. It is proposed to examine what real good pilgrimage in India

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does produce in the spiritual education of the people, and what is the rationale of the institution. The places of pilgrimage are so numerous and their esoteric significance so deep, that anything like completeness must be disclaimed by the present writer. At the same time the hope is expressed that the lines of inquiry indicated herein may be followed up by competent scholars and mystics, so that the highly beneficial character of pilgrimages may be made apparent to all open-minded people, and the great wisdom of his ancestors shown to the Hindu of the present day.

"In the first place it is to be remarked that the sacred cities of the Hindus are well organised and powerful spiritual centres, and from them there radiates an elevating influence which is not the less active because unperceived by the ordinary Philistine. Places of pilgrimage are truly spiritual seminaries which, though completely closed to the idler and the superstitious in selfish quest of personal holiness and personal salvation, are ever open to receive the earnest and devoted searcher after truth. The statement may be boldly made and the support of all true mystics confidently expected on its behalf, that there is no important place of pilgrimage in India which does not enjoy the presence, in most cases permanent, of some Adept or Initiate of a high order, who is ever ready to point the path to the higher life into which he himself has entered. It is a matter of common experience that people's spiritual eyes have opened in these holy cities

under the benign influence of some great *sādhu* (sinless man). But, for reasons which will be readily understood, the pious hand must not seek to withdraw the veil of obscurity which shrouds the holy men and their work. The members of the silent brotherhood will but speak to those whose Karma deserves it. Śaṅkarācārya says:

“दुर्लभं त्रयमेवैतत् देवानुग्रहेतुकं ।
मुमुक्षुत्वं मनुष्यत्वं महापुरुषसंश्रयः ।

*durlabham trayam evaitat devānugraha hetukam ।
mumukṣutvaṁ manuṣyatvaṁ mahāpuruṣasaṁśrayaḥ ।*

“These three are difficult to attain and are due to the favour of the gods¹ (i.e. the good Karma of previous births): humanity, desire for liberation, and contact with great spiritually-minded men.

“The holy cities were built, or at all events completed, in the later epochs of Brahmanic history. When the spirituality of mankind began to be clouded by progressive materiality, consequent upon the desire of selfish enjoyment, the seclusion of the Adepts became greater and the sacred Samskrit language became daily less understood. As a remedy for this great cyclic evil, the holy ones of the earth left to the profane vulgar the symbolical architecture of the great temples, which yet serve as finger-posts to the mystical student. Very few persons are aware that as the pilgrim stands on the bridge of boats on the Ganges before Benares he is face to face with a most sublime and

¹ This interpretation of the term “gods” is accepted by all mystics.

awful mystery, the full import of which none but the higher Initiates comprehend. This mystery is represented by the general aspect of the holy city, whose two Samskrit names—Kāśī and Vārāṇasī—will yield a mine of truth to the earnest inquirer. It is not for us to elucidate the point; for the present it will suffice to suggest to the reader a fruitful field of inquiry, where each will be rewarded according to his earnestness and spiritual penetration.

“What is Kāśī?

“The question has been answered in a well-known treatise by a celebrated mystic, Satya Jñānānanda Tirtha Yati. He says that Kāśī is the supreme power of the great God Śiva who is the undifferentiated bliss, consciousness and being.¹ Śiva or Peace here represents the fourth or unmanifested state of the Universe. He is the Cidākāśa, his other name being Vyoma or space, the small circle or dot which is placed on the top of the Samskrit mystic symbol *Om* (ॐ). What relation it has to the force located in the human body above the eyebrows, and represented by the dot over the crescent moon, the mystic knows very well. Kāśī is called the goddess who embodies consciousness and bliss, and is the same as the Śakti or power to whom the sacred verses of Śaṅkarācārya—*Āṇandalahari*—are addressed. The great teacher says that if Śiva is not united to Śakti

¹ The word *Sat* has been roughly translated “being,” as the English language does not afford a better word; Be-ness if allowed in English would be a more adequate rendering.

he cannot produce even a flutter of well-being. Śakti is adorable of Hari, Hara and Viriñci. By once turning the key of the symbology here adopted we find that Hari or Viṣṇu is the dreaming state of the Universe, the first differentiated aspect of the darkness, the destroyer or remover Hara. Although Hara is usually taken as a loose synonym for Śiva, it is here used with the deliberate object of implying that the transcendental state of the Universe, emblematised by Śiva, is beyond the state of the destroyer, as the *turiya* state is beyond the *susupti*. Śiva is Paranirvāṇa, while Hara is Nirvāṇa. It is easily intelligible how to the popular mind no distinction is observable between Nirvāṇa and Paranirvāṇa. Hari, we have said, is the first differentiated condition realized by the human ego. He is therefore the son represented by the sign Leo in the Zodiac (see T. Subba Row's invaluable article on the "Twelve Signs of the Zodiac" in *The Theosophist*, vol. III).¹ Viriñci or Brahma the Creator is the aggregation of the perceptible Universe. Śakti is therefore above these three, and the consort of Śiva. This explains why Kāśi is called Tripurarahavi [Tripurarahivati?], the royal residence of the destroyer of the three cities, the undifferentiated synthetic condition of the three states mentioned above. With regard to the human ego the three cities are the three bodies, gross, subtle and causal, beyond which is the spirit. From this it also becomes clear that Kāśi is the eternal Cinmātra which has been well explained by

¹ See p. 3 of this book.

Mr. Subba Row in his article on 'Personal and Impersonal God'. (*Theosophist*, vol. IV) It also becomes manifest from this that in one of its aspects Kāśi is *prajña*, in which is realized the great formula 'Thou art It'. This *prajña* is the mother of *mukti* or liberation, as all Vedāntins know. The Tirthayati says: 'I make salutation to that Kāśi by whose favour I am Śiva,' and I know Śiva to be the spirit of all that is. Kāśi is Prajña, Buddhi, Śakti or Māyā, the different names of the divine power which dominates throughout the Universe; in fact, it is one aspect of the One Soul. The above quoted mystic states further: 'This Kāśi is the power of Śiva, the supreme consciousness, but not different from him. Know Kāśi to be the same as Śiva and the supreme bliss . . . Kāśi is that by which the supreme reality of the spirit is manifested or *in* which it is so manifested. She is also sung as the Cinmātrā; I make salutation to her, the supreme Knowledge. Elsewhere the same writer calls Kāśi the darkness (Śyāmā).' This Darkness is the undifferentiated matter of the Cosmos, beyond which dwelleth the sun-coloured one, the spirit. In the Psalms this Asat or Prakṛti is referred to in the highly poetical passage: 'There is darkness round his pavilion.'

"Kṛṣṇa, the supreme spirit, is dark in his human form. No human eye can penetrate beyond this divine darkness. In some Vaiṣṇava work it is stated that on one occasion Kṛṣṇa transformed himself into Śyāmā in Kālī (darkness in its feminine aspect), thus hinting

at the truth which reveals itself to the spiritual eye of intuition. Unconsciously guided by the higher light the Christian Church believes that Jesus Christ was 'black, and comely,' although the passage in the Song of Solomon in which the expression occurs has no relation whatsoever to Christ.

"To return to Kāśi in its aspect of Buddhi. It is to be remembered that Buddhi is the first differentiation of Prakṛti. According to Kapila, Buddhi is the termination (*adhyavasāya*) in nature of Prakṛti to evolve egotism. Buddhi has three conditions or aspects. Its own essentially pure condition is that in which it is identical with Prakṛti, in which the three substantive qualities of goodness (*satva*), passional activity (*rajas*), and delusion (*tamas*), are in a state of equilibrium and in that sense non-existent. This Buddhi is the mother of salvation; in fact it is salvation. When under the influence of *rajas* the quality of *satva* predominates, four things are generated: the practice of virtue (*dharma*), dispassion (*vairāgya*), the spiritual powers (*aśvarya*), and finally salvation, when by the excess of goodness Buddhi returns to its original state of purity. When under some influence *tamas* predominates, the four opposites of what is stated above are produced. *Tamas* by its enveloping power (*āvaraṇa śakti*) makes the one reality in the Universe appear as the differentiated universe of matter, and then *rajas* by its expansive power (*vikṣepa śakti*) produces the passions which are the cause of bondage.

"These three conditions of Buddhi the Tīrthayati gives as aspects of Kāśi: *Nirviśeṣa* (undifferentiated), *śuddha* (pure, when the *sātvika* quality predominates), and *jaḍa* (when *tamas* predominates). One under the domination of *tamas* looks upon the geographical Kāśi as the reality:

दोषारूपा जडा काशी ।

"The *śuddha* Kāśi is the abstract consciousness still limited by forms:

मूर्तिरूपा तु या काशी शुद्धा सा चिन्मयी सती ।

"One under the domination of the *satva* quality practises virtue, still ascribing good and evil to nature around him.

"In her *Nirviśeṣa* condition, Kāśi is self-existent in her glory, and is the supreme God of Śiva and of all liberated souls:

पूर्णरूपा स्वमाहात्म्यं स्वयमेव विचारयेत् ।

निर्विशेषा तु मुक्तानां शिवस्य च परा गतिः ॥

"We shall now understand why it is generally believed that residence in Kāśi removes all sins committed elsewhere, but a sin committed in the temple of the Lord, Kāśi itself, renders one incapable of receiving grace—the reference being to the spiritual evil, the sin against the Holy Ghost—for which there is no remission. The wretch who knows the truth and follows the left hand path is doomed to nameless misery in Avichi Nirvāṇa.

“The Tirthayati says: ‘Terrible indeed is the suffering of one who commits a sin in Kāśi. Alas! the state of a Rudra-piśāca that the sinner attains is more intolerable than the suffering of all the hells.’

“By the acquisition of true knowledge all sins are consumed by the fire kindled in the hearth of heart (*cidāgni kuṇḍam*), but there is no hope for the damned soul who murders his spirit, as far as that is possible, by the practice of black magic.

“Without prolonging the present paper, the student may be recommended to the *Skanda-purāṇa* for further information on this subject; and in conclusion, it may be stated that the practical occultist will derive great benefit from a proper study of the Tirthayati’s treatise, which has here been so largely quoted.”

I will add a few remarks to the foregoing communication. It will be no exaggeration to say that the secrets of the ancient archaic science, for which an enquirer will search in vain the mystical books of the East, are often symbolically represented in some of the most celebrated places of pilgrimage in India. The mysterious ideas generally associated with the position of Benares (Kāśi), its past history and its innumerable gods and goddesses, contain clearer indications of the secrets of final initiation than a cart-load of books on Yoga philosophy. Look again at Chidambaram and examine carefully the plan on which its celebrated temple was built by Patañjali, by the light of the Kabalistic, the Chaldean, the Egyptian and the Hindu doctrines

relating to the great mystery of the Logos. You are far more likely to penetrate this mystery by such a course of study than by examining all the obscure statements of the ancient Initiates regarding the sacred voice of the great deep and the impenetrable veil of Isis. Masons are searching in vain for the lost golden delta of Enoch; but an earnest seeker of truth who has comprehended the rules of interpretation which are applicable to such subjects will not find it very difficult to discover this delta in Chidambaram. Similarly, various occult secrets find their true interpretation and explanation in Śrīśailam, Rameswaram, Jagganath, Allahabad and other places, justly considered as sacred, owing to their various associations, by the followers of the Hindu religion. It would require several volumes to explain at length the sacred symbols connected with these places and their mystic significance, and interpret in a proper manner the Sthalapurāṇams relating thereto. As no writer was permitted in ancient times to divulge in clear language the secrets of occult science to the public, and as books and libraries could be easily destroyed either by the ravages of time or the vandalism of barbarous invaders, it was thought proper to preserve, for the benefit of posterity, in strong and lasting edifices of granite, some of the greatest secrets known to the designers of these buildings, in the form of signs and symbols. The very same necessity which brought into existence the Sphinx and the great Pyramid led the ancient leaders of Hindu religious thought to construct

these temples, and express in stone and metal the hidden meaning of their doctrines. A few explanations and suggestions will be sufficient to justify the foregoing statements, and indicate the manner in which these symbols should be interpreted.

A Samskrit verse is often repeated by Hindus, which says that journeys to seven places of pilgrimage will secure Mokṣa to the devotee. These places are enumerated thus: (1) Ayodhya, (2) Mathura, (3) Māya, (4) Kāśi (Benares), (5) Kañci (Conjeeveram), (6) Avantika (Ujjain), and (7) Dvāraka. Now, these places are intended to represent the seven centres of occult energy in the human body, known as (1) Sahasrāram, (2) Ājñā, (3) Viśuddhi, (4) Anāhatam, (5) Svādhīsthānam, (6) Maṇipūrakam, and (7) Mūlādhāram respectively. The ideas associated with these places will become intelligible when examined by the light of the doctrines connected with these force-centres by Yogis.

It is generally believed by the Hindus that death in Benares secures final emancipation from the necessity of a rebirth. This belief is so strong in the minds of the ordinary people as to lead a considerable number to resort to this place every year for the purpose of remaining there till they die. This certainly appears to be a ridiculous superstition. But a great spiritual truth is lurking behind this strange belief. This truth will become apparent when we ascertain what death at Benares is really intended to mean.

From the foregoing arrangement of the seven sacred places alluded to, it will be seen that Benares corresponds to the heart in the human body, in the centre of which the Anāhatacakram of the Yogis is located; and the truth of this inference is further strengthened by the manner in which Kāśi is described in the *sankalpam* (preliminary recitation before bathing or commencing any worship). It is therein said that Benares is between Asi and Varuṇa; that it is situated in Ānandavana; that it is in Mahāśmasāna (or the great graveyard or burial ground); that it stands in front of Gauri; that it is held up by the three points of the trident of Śiva; that it is in the midst of Brahma-nāḷam (the narrow passage of Brahma), going northwards, and that it is at the end of Maṇi (Maṇikarṇika means Praṇavakarṇika). It may be easily seen now how far this is a figurative representation of the Anāhatacakra of the Yogis. This *cakra* is between the two Nāḍis, Idā and Piṅgalā in the human body, which are represented by the two small streams Asi and Varuṇa named in the foregoing description. The state of ecstasy is realized when consciousness is centred in the germ of *prajña*, which is placed in this *cakra*, and hence Benares is an Ānandavana, which literally means a pleasure garden. When this centralization of consciousness in the germ of *prajña* is secured, the objective consciousness realized in the physical body and in the astral body entirely ceases; consequently before the spiritual consciousness of the regenerated spirit (the Christ after

resurrection) is awakened, the condition realized may be compared to that of sound sleep or *suṣupti*—the death of the incarnated Christ, the death of the individual man. This is the time of the great peace and calmness after the tempest. Hence Kāśi or Anāhatacakra, wherein this condition is realized, is the great burial ground or burning ground, as every thing—the ego and the non-ego—seems to be dead and buried for the time being. Gauri is the Sophia of the Gnostics and the Isis of the Egyptians. When this condition—that of *prajña*—is reached, the Spirit is in front of the divine light and wisdom, and ready to behold the mysterious Goddess without the veil, as soon as its spiritual eyes are opened on the other side of the Cosmos.

Hence Benares is in Gaurimukham. This condition again marks the termination of the three conditions of consciousness experienced by the incarnated spirit, namely the ordinary, the clairvoyant and the Devachanic conditions. These three states of differentiated *prajña* are the three points of Śiva's trident. Again Anāhatacakra is in the Suṣumnā-nāḍi—a mysterious and narrow passage running through the spinal cord to the crown of the head through which the vital electricity flows—and Benares is therefore said to be in Brahma-nāḍam, which is another name for Suṣumnā-nāḍi. Further, the condition above alluded to is represented by the dot over Praṇava, as our correspondent says, and hence Benares is described as Maṇikarnika.

It will thus be seen that Benares is an external symbolical representation of the Anāhatacakra of the Yogis. Death in Benares therefore means the concentration of *prajña* in the original germ consciousness, which constitutes the real individuality of the man. It must further be noticed that Sahasrāram represents the positive pole and Mūlādhāram the negative pole in the body. From the mysterious union of other energies in the heart the sacred and irrepressible (*anāhata*) voice is generated in the Anāhatacakra. This voice is heard when the tempestuous activity of conscious existence terminates in the death of Suṣupti, and out of the ashes of the individual man the regenerated man springs into existence electrified by this "song of life". Hence it is stated that when a man dies at Benares, Rudra (a form of manifestation of Thoth, the Initiator), communicates to him the secret of the Logos and secures Mokṣa for him. It will be clear now that the popular belief is full of meaning to a student of occult science. Similarly the traditions connected with every other important place of pilgrimage will yield much valuable information when properly interpreted.

VII. BHAGAVAD-GĪTĀ¹

IN studying the *Bhagavad-gītā* it must not be treated as if isolated from the rest of the *Mahābhārata* as it at present exists. It was inserted by Vyāsa in the right place with special reference to some of the incidents in that book. One must first realize the real position of Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa in order to appreciate the teaching of the latter. Among other appellations Arjuna has one very strange name—he is called at different times by ten or eleven names, most of which are explained by himself in Virāṭaparva. One name is omitted from the list, i.e. Nara. This word simply means “man”. But why a particular man should be called by this as a proper name may at first sight appear strange. Nevertheless herein lies a clue, which enables us to understand not only the position of the *Bhagavad-gītā* in the text and its connection with Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa, but the entire current running through the whole of the *Mahābhārata*, implying Vyāsa’s real views of the origin, trials and destiny of man. Vyāsa looked upon

¹ Notes of a lecture, delivered at the Convention of the Theosophical Society, 1885, by Mr. T. Subba Row as an introduction to a set of lectures, which he had promised to give at the subsequent Anniversary.—ED.

Arjuna as man, or rather the real monad in man; and upon Kṛṣṇa as the Logos, or the spirit that comes to save man. To some it appears strange that this highly philosophical teaching should have been inserted in a place apparently utterly unfitted for it. The discourse is alleged to have taken place between Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa just before the battle began to rage. But when once you begin to appreciate the *Mahābhārata*, you will see this was the fittest place for the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

Historically the great battle was a struggle between two families. Philosophically it is the great battle in which the human spirit has to fight against the lower passions in the physical body. Many of our readers, have probably heard about the so-called Dweller on the Threshold, so vividly described in Lytton’s novel *Zanoni*. According to this author’s description, the Dweller on the Threshold seems to be some elemental, or other monster of mysterious form, appearing before the neophyte just as he is about to enter the mysterious land, and attempting to shake his resolution with menaces of unknown dangers if he is not fully prepared.

There is no such monster in reality. The description must be taken in a figurative sense. But nevertheless there is a Dweller on the Threshold, whose influence on the mental plane is far more trying than any physical terror can be. The real Dweller on the Threshold is formed of the despair and despondency of the neophyte,

who is called upon to give up all his old affections for kindred, parents and children, as well as his aspirations for objects of worldly ambition, which have perhaps been his associates for many incarnations. When called upon to give up these things, the neophyte feels a kind of blank, before he realises his higher possibilities. After having given up all his associations, his life itself seems to vanish into thin air. He seems to have lost all hope, and to have no object to live and work for. He sees no signs of his own future progress. All before him seems darkness; and a sort of pressure comes upon the soul, under which it begins to droop, and in most cases he begins to fall back and gives up further progress. But in the case of a man who really struggles, he will battle against that despair, and be able to proceed on the Path. I may here refer you to a few passages in Mill's autobiography. Of course the author knew nothing of occultism; but there was one stage in his mental life, which seems to have come on at a particular point of his career and to have closely resembled what I have been describing. Mill was a great analytical philosopher. He made an exhaustive analysis of all mental processes—mind, emotions and will.

“I now saw or thought I saw, what I had always before received with incredulity—that the habit of analysis has a tendency to wear away the feelings, as indeed it has when to other mental habits is cultivated . . . Thus neither selfish nor unselfish pleasures were pleasures to me.”

At last he came to have analysed the whole man into nothing. At this point a kind of melancholy came over him, which had something of terror in it. In this state of mind he continued for some years, until he read a copy of Wordsworth's poems full of sympathy for nature's objects and human life. “From them,” he says, “I seemed to learn what would be the perennial sources of happiness, when all the greater evils of life should have been removed.” This feebly indicates what the chela must experience when he has determined to renounce all old associates, and is called to live for a bright future on a higher plane. This transition stage was more or less the position of Arjuna before the discourse in question. He was about to engage in a war of extermination against foes led by some of his nearest relations, and he not unnaturally shrank from the thought of killing kindred and friends. We are each of us called upon to kill out all our passions and desires, not that they are all necessarily evil in themselves, but that their influence must be annihilated before we can establish ourselves on the higher planes. The position of Arjuna is intended to typify that of a chela, who is called upon to face the Dweller on the Threshold. As the Guru prepares his chela for the trials of initiation by philosophical teaching, so at this critical point Kṛṣṇa proceeds to instruct Arjuna.

The *Bhagavad-gītā* may be looked upon as a discourse addressed by a Guru to a chela who has fully determined upon the renunciation of all worldly desires

and aspirations, but yet feels a certain despondency, caused by the apparent blankness of his existence. The book contains eighteen chapters, all intimately connected. Each chapter describes a particular phase or aspect of human life. The student should bear this in mind in reading the book, and endeavour to work out the correspondences. He will find what appear to be unnecessary repetitions. These were a necessity of the method adopted by Vyāsa, his intention being to represent nature in different ways, as seen from the stand-points of the various philosophical schools, which flourished in India.

As regards the moral teaching of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, it is often asserted by those who do not appreciate the benefits of occult study, that, if everybody pursued this course, the world would come to a standstill; and, therefore, this teaching can only be useful to the few, and not to ordinary people. This is not so. It is of course true that the majority of men are not in the position to give up their duties as citizens and members of families. But Kṛṣṇa distinctly states that these duties, if not reconcilable with ascetic life in a forest, can certainly be reconciled with that kind of mental abnegation which is far more powerful in the production of effects on the higher planes than any physical separation from the world. For though the ascetic's body may be in the jungle, his thoughts may be in the world. Kṛṣṇa therefore teaches that the real importance lies not in physical but in mental isolation.

Every man who has duties to discharge must devote his mind to them. But, says the teacher, it is one thing to perform an action as a matter of duty, and another thing to perform the same from inclination, interest, or desire. It is thus plain that it is in the power of a man to make definite progress in the development of his higher faculties, whilst there is nothing noticeable in his mode of life to distinguish him from his fellows. No religion teaches that men should be the slaves of interest and desire. Few inculcate the necessity of seclusion and asceticism. The great objection that has been brought against Hinduism and Buddhism is that by recommending such a mode of life to students of occultism they tend to render void the lives of men engaged in ordinary avocations. This objection, however, rests upon a misapprehension. For these religions teach that it is not the nature of the act, but the mental attitude of its performer, that is of importance. This is the moral teaching that runs through the whole of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. The reader should note carefully the various arguments by which Kṛṣṇa establishes his proposition. He will find an account of origin and destiny of the human monad, and of the manner in which it attains salvation through the aid and enlightenment derived from its Logos. Some have taken Kṛṣṇa's exhortation to Arjuna to worship him alone as supporting the doctrine of a personal god. But this is an erroneous conclusion. For, though speaking of himself as Parabrahman, Kṛṣṇa is still the Logos. He

describes himself as Ātmā, but no doubt is one with Parabrahmam, as there is no essential difference between Ātmā and Parabrahmam. Certainly the Logos can speak of itself as Parabrahmam. So all sons of God, including Christ, have spoken of themselves as one with the Father. His saying, that he exists in almost every entity in the Cosmos, expresses strictly an attribute of Parabrahmam. But a Logos, being a manifestation of Parabrahmam, can use these words and assume these attributes. Thus Kṛṣṇa only calls upon Arjuna to worship his own highest spirit, through which alone he can hope to attain salvation. Kṛṣṇa is teaching Arjuna what the Logos in the course of initiation will teach the human monad, pointing out that through himself alone is salvation to be obtained. This implies no idea of a personal god.

Again notice the view of Kṛṣṇa respecting the Sāṅkhya philosophy. Some strange ideas are afloat about this system. It is supposed that the Sūtras we possess represent the original aphorisms of Kapila. But this has been denied by many great teachers, including Śaṅkarācārya, who say that they do not represent his real views, but those of some other Kapila, or the writer of the book. The real Sāṅkhya philosophy is identical with the Pythagorean system of numerals, and the philosophy embodied in the Chaldean system of numbers. The philosopher's object was to represent all the mysterious powers of nature by a few simple formulae, which he expressed in numerals. The original

book is not to be found, though it is possible that it still exists. The system now put forward under this name contains little beyond an account of the evolution of the elements and a few combinations of the same which enter into the formation of the various tattvams. Kṛṣṇa reconciles the Sāṅkhya philosophy, Rāja Yoga, and even Haṭha Yoga, by first pointing out that the philosophy, if properly understood, leads to the same merging of the human monad in the Logos. The doctrine of Karma, which embraces a wider field than that allowed it by orthodox Pandits, who have limited its signification solely to religious observances, is the same in all philosophies, and is made by Kṛṣṇa to include almost every good and bad act or even thought. The student must first go through the *Bhagavad-Gītā* and next try to differentiate the teachings in the eighteen different parts under different categories. He should observe how these different aspects branch out from our common centre, and how the teachings in these chapters are intended to do away with the objections of different philosophers to the occult theory and the path of salvation here pointed out. If this is done, the book will show the real attitude of occultists in considering the nature of the Logos and the human monad. In this way almost all that is held sacred in different systems is combined. By such teaching Kṛṣṇa succeeds in dispelling Arjuna's despondency and in giving him a higher idea of the nature of the force acting through him, though for the time being it is manifesting itself

as a distinct individual. He overcomes Arjuna's disinclination to fight by analysing the idea of self, and showing that the man is in error, who thinks that *he* is doing this, that and the other. When it is found that what he calls "I" is a sort of fiction, created by his own ignorance, a great part of the difficulty has ceased to exist. He further proceeds to demonstrate the existence of a higher individuality, of which Arjuna had no previous knowledge. Then he points out that this individuality is connected with the Logos. He furthermore expounds the nature of the Logos and shows that it is Parabrahmam. This is the substance of the first eleven or twelve chapters. In those that follow Kṛṣṇa gives Arjuna further teaching in order to make him firm of purpose; and explains to him how through the inherent qualities of Prakṛti and Puruṣa all the entities have been brought into existence.

It is to be observed that the number eighteen is constantly recurring in the *Mahābhārata*, seeing that it contains eighteen Parvas, the contending armies were divided into eighteen army corps, the battle raged eighteen days, and the book is called by a name which means eighteen. This number is mysteriously connected with Arjuna. I have been describing him as man, but even Parabrahmam manifests itself as a Logos in more ways than one. Kṛṣṇa may be the Logos, but only one particular form of it. The number eighteen is to represent this particular form. Kṛṣṇa is the seventh principle in man, and his gift of his sister in marriage

to Arjuna typifies the union between the sixth and the fifth. It is worthy of note that Arjuna did not want Kṛṣṇa to fight for him, but only to act as his charioteer and to be his friend and counsellor. From this it will be perceived that the human monad must fight its own battle, assisted when once he begins to tread the true path by his own Logos.

VIII. NOTES ON HAṬHA YOGA¹

THE Suṣumnā is connected with the tube that runs through the centre of the spine. It is a sort of vein of magnetic electricity, and the energy passing through the Suṣumnā is a stream of vital electricity. The tube above mentioned is connected with the ventricles of the brain.

The Suṣumnā begins with the Mūlādhāram and ends in Sahasrāram. The former Cakram is at the base of the spine where it forms a triangle.

The Brahmarandhra is put in different places in different books, it should be taken to be the top of the head.

You may know the action of Suṣumnā by feeling an accession of fire to the brain—as if a hot current of air were being blown through the tube from the bottom to the top.

Haṭha Yogis say that Idā and Piṅgalā act alternately, but if you stop both of these the hot current is forced through the Suṣumnā. Also without having anything to do with Idā and Piṅgalā—by practising *kumbhaka* alone—the Suṣumnā comes into play; but a

¹ Notes of a conversation with “Solar Sphinx”.

Rāja Yogi, without using either of these methods, has a way of rousing the Kuṇḍalinī. The means the Rāja Yogi employs belong to the mysteries of initiation.

The reason why Suṣumnā is reckoned to be the chief of the *nāḍis* is, because it is only through it that the Monad goes out in the case of a Yogi; and in the case of an adept, at the time of his death, his soul goes out through the Suṣumnā. Moreover it is the seat of circulation of the soul or *kāraṇa-śarīra*.

The *kāraṇa-śarīra* is said to be in a state of sleep, but this is no ordinary sleep, it is *yoga* sleep. It is the calm after the tempest spoken of in *Light on the Path* (Rule 21).

Samādhi includes the realization of *yoga-ānandam* but it is a generic term used to denote several conditions.

It is absurd to suppose, as stated in some of the books, that the solar system is contained in the Suṣumnā. What is meant is that when consciousness is fixed for the time being in the monad circulating in the Suṣumnā, the Yogi becomes *en rapport* with astral light and the universal mind and thus is able to see the whole Cosmos.

The six Cakrams are located in the Sthūla-śarīra, but they are not visible when a body is dissected, because the leaves and petals described in the books have no objective existence, but represent so many powers or energies.

For instance, Sahasrāram is considered to have eight main petals, and the meaning of this is that the

brain has eight poles. Similarly the letters, characters, symbols, goddesses, etc., said in the books to exist in these Cakrams, all symbolise different powers.

The reason of the differences between the Cakrams is that in the seven centres seven powers are located, and it is said that as the Kuṇḍalinī breaks through each Cakram, it causes the man to subdue that Cakram.

As Kuṇḍalinī goes on breaking through the Cakrams one by one, it gains control over so many forces connected with the elements, the astral counterparts of which are located in the respective Cakrams. The location of the mind is said to be between the eyebrows by the Haṭha Yogis.

The *cakra sammelanam* mentioned in the books means that when Kuṇḍalinī passes through one Cakram, it takes its essence or energy, and so on with the rest, and finally joins all into a sort of united current.

The seven Cakrams are connected with the seven planets in the following order, beginning with Mūlādhāram: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, Mercury, Moon, Sun. The moon is connected with the mind of man, because it is so changeable and vacillating.

The mind of man never penetrates (as sometimes asserted) into the Cakrams, but the Kuṇḍalinī does so penetrate, and the mind itself will finally combine with Kuṇḍalinī when this latter gets near the Ājñā Cakram, and then the man becomes clairvoyant.

Kuṇḍalinī is a power or energy in the Mūlādhāram, sometimes called the astral serpent. It has its head in

the region of the navel; it can be roused by increasing the fire in the Mūlādhāram. It is said to be like a serpent, because it moves in curves, it appears to move round and round in a circle, Idā and Piṅgalā alternate on account of its motion.

Kuṇḍalinī is said in the books to have three and a half circles to show that it pervades the three and a half *mātrās* of Praṇava. In some cases it is represented as eight, because its energy runs through *Aṣṭaprakṛti*. Sometimes it is represented as four.

Some say that, in order to attain Rāja Yoga, one should investigate *mahāvākyam*; others that the mind must be concentrated on a point and the Yogi must contemplate Parabrahmam; some say one's own Guru is the true subject of contemplation, and it is enough to lead a good life; some say the repetition of the Praṇava is in itself Rāja Yoga, and others say you must cultivate will-power: which of these ways is the true one?

All these are necessary and much more—read *Light on the Path*.

The end of Rāja Yoga is the attainment of immortality.

IX. OCCULTISM OF SOUTHERN INDIA

SOUTHERN India has always produced the greatest Āryan philosophers. Madhvācārya came from Southern India, and Śaṅkarācārya was born in Malabar; and at the present day there are high adepts and schools of occultism in Southern India. In the adept hierarchy, there are always seven classes of adepts, corresponding to the seven rays of the Logos. Two of these classes of adepts are so mysterious, and their representatives on earth are so rare, that they are seldom spoken of. Perhaps one or two adepts of these two mysterious orders appear every two or three thousand years. It is probable that Buddha and Śaṅkarācārya come under this category. But of the other five classes of adepts, representatives are always to be found on earth. All five classes are represented in the Himālayan school. At present, it is unlikely that all five classes are represented in Southern India: though all the adepts of this and every other school must belong to one of these five classes.

It is a doctrine of the Southern India school that, though belonging to one of these five classes, and falling into one of these five rays, all of which are represented

in the Himālayan school, adepts in India, for example, need not be correlated to the Tibetan school—need not dovetail, so to speak, into the *guruparamparā* chain of the Himālayan school—and need not therefore owe allegiance to one of the five Chohans, or chiefs, of the five classes of adepts in Tibet.

When a great adept has passed away from incarnated life, his spiritual self may select some suitable person on whom to impress his teachings, who thus becomes his unconscious medium and apostle: this chosen exponent of the adept's wisdom may not recognise the source of his knowledge and power; to recognise their source is almost impossible, since these ideas are instilled into the inmost spirit of the man, the deep, secret place of his nature, from whence arise moral leadings and spiritual ideals. Such apostles have often found that their wisdom left them even in life; when their work was done, the over-shadowing adept often withdrew his inspiration. The over-shadowing by a high adept is what is called a divine incarnation, an *avatāra*.

It is probable that Śaṅkarācārya was such an incarnation. He was already a great adept when he was sixteen years old, at which time he wrote his great philosophical works.

It seems that Gautama Buddha was not such an incarnation as we see in him the actual life-struggle of man striving to perfection, and not the fruition of a great soul who had already reached its goal. But in

Śaṅkarācārya we see no such struggle; this is why we say he is a divine incarnation.

The seven rays we have spoken of represent the outflowing energy from the seven centres of force in the Logos; they represent seven forces, so to speak, which must enter into everything in the universe. No object can exist without the presence of each of these seven forces.

A man's past Karma determines which of the seven, or, practically speaking, five rays, of occult wisdom he shall take his place in; but it is impossible to say that the fact of belonging to one of these rays indicates the presence in a man of any particular moral or mental quality, such as patience, honesty, or courage, on the one hand, or the poetic or artistic faculty, on the other.

The Southern occult school divides the states of consciousness into three: (1) *jāgrat*, or waking consciousness; (2) *svapna*, or dream consciousness, and (3) *suṣupti*, or the consciousness of dreamless sleep. As this classification stands, however, it is purposely obscure: to make it perfect, it must be understood that each of these three states is further divided into three states. Let us take these in their order beginning with the lowest.

The *jāgrat* consciousness is divided into three: (1) the *jāgrat* of *jāgrat*, which is ordinary waking consciousness; (2) the *svapna* of *jāgrat*, the ordinary dream state; (3) the *suṣupti* of *jāgrat*, which is dreamless sleep.

Similarly, the *svapna* state has three divisions: (1) the *jāgrat* of *svapna*, which is the consciousness of waking clairvoyance; (2) the *svapna* of *svapna*, or somnambulatory clairvoyance; and (3) the *suṣupti* of *svapna*, the consciousness of Kāma Loka.

The *suṣupti* state is also divided into three states: (1) the *jāgrat* of *suṣupti*, the consciousness of Devachan; (2) the *svapna* of *suṣupti*, the consciousness in the interval between two planets; and (3) the *suṣupti* of *suṣupti*, the true *arūpa* (formless) consciousness which exists between two planetary rounds.

To make this clear, the following table may be useful:

<i>Jāgrat.</i>	{ <i>Jāgrat.</i> —Waking consciousness. <i>Svapna.</i> —Dreaming. <i>Suṣupti.</i> —Dreamless sleep.
<i>Svapna.</i>	{ <i>Jāgrat.</i> —Waking clairvoyance. <i>Svapna.</i> —Somnambulatory clairvoyance. <i>Suṣupti.</i> —Kāma Loka.
<i>Suṣupti.</i>	{ <i>Jāgrat.</i> —Devachan. <i>Svapna.</i> —Between planets. <i>Suṣupti.</i> —Between Rounds.

Above these nine stages, come the true mystical states of consciousness, to which the adepts have access.

These different states of consciousness mean simply this, that the one observer, the *ātmā*, or self, observes nine classes of objects; the fact that the *ātmā* observes

one class of objects is indicated by saying that such and such a state of consciousness is active.

In each of these classes of objects, which are on the different planes, there are five elements, each corresponding to one of the senses. In the view of the occultists of Southern India, it is erroneous to speak of seven senses, two being considered still undeveloped. It is true that there are seven factors in each plane of consciousness; but only five of these are senses, nor, in the view of this school, will there ever be two additional senses analogous to these.

The sixth factor is the mind, which rules and guides the senses, and draws deductions from their impressions when collected and arranged. The seventh factor is the *ātmā*, which is the observer of the generalisation which the mind makes from the impressions of the senses. It is the self, the sense of "I," in us, behind which it is impossible to go, either in logic or in observation. The seven factors must be present on every plane: in dreaming, for example, objects corresponding to the senses of sight, touch, taste, smell and hearing, pass before the dreamer: his mind classifies these impressions and he feels the sense of "I," the observer which is the subject of these subjects. There is the sense of "I" on each plane, but it is not quite identical, only the kernel, or basic notion of "I" remains unchanged.

Corresponding to the five senses are the five classes of objects on each plane; or, as we may call them, the five qualities of impression, or five elements. These are

(1) earth, corresponding to the sense of smell; (2) water, corresponding to the sense of taste; (3) air, corresponding to the sense of touch; (4) fire, corresponding to the sense of sight; (5) ether, or *Ākāśa*, corresponding to the sense of hearing. Each of these has its psychic counterpart; the counterpart of earth is magnetism; the counterpart of water is electricity; the counterpart of air is perhaps the forces discovered by Keely; while the counterparts of the other two are mystical forces the names of which it is useless to give.

When the seven rays we have spoken of proceed from the Logos, they are separate, and subsequently co-mingle in the formation of all beings. When an individual begins his course of evolution, these rays are equally balanced in him, none preponderating more than another. In the course of time the man's actions, his *karma*, cause him to come particularly under the influence of one or other of the rays. Up this ray he must make his further progress, till he has succeeded in merging his life in the life of the Logos—the grand fountain-head of light and power.

When this mergence takes place, the man does not suffer loss of individuality; rather he enjoys an almost infinite extension of individuality. Each of the seven classes of Logoi has its own peculiar consciousness, and knows that this is so; that is to say, each Logos recognises its own light; but each Logos also participates in the life of all the other classes of Logoi; that is to say, the peculiar quality of their life is represented in it also;

so that an individuality, in merging in a particular Logos, is not cut off from the consciousness of the other Logoi, but shares in, and experiences, their consciousness also.

We have said that the Ātmā is represented on every plane, and the Logos is related to the Ātmā on each of the planes. It is however, useless to attempt to understand the relation between the Ātmā on any plane, and the Logos.

This relation must be known, however, after the last initiation, when man will thoroughly understand his spiritual nature. After the last initiation, the adept thoroughly comprehends the relation of Ātmā with the Logos, and the method of merging himself in the Logos, by which he obtains immortality: but it is a mistake to suppose that the life of the Logos rises up within the man at the last initiation, or that its light enters into him. He understands his spiritual nature, and sees the way to the Logos; but it may take him several incarnations after the last initiation before he can merge in the Logos.

This philosophy recognises two paths, both having the same end, a glorified immortality. The one is the steady natural path of progress through moral effort, and practice of the virtues. A natural, coherent and sure growth of the soul is the result, a position of firm equilibrium is reached and maintained, which cannot be overthrown or shaken by any unexpected assault. It is the normal method

followed by the vast mass of humanity, and this is the course Śaṅkarācārya recommended to all his Sanyāsīs and successors. The other road is the precipitous path of occultism, through a series of initiations. Only a few specially organised and peculiar natures are fit for this path.

Occult progress, growth along this path, is effected by the adept directing through the chela various occult forces, which enable him to obtain prematurely, so to speak, a knowledge of his spiritual nature: and to obtain powers to which he is not morally entitled by degree of his progress. Under these circumstances it may happen that the chela loses his moral balance, and falls into the *dugpa* path. From this it must not be concluded that the Southern Indian school of occultism regards adeptship and initiation as a mistake, as a violent and dangerous usurpation of nature's functions.

The adept hierarchy is as strictly a product of nature as a tree is: it has definite and indispensable purpose and function in the development of the human race. This function is to keep open the upward path, through which descend the light and leading without which our race would require to make each step by the wearisome, never-ending method of trial and failure in every direction, until chance showed the right way. In fact the function of the adept hierarchy is to provide religious teachers for the stumbling masses of mankind.

But this path is eminently dangerous to those who do not hold the talisman which ensures safety; this talisman is a perfectly unselfish, self-forgetting, self-annihilating

devotion to the religious good of mankind, a self-abnegation, which is not temporal, but must have no end for ever, and the object of which is the religious enlightenment of the human race. Without this talisman, though the progress of the chela may be very rapid for a time, a point will come when his upward advance will be arrested, when real moral worth will tell; and the man who progressed along the slow and steady path may be the first to merge himself in the light of the Logos.

This school recommended as the best path for all, a devotion to virtue, a gradual withdrawal from the grosser material concerns, a withdrawal of the life forces from the outward world and its interests, and the direction of these forces to the inner life of the soul, until the man is able to withdraw himself within himself, so to speak. Then, turning round to direct himself towards the Logos and the spiritual life and away from the material plane, he passes first into the astral life, and then into spiritual life, till at last the Logos is reached, and he attains Nirvāṇa.

It is, therefore, wiser not to seek the path of chelaship; if the man is fit for it, his Karma will lead him to it imperceptibly and infallibly; for the path of occultism seeks the chela and will not fail to find him, when the fit man presents himself.

[The foregoing is a summary of a discussion with Mr. Subba Row at the Adyar Library, held on the 1st December, 1888.
—Ed.]

SECTION II

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

I. WILL

By L. A. SANDERS, F. T. S.

Sors de l'enfance ami, reveilles toi.

—(Schopenhauer's motto)

ROUSSEAU

It is with the greatest interest that I read the profound article by T. Subba Row, "A Personal and an Impersonal God"—logically arriving at a condition of unconsciousness, though containing the potentiality of every condition of "Prajña," the only permanent state in the universe.

The theory of the idealistic thinker, John Stuart Mill, is mentioned in this connection, who is certainly the type of Western idealistic philosophy.

But there is another idealist, another Western thinker, who has expressed the same long before J. S. Mill in other words, but with a candid reference to Asiatic philosophy, and given these ideas at the same time a far more palpable objectivity, as far as regards our conscious world. Perhaps for the latter reason your readers may find an interest in his thoughts, which I allow myself to render as follows:

“The world is my mental perception—this is a self-evident truth for every living and discerning being, although man alone can bring it into a reflecting abstract consciousness, and when he does do so, in fact, then philosophical reflection has begun in him. Then also it becomes a clear certainty to him, that what he knows is no Sun, no Earth, but only an eye that sees a Sun, a hand that touches an Earth, that the surrounding world is there only as a mental representation, i.e. absolutely in relation to something else, which something else is himself. If any truth can be pronounced *a priori*, then it is this one, the statement of that form of all possible and thinkable experiences, more universal than all others, more so than time, space and causality. All these, in fact, presuppose already the former; it is only the division in object and subject that makes possible and imaginable phenomena of whatsoever kind, abstract or intuitive, pure or empirical. Therefore, no truth is more certain, more independent of all others, or requiring less proof than that everything that exists in our perception is only Object in relation to Subject, the perception of that which perceives: in a word—our own mental representation.

“And this applies as much to all Past as to the Present, and all Future; to what is most distant, and to what is most near, because it applies to time and space themselves, in which alone the relations can exist.

“This is by no means a new truth. It was already contained in the sceptical premises from which Descartes proceeded. Berkeley, however, was the first to give it an absolute form, and has thereby deserved much of philosophy, though his other doctrines cannot bear criticism. The principal mistake of Kant was his neglect of this axiom.

“*How long ago, however this fundamental truth has been acknowledged by the Sages of India, appearing as the fundamental principle of the Vedānta philosophy, ascribed to Vyāsa, is demonstrated by Sir W. Jones, in his work ‘On the Philosophy of the Asiatics’.*—(*Asiatic Researches*, vol. IV, p. 164.) The fundamental tenet of the Vedānta school consists not in denying the existence of matter, that is of solidity, impenetrability, and figure (to deny which would be lunacy,) but in correcting the popular notion of it, and in contending that it has no essence independent of mental perception: that existence and perceptibility are convertible terms.

“These words express sufficiently the co-existence of empirical reality with transcendental Idealism.

“Thus only and from this aspect of the world as mental perception, can we begin to contemplate it. That such a contemplation, however, without any detriment to its truth, is one-sided, and therefore, the result of some arbitrary abstraction, is nevertheless felt by everybody and proved by that internal revolt, with which one accepts the world as one’s mere mental perception, and of which, on the other hand, one can

yet never entirely rid himself. Later on, however, we will make up for the one-sidedness of this consideration, by the enunciation of a truth, not so directly certain as that one from which we now proceed, but the only one to which a profounder inquiry can lead: still more difficult as an abstraction, the division of what is different, and union of that which is identical; a most important truth, which, if not dismaying, yet must appear critical to every one, the following one in fact; that we can as well say, and must say:

‘The world is my will.’¹

“We must begin to consider not only the world, but even our own body as mere perception. That from which we are now abstracting shall presently clearly show itself as Will, of which alone the world in its other aspect consists, for that aspect is in one respect exclusively Mental Perception, but on the other absolutely Will!”²

BORNEO, 18th March, 1883.

Editor’s Note—For the benefit of those of our readers in India, who, although excellent Vedāntic scholars,

¹ See Schopenhauer’s chief work *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*. *Isis Unveiled*, II, pp. 159 and 261.—L.A.S.

² An entity, however that would be none of either, but an Object for itself, to which Kant’s “*Ding an sich*” degenerated under his treatment, is a phantasm, and its recognition a will-o’-the-wisp in “philosophy”. Arthur Schopenhauer (vol. I. p. 35), edited in 1818, at a period when the knowledge of Samskrit in Europe was very meagre. Schopenhauer’s “Objectivation of Will” throws light upon the other side of the universe.—L.A.S.

may have never heard of Arthur Schopenhauer and his philosophy, it will be useful to say a few words regarding this German metaphysician, who is ranked by many among the world’s great philosophers. Otherwise, the above translated fragment, picked out by our brother, Mr. Sanders, for the sole purpose of showing the great identity of view, between the Vedānta system—the *archaic* philosophy (we beg Professor Max Müller’s pardon)—and the comparatively modern school of thought founded by Schopenhauer may appear unintelligible in its isolated form. A student of the Göttingen and Berlin Universities, a friend of Goethe and his disciple, initiated by him into the mysteries of colour (See A. Schopenhauer’s Essay *Ueber Sehen und Farben*, 1816), he evolved, so to say, into a profoundly original thinker without any seeming transition, and brought his philosophical views into a full system before he was thirty. Possessed of a large private fortune, which enabled him to pursue and develop his ideas uninterruptedly, he remained an independent thinker and soon won for himself, on account of his strangely pessimistic view of the world, the name of the “misanthropic sage.”

The idea that the present world is radically evil, is the only important point in his system that differs from the teachings of the Vedānta. According to his philosophical doctrines, the only thing truly real, original, metaphysical and absolute, is *will*. The world of objects consists simply of appearances; of

māyā or illusion—as the Vedāntins have it. It lies entirely in, and depends on, our representation. Will is the “thing in itself” of the Kantian philosophy, “the substratum of all appearances and of nature herself. It is totally different from, and wholly independent of, cognition, can exist and manifest itself without it, and actually does so in all nature from animal beings, downward”. Not only the voluntary actions of animated beings, but also the organic frame of their bodies, its form and quality, the vegetation of plants, and in the inorganic kingdom of nature, crystallisation and every other original power which manifests itself in physical and chemical phenomena, as well as gravity, are something outside of appearance and identical with what we find in ourselves and call—Will. An intuitive recognition of the identity of will in all the phenomena separated by individuation is the source of justice, benevolence, and love; while from a non-recognition of its identity spring egotism, malice, evil and ignorance. This is the doctrine of the Vedāntic *avidyā* (ignorance) that makes of *Self* an object distinct from Parabrahmam, of Universal Will. Individual soul, physical self, are only imagined by ignorance and have no more reality and existence than the objects seen in a dream. With Schopenhauer it also results from this original identity of will in all its phenomena, that the reward of the good and the punishment of the bad are not reserved to a future heaven or a future hell, but are ever present (the doctrine of Karma, when

philosophically considered and from its esoteric aspect). Of course the philosophy of Schopenhauer was radically at variance with the systems of Schelling, Hegel, Herbert and other contemporaries, and even with that of Fichte, for a time his master, and whose philosophical system while studying under him, he openly treated with the greatest contempt. But this detracts in nothing from his own original and profoundly philosophical though often too pessimistic views. His doctrines are mostly interesting when compared with those of the Vedānta of Śaṅkarācārya's school, inasmuch as they show the great identity of thought arriving at the same conclusions between men of two quite different epochs, and with over two millenniums between them.

When some of the mightiest and most puzzling problems of being are thus approximately solved at different ages and by men entirely independent of one another, and that the most philosophically profound propositions, premises and conclusions arrived at by our best modern thinkers are found on comparison nearly, and very often entirely, identical with those of older philosophers as enunciated by them thousands of years back, we may be justified in regarding “the heathen” systems as the primal and most pure sources of every subsequent philosophical development of thought.

II. NOTES ON OCCULT PHILOSOPHY

[The following notes are answers to philosophical questions raised by some of the Delegates at the Convention of the Theosophical Society.]

DEVACHAN

It has been asked: why the activity exhibited by a human monad in Devachan should last through a longer period of time than that same monad's activity on the present plane of existence?

From our present standpoint the difference is a great one, but this is not so from the standpoint of the Devachanee. When a Yogi is in a state of Samādhi, years may pass and seem only months or days to him. Energy exerted on the astral plane produces effects which last for a longer period of time than those produced by an equal amount of energy on the material plane, for the reason that less friction of opposition is encountered on the astral plane.

On the objective plane, the metallic sound produced by the striking of a bell will not last more than five or six minutes, however finely the bell be made; but after the sound seems dead to the ordinary man, the chela can hear it on the astral plane for one or two hours longer. So we say that the momentum being the same,

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the period of time occupied by effects differs on the material and on the astral plane.

It is not possible to fix beforehand the definite length of the time passed by a human being, or even a race, in Devachan; that depends a great deal upon the nature and development of the spiritual monad in the man, and also on the impulses it has generated in the world of effects and, more or less, on the nature of the man's aspirations. When the element of spirituality appears in the monad, its Devachanic existence will be longer. Perhaps the highest adept, after making a careful psychical analysis of a man, would be able to foretell the length of the latter's stay in Devachan as within one or two thousand years, but he could not give the exact duration.

In estimating the influence on a man's Devachanic existence of a particular thought or train of thought, we must enquire into the utility of the latter and its effect on the world at large, and not imagine that everything depends upon whether the thought is subjective or objective. It is a mistake to suppose that ideation which refers to practical work has less potentiality in this direction than ideation which only relates to the mental plane.

Good work on the physical plane helps on our spiritual development. First, by its influence on the formation of habits; a man constantly engaged in doing good works is not likely to fall into bad habits. Secondly, by its effects on both the astral and the

physical plane, a good action has the effect of concentrating good influences on the doer. When a man makes bad Karma, by the very ideation he attracts to himself forces which will lead him from bad to worse. A man, who has good ideas, attracts influences of quite a different kind and these will begin to help him on his way. On the other hand, actions must not be judged of by their effects alone, because then one element is wanting: the inward impulse prompting the act must also be taken into consideration.

The question of our responsibility for the occurrence of a bad thought must be considered from a purely causal standpoint, so that the introduction of anything like the idea of a judge may be avoided. The fact that the bad thought has occurred in your mind, makes an impression on the astral plane, though, if the thought is driven away by opposition, the bad effects may be neutralised. But if your will-power gives way to the bad ideas, they will produce evil effects, whereas if a determined will-power controls your thoughts, you will get into the path of virtue.

Devachanic existence does not always begin immediately after death. The period in the case of very good people begins immediately, and the transition of Kāmaloka is not felt.

There are no doubt a few other cases, such as that of an infant, whose monad has exhausted the results of its Karma, or where there is some physical reason against existence in a particular body, where the

incarnation may take place after a few minutes; on the other hand, it may not do so for a hundred years, during which period the entity is in a profound sleep and there is nothing like ideation.

When an entity reincarnates, the shell is invariably disintegrated.

THE HUMAN MONAD

A complete explanation of what is meant by the term "human monad" would include the whole range of occult science. It may be said, however, that the human monad is not identical with the 7th principle, the Ātmā or Logos; it is energy which works through the 6th principle. It is the one energy diffused from the Logos, the one life proceeding from the Logos as an active entity.

What is meant will be best explained in a simile. Take the sun; according to the occult theory, that which emanates from it is uniformly spread throughout boundless space; the sun is like a focus in which this matter is concentrated and which is given off as visible light and heat. The one element is Parabrahmam, and whenever the centre of activity called the Logos emerges from it as an active force, this force is the one element in its active condition, the one life, and it is the very same power which Hartmann describes as the one unconscious energy which may be called the will-power of nature, which produces consciousness and every other physical fact in the manifested Universe.

We cannot say it comes into existence at any particular time, it seems latent in the one life throughout, but at its appearance as an active energy, it is the first germ of consciousness in the whole Universe. This is Ātmā.

This is but one power, it begins to work through all the gradations of the various kingdoms, and on arriving at the plane of human volition, becomes differentiated and acquires a certain kind of individuality, and this we call the monad. If this monad were not interconnected with the Logos, immortality would be impossible, but as it has been diffused through the Logos, there is a chance of its passing back through the Logos again and so gaining immortality.

The experiences of today are not those of tomorrow, each day a man may be considered as a different being, but there seems to be something within each of us on which all these varied experiences are strung and by which they have something like a continuity. The monad may be considered as a string on which the experiences of many births are strung. You may consider the Logos as the basis of innumerable monads. These never die out but start into active existence again. All the human beings whose experiences have been brought to the Logos by the travelling monad may be said to have gained immortality, but sometimes the monad becomes so opposed in its magnetic effect to the Logos from which it has emanated, that its absorption is impossible. This happens only in the case of a very wicked man, and then that monad never gains

immortality; it may live on till Pralaya arrives; and is then merged into the ocean of cosmic matter without transferring its impressions to any Logos.

A monad may remain for perhaps millions of years, till Pralaya comes—this time can be almost called infinity—but it is as nothing in comparison to the existence of the Logos itself.

Is the ego ever really wiped out or effaced?

The monad is never killed though the man may be. You call the monad by a particular name so long as it retains the owner's subjective experiences, but when the monad is made quite clean, you can say the experiences are wiped out. A monad is only a centre of energy.

Nirvāṇa means the absorption into the Logos, but for the purpose of differentiating, three conditions are intended by the one name. A period of rest not only from objective but also from subjective activity arrives after the completion of each round, but the real Nirvāṇic condition is only reached when the monad is transferred into the Logos and the man's life becomes part of the life of the Logos.

Many have asked whether after the close of one solar Māvantara, when a particular monad is absorbed into the Logos, by the activity of the same Logos that monad is again ejected; if so, it would be said that even after the absorption birth is possible, but from the standpoint of the Logos there is no birth. Just as I may send my aura to your brain, the Logos emits a ray from itself into matter, the Logos does not suffer, but the ray

does. From the standpoint of the Logos there is no rebirth.

The Logos has an objective existence. Beyond Logos there is the unmanifested Parabrahmam.

Viṣṇu is the Logos. Brahmā is the universal mind, the Demiurgos.

Each Logos has a consciousness of its own. Consciousness which is non-consciousness, means a state of consciousness unlike the state of consciousness with which we are acquainted.

THOUGHT-TRANSFERENCE

The only explanation we can give of the phenomena of thought-transference depends upon the existence of the astral fluid—a fluid which exists throughout the manifested solar system, but which does not extend beyond it.

It must be borne in mind that there is a difference between Ākāśa and the Astral Light, though the two terms have often been used as being synonymous. Ākāśa is a much higher kind of cosmic ether which exists as a link between one solar system and another, and is as infinite as the original cosmic matter. It is the result of motion in that very cosmic matter. Astral Light is not Ākāśa, but a different form of cosmic ether. It is simply that entity in the manifested solar system which corresponds to what we have called the 4th principle in man. It is a manifestation of undifferentiated matter. It is a kind of matter far more

ethereal than any with which we are acquainted. Perhaps matter in its ultra-gaseous condition—radiant matter—may help us to a conception of the astral fluid. Though it exists uniformly throughout space in the solar system, it is yet more dense around certain objects by reason of their molecular action, this is especially the case around the brain and spinal cord of human beings, where it forms what is called the aura. It is this aura round the nerve cells and nerve tubes which enables a man to catch the impressions made upon the Astral Light in the Cosmos.

If we divide mental phenomena into the three branches of modern psychologists: intellectual images, emotions and volition, we find that volition always makes itself felt by an increase of vibration in the astral aura. The intellectual image makes itself felt by the impression of the image on the aura; and in other cases there is a change of colour which also corresponds to change of spiritual feelings. It is asserted that each colour corresponds to a certain emotion, but I am not prepared to say occultists agree with phrenologists in their arrangement.

If I have the idea of a circle, the figure of a circle is formed in the sensitive's odic aura. All mental ideas have their pictures in Astral Light which are almost similar to the images that afterwards arise in the brain, but the intermediate link between the two, the nerve current in the brain, does not actually describe the picture in the mind. If there were in space no medium

to serve as a means of communication between one human being and another, all thought-transference would be impossible, it is impossible to conceive of communication without a medium.

The existence of this Astral Light can be proved from the fact that certain phenomena can only be explained upon the assumption of such existence, and it is moreover an object of direct perception to Adepts. Once let its existence be granted, and also the fact that it concentrates itself more thickly around the brain and nervous system than elsewhere, and you will see that nature has made provision to enable a person to catch the impressions made by others on the Astral Light.

In thought-reading experiments the best results have generally been obtained from children. The reason of this is that the aura of a child is passive, because it has not generated any active tendencies of its own. This fact can be inferred from the difference in colour between the aura of a child and that of an adult. The aura of a child is milk-white, but in the case of a grown-up person there is always upon this basic colour, another colour as green, yellow, red, etc. These colours denote a particular peculiarity of mental or spiritual organisation. Whenever one of these colours is present and shows an absence of sympathy with the characteristics indicated by the colour of the aura of the operator, then a repulsion will be set up; but when there is no such repulsion—whenever the mind is passive—thought-transference is possible.

Every thought is accompanied by another physical phenomenon which may be described as an alteration in the nervous fluid. There is intimate connection between nerve-fluid properly so-called and the aura surrounding it. Nerve-fluid has its own aura like every congregation of molecules in nature, even prime ether has its own aura which is Ākāśa. Nerve-fluid has its own aura, called the odic aura of the man. All auras have one base, they are all akin to the magnetic fluid in the Cosmos. For every thought there is an affection of the nerve currents of the brain or nerve. This implies vibration which is caught up by the astral aura which communicates with the astral fluid with which it is in contact. This vibration affects the odic aura round the thinker's brain, and is immediately transmitted to the brain to which the thought is transferred; it is converted into a particular kind of motion in his aura and then into action in the nerve-fluid and is thus immediately transmitted to his brain.

If the will-power of the operator is not strong enough to give a direction to the vibration generated in the astral fluid, touch is generally required; and where there is magnetic sympathy or at least absence of repulsive tendencies, the vibration immediately reaches its destination and is transferred into a thought in the mind of the sensitive, which will be the same thought first generated in the mind of the operator. If a particular sort of motion in nerve-fluid means a certain thing in the mind of one man, it means the same thing in another man's mind.

The ideas of modern scientists about luminiferous ether are hardly sufficiently definite to enable us to express an opinion about their resemblance to our views, but from the manner in which the conclusions have been arrived at, we see certain differences. First, we see light coming to us from the fixed stars, and they say, admitting the undulatory theory of optics, there must be a medium through which the vibrations pass. Secondly, they have ascertained from minute mathematical calculations that, owing to friction in this ether, there is a certain amount of retardation in the path of the planets. Admitting the two premises, it will be plain that the ether exists throughout space; now the astral fluid does not exist throughout space, but Ākāśa does, and the latter is more likely to correspond with the ether of the scientists.

Their cosmic ether is not peculiarly permanent in connection with any particular organism and does not appear to have any special connection with nerve force, but we hold that whenever there is a specially sensitive organisation, the astral fluid is there concentrated, and in other places it exists more or less uniformly diffused, but its uniformity is never continuous like that of the ether of the scientists. The fact is that the astral fluid only comes into existence when certain kinds of differentiation take place in the original Mūlaprakṛti.

If the scientists recognise a distinction between "bound ether" and "free ether," it amounts to the same kind of distinction as that between astral fluid

and Ākāśa, but even as it exists in point of space without any organisms, it differs in its constitution from real cosmic ether.

In the course of ordinary thought-transference there is no mediation of any elemental whatever.

In certain cases we find that a sense of calamity is felt by a person at a distance when his friend is dying; in such instances the impression is actually a picture of the person and sometimes the image is very distinct. But we believe that somehow our mental ideas are connected with the emotions of pleasure and pain; therefore, admitting that some currents are accompanied by feelings without images, we may conceive a case in which the image, being indistinct, is accompanied by a nerve current which is only expressed by an emotion. Sometimes there are variations. It may be that a portion of the picture is lost, or some new elements are introduced, but when there is no picture, but only a kind of vibration, there will be nothing but a vague idea of grief or calamity.

Again, we sometimes find that the recipient has some token transferred to him, such as, for instance, a coffin when a person is dying. I believe if we take into consideration the results likely to be produced by the laws of psychological association, the case is that particular groups of ideas are connected, as death with a coffin in the mind of a Christian, etc.

One idea has the effect of recalling other ideas which are associated with it. Any of these ideas may

be pictured in the brain and be followed by other ideas, and sometimes it happens that the associations become more prominent than the main idea.

A case is mentioned in which a soldier's wife, travelling with the regiment, one night, while her husband was present and seated on a chair, declared she saw her mother appear, that her mother pressed her shoulders and said: "And I have left you the cream-jug, mind you get it." The husband heard and saw nothing. The figure then vanished, and it was afterwards found that the mother had died and left a cream-jug to her daughter.

This was a case of thought-transference. The woman must have been very anxious to give her daughter this information before her death, anxiety must have increased; when she was dying the thought connected itself with her aura, that thought carried with it, at the time of dissolution, the odic aura of the person herself; but it is not a case of the astral body going to a distance. In all cases except those where Adepts are concerned it is the energy of thought-transference which sometimes takes a portion of a person's aura. Generally this takes place in cases of death; in other cases, unless the person is clairvoyant, it will not be possible for the astral body to be seen.

Sometimes it happens that when a portion of the aura is thus brought, it will be visible only to the man to whom the thought refers. When the thought is transferred, the image is transferred. From a more distinct mental subjective image to an objective figure, there may be infinite gradations of clearness and, visibility.

Another case was as follows: A lady was going to India to her brother, she died on the voyage, and was seen clad, as at the moment of death, by the *brother's wife* three hours after the death occurred.

Here there must either have been strong sympathy between the two, or else the sister must have been a seer, or there must have been some other agency, such as an elemental at work. It is a case of thought-transference, but, in the absence of further particulars, a detailed explanation cannot be given. The impression could not have been transferred from the husband to the wife if the former did not see the apparition. As to the difference of three hours between time of death and of the appearance, generally speaking, the shell may wander about for a time, unless it is a case of a death at which all the principles are immediately separated. If this was so, if the dead body had these two persons in her mind, there is every likelihood that the shell would travel to the place, and not finding the person to whom she wished to communicate sufficiently sensitive, she communicated with the more sensitive person who was present.

There cannot be any delay in the mere transmission of the image. The mind may be sometimes active in cases of insensibility. You may have read accounts of persons under chloroform where the internal man was feeling peculiar sensations though apparently insensible. The delay might be accounted for by supposing the person to whom the image is transmitted did receive the

image by means of his odic aura, but his brain being at work at the time did not cognise the impression; it will be sometime before the impression is effaced, so the image may make itself felt at some future time.

The following instance differs in many ways from the previous ones. A man willed his own appearance at a distance to two ladies on a certain occasion. He went to bed and woke up unconscious of anything having taken place, but was afterwards told that on a certain night he had appeared to them and acted in accordance with details previously written down. They had seen him as if in life.

This may be accounted for in various ways. He may have dreamt though ignorant of having done so, and again the astral man may have states of consciousness of his own, of which the physical man is ignorant and which last for some time. Again, it may be possible that this will-power that he should go at a particular time had the effect of producing a particular nerve current in his brain, and it might actually have emanated from his brain at the time he had willed. In such cases I do not know of any instances in which the time set has varied. There are many cases to be disposed of on that supposition, the only way in which we can account for it is, that the astral man generated the impression at a particular moment without the knowledge of the physical brain, or else it was generated in the physical brain according to the impression left by the first determination.

III. THOUGHTS ON KĀMA-LOKA

[Suggested by Mr. Sinnett's paper on the same subject.¹]

IN considering this subject we must, above all things, take care to realise that the seven principles in man are not several entities, or substances, that can be separated, and each considered as a distinct individuality, having definite characteristics peculiar to itself. In Samskrit the different principles are called *upādhis*, i.e., the sheaths or seats of the different states of existence of the One Life.

The seat of consciousness which gives rise to the feeling of individuality and the sense "I am I" is in the 5th principle.

If there is no 5th principle, i.e., if there is no consciousness of individuality, all the other states of existence are non-existent, for without a percipient ego there can be neither perception nor any object of perception. Hence it is said, that without the son (the germ of consciousness in the Logos roused into activity at the time of Cosmic evolution) there is no Father or Mother. The Father and the Holy Ghost come into existence

¹ Vide *Theosophist*, February, 1885, page 106.

when the Son is born, and this is the true occult explanation of the Trinity in Unity and Unity in Trinity. Perhaps it may be objected that animals can take cognisance of existence although they have no 5th principle; but the reason of this is that, although the 5th principle is not *united* to the lower principles of the animals, it yet *overshadows* them. Thus, properly speaking, it is the 5th principle only which plays a prominent part in the various states of man in life and after death. By its association (no matter how, for the present) with the lower principles, it generates earthly and material tendencies which attract it downwards. At the same time, being *overshadowed* by its father, the 6th and 7th principles, it generates higher aspirations which attract it upwards.

After physical death, when the entity passes into Kāma-Loka, the real struggle is confined to the 5th principle alone, that is, to the seat of consciousness, together with the affinities generated in it during its earthly incarnation. In Kāma-loka, therefore, the 4th principle or Kāma-rūpa, which is the *upādhi*, or seat, of all earthly desires and passions, etc., drags towards itself those affinities of the 5th principle which are of a material nature, while the higher aspirations are attracted towards the 6th and the 7th principles. The conception may be made clear by remembering that the 7th principle is the source of energy, while the 6th principle is merely the energy radiated by the 7th.

The states of existence of man may be divided into three which can be again divided into seven. The first three are: physical life, astral life and spiritual life. The seven states are: (1) physical life, (2) the state between physical and astral life, (3) the astral life, (4) the state between the astral life and the spiritual life, and (5, 6, 7,) the three states of spiritual life. In physical life, all the physical activities are strong while the astral life is exhibited in the temporary cessation of the functions of physical activities, as takes place in sleep, etc. Each life manifests itself only in those spheres to which its organisation is adapted. Thus for manifestation on this physical world a physical organism is essential, and without its help no activity can be manifested in this sphere. In this life we have, as it were, brought with us such an accretion of principles as has been produced by the *effects* of the causes generated in a previous incarnation. At the same time we have an organisation which enables us to generate new causes. When the physical body is worn out by the activities manifested through it, the cohesive force which held its particles together becomes weaker and weaker until physical death takes place. We do not therefore die at once (except in cases of sudden death caused by accidents, etc.), but are gradually dying every moment of our lives. The vital principle, finding its present *Sthūlaśarīram* unfit for habitation, leaves it, to animate some other *Sthūlaśarīram*. The 3rd principle, which is the

agglomeration of the magnetic emanations of the physical body, cannot but die at the death of the latter. The 4th principle, however, by its contact with the 3rd in physical life, has gathered round itself some of its essence. But this essence is like the smell of a rose, which lingers only for a time after the rose has been destroyed.

Hence it is that the so-called astral body is seen at a distance by the friends or relatives of a dying man. The concentrated thought, an intense desire to see a friend, etc., clothes itself in the 4th principle, which, by the essence of the 3rd gathered around itself, makes itself objective to the distant friend. And such a manifestation is possible, only so long as this essence is still retained. This is the reason for the Hindu custom of burning the dead, for when the body is once burnt, no more astral essence can be drawn out of it. But a buried body, although in the process of decomposition, still furnishes the aura, however feeble it may be, through which the dead entity finds itself able to manifest itself. In the dying man the struggle between the physical and the astral man goes on till it ends in physical death. This result produces a shock stunning the astral man who passes into a state of unconscious sleep until he re-awakens into the Kāma-Loka. This sleep is the second state of existence. It will thus become apparent why it is that "apparitions" are seen at the time of death. Sometimes it so happens that these "apparitions" are seen some time after the supposed death

of the man. But on careful examination it may be found that the man only *appears* to be dead; and although the medical faculty may not be able to detect any signs of life in him, still, in reality, the struggle between the physical and the astral man is not yet ended.

It is because this struggle is silently going on that the ancients enjoyed solemn silence in the awful presence of death. When the man awakens into the Kāma-loka, he begins his third state of existence. The physical organisation, which alone enables *man* to produce causes, is not there, and he is, as it were, concerned only with those affinities which he has already engendered. While this struggle in the 5th principle is going on, it is almost impossible for the entity to manifest itself upon earth. And when a dweller on this earth tries to establish a connection with that entity, he only disturbs its peace. Hence it is that the ancients prohibited these practices, to which they gave the name of necromancy, as deadly sin.

The nature of the struggle depends upon the tendencies engendered by the individual in his physical life. If he was too material, too gross, too sensual, and if he had hardly any spiritual aspirations, then the downward attraction of the lower affinities causes an assimilation of the lower consciousness with the 4th principle. The man then becomes a sort of astral animal, and continues in that state until, in process

of time, the astral entity is disintegrated. The few spiritual aspirations that he might have had are transferred to the *monad*; but the separate *consciousness* being dragged into the animal soul, dies with it and his *personality* is thus annihilated. If a man, on the other hand, is tolerably spiritual, as most of our fellowmen are, then the struggle in Kāma-loka varies according to the nature of his affinities; until the *consciousness* being linked to the higher ones is entirely separated from the "astral shell," and is ready to go into Devachan. If a person is highly spiritual, his Kāma-loka is of a very short duration, for the consciousness is quickly assimilated to the higher principles and passes into Devachan.

It will thus be seen that in any case intercourse with the Kāma-loka entities is detrimental to the progress of those entities and also injurious to the persons indulging in such intercourse. This interruption is just as bad and even far worse than the disturbance in the death-chamber on this physical plane. When it is remembered that the 4th principle by its contact with the 5th has assimilated to itself the *essence* of the latter, it becomes an easy matter to account for those rare phenomena in which a high degree of intelligence has been exhibited by the Kāma-loka entities dragged into mediumistic *séances*. Of course there are cases in which an "astral shell" acts merely as a mirror through which the intelligence of the "medium" is reflected, as there are others in which "*elementals*" make

use of these "astral shells". But in those cases where the Kāma-loka entities actually appear and exhibit a rare intelligence, it is on account of the *essence* absorbed by the 4th principle during its connection with the 5th. There are again cases in which the Kāma-loka entities of "suicides" and of persons dying unnatural and accidental deaths may appear and exhibit rare intelligence, because those entities have to live in Kāma-loka for the period they would have passed on earth if those accidents had not carried them away—before the struggle between the astral and spiritual affinities commences. The causes engendered by them during earth-life are not yet ripe for fruition and they must wait their natural time. But to recall these into "mediumistic" circles is equally dangerous as in the above-mentioned cases, and for the very same reasons. It may not be positively injurious in all cases, but at any rate the process is fraught with danger and should not be undertaken by inexperienced persons.

As regards those good persons, who, it is apprehended, may on account of some unsatisfied desire linger on earth, the Hindus have a peculiar custom which is generally relegated to the limbo of exploded superstitions, because its scientific rationale is not properly understood. If the desire be of a spiritual nature, then of course it is only concerned with the spiritual affinities set up in the Manas. But if it be of a material nature, such as some act to be done for the welfare of a friend or family, etc., etc., then only need it be taken into

account. In ancient times, an initiate or adept was always present in a death chamber, and attended to the necessary conditions and thus released the dying man from his earthly attractions. This is the real origin of "extreme unction" in the Roman Catholic Church and the custom of having a priest near the dying man in other religions. Gradually as a materialising tendency began to assert itself, the Hindus invented a ceremony which is the next best thing they could do under the circumstances. It is a general belief among them that after physical death, the entity lingers on the earth for a period of ten days before passing into any other state of existence. During this period they perform a regular daily ceremony in which they prepare some rice balls and put them before crows. The belief is that crows are so sensitive as to detect any astral figure they see. If the man dies, having some unsatisfied desire, then his astral figure covers the rice balls which the crows cannot touch. If the balls are immediately touched, then it is concluded that the man having no unsatisfied desire is no longer earth-bound. But if they are not, then the relatives of the dead person go on recounting all the wishes of the latter that they can possibly think of, promising at the same time to fulfil them. When the right thing is hit on, then it is believed the entity immediately goes off to its sphere, and the crows touch the balls. Whatever it may be, the Hindus have a horror of those elementaries, and instead of

dragging them into *séances* they try by every possible means to release them from the earth's atmosphere.

When the struggle between the lower affinities and the higher aspirations of the man is ended in Kāma-loka, astral death takes place in that sphere as does physical death on this earth. The shock of death again throws the entity into a state of unconsciousness before its passage into Devachan. The "shell" left behind may manifest itself until it is disintegrated, but it is not the real spiritual man; and the rare intelligence exhibited by it, occasionally, is the radiation of the aura caught by it during its connection with the spiritual individuality. From its 4th state of existence it re-awakens in Devachan, the conditions of which, according to Hindu books are, *salokatā*, *samīpatā* and *sāyujyatā*. In the lowest state, i.e. of *salokatā*, the entity is only under the *influence* of the 6th and the 7th principle, while in the second state, i.e. of *samīpatā*, it is *fully overshadowed* by the latter. It is in the *sāyujyatā* state only that it is fully merged into its Logos to be thrown again into re-incarnation when it has fully enjoyed the effects of the spiritual aspirations created by it. It is only very highly spiritualised entities that reach this highest state of Devachan. Of course, the cases of adepts are here entirely left out of consideration, for as the *Bhagavad-gītā* says, the *jñāni* reaches that state from which there is no re-birth and which is called Mokṣa or Mukti. The-period of gestation between the Devachanic condition and physical

rebirth may be called the eighth state; but in the Hindu books the physical life being the basis of the seven after-states, it is not included in the category of the *sapta* higher *lokas*, just as in the septenary principles Parabrahmam is not taken into account for the very same reason. From the subjective standpoint, the Parabrahmam, and from the objective standpoint the sthūlaśarīram, are not included in the septenary division, as the former is the basis upon which the whole structure is built.

IV. THE FORMS OF VĀK

WITH reference to Mr. Subba Row's lectures on *Bhagavad-gītā*, published in *The Theosophist* for April, 1887, page 446, where he says, "I would here call your attention to the 1st Āhnika of *Mahābhāṣya*, where Patañjali speaks of three forms manifested, Paśyantī, Madhyamā and Vaikharī Vāk; the way he classifies is different. . . ,"

I have to state that the 1st Āhnika of *Mahābhāṣya* does not contain any such particular divisions. Patañjali quotes a verse from *Rgveda* "*Catvārivāk parimitapadam*," etc. and interprets *catvārivāk* as *nāma*, *ākhyātā*, *upasarga*, and *nipāta*. The same verse of *Rgveda* is interpreted by Yāska in his *Nirukta*, chapter 12, in the same way as by Patañjali, and he adds some other explanations than those quoted by Mr. Subba Row; nor does Kaiyaṭa, the well-known commentator of *Mahābhāṣya*, give them in his *Bhāṣya-pradīpa*. But Nāgeśabhaṭṭa, a commentator of *Bhāṣya-pradīpa*, gives Mr. Subba Row's sub-divisions in detail, in his *Bhāṣyapradīpodyota* referring to Harikārika, or *Vākyapadīya* of Bhartrhari. This Nāgeśabhaṭṭa speaks of the same sub-divisions in the *Sphoṭavāda* of his *Manjūṣā* and some modern grammarians give the same sub-divisions quoting from the *Mahābhārata*;

Annambhaṭṭa, a commentator on *Bhāṣyapradīpa*, who lived before Nāgeśabhaṭṭa, did not interpret the passage in question in the way that Nāgeśabhaṭṭa did.

I would, therefore, ask you to draw Mr. Subba Row's attention to the above facts, and to explain the thing in a more acceptable way. I have herewith enclosed extracts from *Mahābhāṣya*, Kaiyaṭa, and *Nirukta* on this point.

Yours fraternally,
N. BHASHYACHARY

I have to thank Mr. Bhashyachary for having called my attention to the wrong reference given in my third lecture. Instead of referring to Nāgeśabhaṭṭa's *Bhāṣyapradīpodyota* and *Sphoṭavāda*, I referred to the *Mahābhāṣyam* itself through oversight. I had especially in my mind Nāgeśabhaṭṭa's remarks on the four forms of Vāk in his *Sphoṭavāda* when I made the statements adverted to in your learned correspondent's letter. Patañjali had to interpret the original Ṛk of the *Rgveda* from the standpoint of a grammarian in his *Mahābhāṣya*: but he certainly recognised the importance of the interpretation put upon it by Haṭhayogis and Rājayogis as might be easily seen by the symbols he introduced into the mystic arrangements of the Chidambaram temple. Apart from mystic symbology, Nāgeśabhaṭṭa had very high and ancient authorities to guide

him in interpreting this Ṛk. Nearly seven interpretations have been suggested for this Ṛk by various classes of writers and philosophers. The four forms of Vāk enumerated by me are common to the interpretation of Haṭhayogis and Mantrayogis on the one hand and Rājayogis on the other. I request your learned correspondent to refer to Vidyāraṇya's commentary on the 45th Ṛk of the 164 Sūkta of the 22nd Anuvāka of the first Maṇḍala of *Rgveda*. Most of these various interpretations are therein enumerated and explained. The learned commentator refers to Parā, Paśyanti, Madhyamā and Vaikhari and indicates the order of their development as stated by Mantrayogis and Haṭhayogis. It will be useful to refer to *Yogasikha* and other Upaniṣads in this connection. There is still higher authority for the views expressed in my lecture and the statements made by Nāgeśabhaṭṭa in Śaṅkarācārya's commentary on *Nṛsimhottaratāpani* (see page 118, Calcutta edition, from line 14 to the end of the para). These four forms of vāk are therein explained from the standpoint of Tāraka Rājayoga. I would particularly invite the reader's attention to the explanation of Madhyamā. Madhyamā is so called because it occupies an intermediate position between the objective form and the subjective image. On carefully perusing this portion of the commentary, it will be seen that the explanations therein given form, as it were, the foundation of the various statements made by me in my lectures regarding these four forms of Vāk. Whether this

commentary is attributed to Śaṅkarācārya as many have done, or to Gauḍapāda as some have stated, its authority is unimpeachable. I do not think it necessary to refer to any works on Mantra Śāstra in this connection, as the authorities cited above are amply sufficient to justify my statements. I may perhaps have to refer to the mystic philosophy of Vāk at greater length in another connection.

T. S. R.

SECTION III

REVIEWS

I. " THE PHILOSOPHY OF SPIRIT "

THE book bearing the above title, and professing to expound " the philosophy of spirit " contained in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, has already been introduced to the readers of *The Theosophist* by the review that appeared in the December 81 number, and the author's reply thereto published in the copy of March 1882. Considering the importance of the issues raised by the author's publication, and the two articles above referred to, I persuade myself that I shall be justified in sifting, with some minuteness, the conclusions arrived at by the author regarding the authorship and philosophy of the *Bhagavad-gītā* and its esoteric basis or foundation. As the author has not merely published his own speculations regarding the subjects dealt with in that ancient work, but informs the public that his speculations are in perfect accordance with the ancient philosophy of Vyāsa, I believe I have a right, as a Hindu, to object to the position taken by him, if, in my humble opinion, his views should be at variance with those of the orthodox pandits and the initiates of ancient Āryāvarta, as much as with those of modern India. And I hope the learned gentleman will be

good enough to excuse me, if, in this article, I may be under the painful necessity of dwelling longer on what I conceive to be the defects of his work than on its merits. Though the author does not seem to be a Spiritualist in the sense in which that term is used by the so-called modern professors of that name, still he has attempted to give a philosophical shape to their crude notions about "disembodied spirits"; and any intelligent and profitable discussion of the real points of difference between Theosophy and Spiritualism is only possible with writers like Mr. Oxley.

In this article I shall first examine the author's theory about the real origin of sacred writings in general and of the *Bhagavad-gītā* in particular, and next, in his remarks, scattered throughout the book, about what he calls the Astro-Masonic basis of the said treatise, and his views about some of the doctrines therein explained.

At the outset, it is necessary to apprehend correctly Mr. Oxley's opinions about the constitution of man and the progress of what the learned author is pleased to call "life-principle" after death. The author recognizes the trinity of man, and names the three entities that constitute him—body, spirit and soul. He calls "*Soul*" the "inmost of all," "eternal, incorruptible, unchangeable and inseparable from the grand Life, called God," while describing "*Spirit*" as the "inner or intermediate active agent which guides, propels and uses as its instrument the body, or that

covering which is exterior to itself" (p. 221). From these explanations it is apparent that the author means by "soul" and "spirit" the same entities as are denoted by the two Samskrit terms *Ātmā* (7th principle) and *Sūkṣmaśarīram*, or *Līṅgaśarīram*, respectively. The author is at liberty to attach any connotations he pleases to these words, as no definite meaning has yet been attached to them by English writers. But I do not think he has used the word *Spirit* in the sense above indicated *throughout* his book; for, he further says that there are 12 degrees or stages of ascent (p. 40), which the life-principle in man has to pass through in its spiritual progress; and we are also informed that, on reaching the 12th stage, man becomes an *angel*. Further progress from angel-hood upwards or inwards is admitted, though the author does not undertake to describe it. He further proceeds to say (pp. 53, 56, 181, etc.), that particular individuals are in some mysterious way connected with particular spiritual communities, "receiving their life-influx" from them and imbibing their influence. And every human being will, in the course of his progress, become an angel of some particular description or other.

Now I beg to submit, with all due respect to the author's *guru*, that these views do not harmonize with the teachings of Vyāsa and the other Ṛṣis of ancient Āryāvarta. The difference between the doctrine of the ancient Āryan esoteric science and the propositions above laid down, will not be properly appreciated

Vyāsa. From the stand-point of Āryan philosophy, the author is right in saying that a man becomes perfect on reaching the 11th stage, but he is wrong in saying that, on attaining the next higher step, he becomes an “angel” or Deva. The nature of the last 5 stages is not clearly understood even by the *ordinary initiate*.¹ It is not surprising, then, that an author like Mr. Oxley, who attempts to interpret the ancient Āryan doctrine without knowing either Samskrit language, Hindu systems of mythology, Eastern modes of allegorizing spiritual truths, or physiology and psychology as taught by the ancients, should have misunderstood the meaning of the 12th stage. No one, who correctly understands the meaning of the 8th Adhyāya (chapter) of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, and compares the original with the author’s translation of the said chapter, will be inclined to doubt the correctness of our assertion. In that chapter, Kṛṣṇa, speaking of the future state of the human being after death, says that, generally speaking, “the life-principle” in man (the Kāraṇaśarīram probably?) assumes the shape and nature of that being or entity on whom, or on which, the human being concentrates his attention deeply. Therefore, and as it is not desirable for a human being to contemplate any other spiritual entity or being than Kṛṣṇa himself, he advises Arjuna to centre his thoughts in him. But, who is Kṛṣṇa?

¹ An initiate of the preliminary degrees.

The *Bhagavad-gītā* does not leave us in any doubt about this question. In giving an account of his *vibhūti* (as it is called in Samskrit) Kṛṣṇa commences by saying “*Ahamātmā*”¹ (I am Ātmā—the 7th principle in man). To use the author’s phraseology, he is the “soul”—the inmost principle in man. The author admits this view in certain portions of his book, though, for the purpose of establishing the claims of Busiris to the authorship of the *Mahābhārata*, a different interpretation would perhaps be necessary. And, in recommending the contemplation or *dhyāna* of one’s own Ātmā, Kṛṣṇa points out two different modes of doing it, in the 9th, 12th and 13th ślokams of the chapter above mentioned. The author’s translation of the 9th śloka is enough to convince me that he has no definite idea about the esoteric meaning therein found, and that he mistook the spiritual being or entity described in the said śloka for his favourite angel. He translates the significant Samskrit adjective—*purāṇam*, as if it meant ‘the ancient angel’. I shall be very happy indeed to learn in what Samskrit lexicon is this meaning given, or what are the Samskrit words used in the śloka that could ever suggest that idea of an “angel”. From this instance of mis-translation, as well as from other similar instances which will be noticed further, I am justified in thinking that the

¹ The “I AM, THAT I AM” of the Biblical Jehovah, the “I AM WHO I AM,” or “Mazdao” of Ahuramazda in the Zend Avesta, etc. All these are names for the 7th principle in man.—Ed.

author's theories were formed before he had carefully ascertained the esoteric meaning of the *Bhagavad-gītā*; and that he simply attempted to find support for his individual speculation in it, and to identify modern Spiritualism (however advanced) with what he is pleased to call "Ancient Yoginism" (p. 87).

In fact, in the śloka, or verse in question, there is no reference whatsoever to any angel, Deva or God. The last five stages in the ladder of ascent have exactly the same meaning that is given by the esoteric Buddhism to the four celestial "Dhyān-Buddhas" and "Ādi-Buddha". Kṛṣṇa significantly alludes to the Dhyān-Buddhas in the 9th and 10th ślokams, and speaks of "Ādi-Buddha"—the state or condition represented by Praṇava—in the succeeding verses.¹ While he applies the word *puruṣa* to these "Dhyān-Buddhas" he speaks of Ādi-Buddhas, as if it were merely a state or condition.² The two expressions, *anuśāsītāram* and *Āditya-varṇam*, in the 9th verse may give the author a clue to the mystery connected with these "Dhyān-Buddhas".

¹ Hence, the great veneration of the Buddhists for *Bhagavad-gītā*—Ed.

² "Ādi-Buddha" creates the four celestial Buddhas or "Dhyāns," in our esoteric philosophy. It is but the gross misinterpretation of European Orientalists, entirely ignorant of the Arhat doctrine, that gave birth to the absurd idea that the Lord Gautama Buddha is alleged to have created the five Dhyān or celestial Buddhas. Ādi-Buddha, or, in one sense, Nirvāṇa, "creating" the four Buddhas or degrees of perfection—is pregnant with meaning to him who has studied even the fundamental principle of the Brahmanical and Arhat esoteric doctrines.—Ed.

I am not permitted to state in an article the views of the ancient Ṛṣis concerning these 5 stages—the spiritual counterparts of the *5 chambers of construction* above the King's chamber in the great Pyramid of Egypt—or the philosophy underlying the Buddhist doctrine regarding these 5 Buddhas. But it is enough for my present purpose to state that these celestial "Dhyān-Buddhas" came into existence (according to Vyāsa) before the last work of creation or evolution commenced, and consequently, before any Deva or Angel was evolved. Therefore, they are to be regarded as occupying a higher position (in a spiritual sense) than even Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Īśvara, the three highest gods of the Hindu Pantheon—as they are the *direct emanations* of *Parabrahmam*. The author will understand my meaning clearly, when he examines the accounts of "creation" given in the Hindu Purāṇas, and comes to comprehend what the ancient Ṛṣis meant by Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatkumāra, and Sanatsujāta.

From the teachings of Kṛṣṇa himself, as disclosed in the chapter under examination, it is clear that the transformation into an angel after death (even into a Busiris, the *light-giver*) is not a state or position which is so devoutly to be wished for, by any true Yogi. The ancient Ṛṣis of Āryāvarta have taken considerable pains to impress upon the minds of their followers that the *human spirit* (7th principle) has a dignity, power and sacredness which cannot be claimed by any other

God, Deva or angel of the Hindu Pantheon;¹ and human beings are stated in the Purāṇas to have performed actions which all the 33 crores of Devas in Svarga were unable to perform. Rāma in *human shape*, conquers Rāvaṇa, a giant, who drove before him all the angel-bands of Heaven. Kṛṣṇa again, in *human form*, conquers Narakāśura, and several other Rākṣasas whom even Indra was unable to oppose. And again Arjuna—a man significantly called by Vyāsa “Nara”—succeeds in destroying the “Kālakeyas” and the “Nivātakavacas” (two tribes of Rākṣasas or demons, who were found invincible by the “Devas”) and actually defeats Indra himself with the help of his friend, Kṛṣṇa. If the learned author is pleased to read between the lines of our Purāṇas and to ascertain the grand idea which found expression in such myths and allegories, he will be in a better position to know the opinion of our ancient teachers regarding *the human spirit* (7th principle) and its supremacy over all the angels of Svarga. Even on this mundane plane of existence a Hindu “Yogi” or a Buddhist “Arhat” aims at a result immeasurably higher than the mere attainment of Svargam: namely, a state of *eternal rest*,

¹ In view of this, Gautama Buddha, after his initiation into the *mysteries* by the old Brāhman, *His Guru*, renouncing gods, Devas and personal deity, feeling that the path to salvation lay not in vain-glorious dogmas, and the recognition of a deity *outside* of oneself, renounced every form of theism and—became BUDDHA, the one enlightened. “*Aham eva param Brahmā*,” I am myself a Brahman (a god), is the motto of every Initiate.—ED.

which even the Devas do not comprehend. And I can safely assure the author that an eastern adept would not consider it a compliment if he were told that he would reach Svargam after death or that he would become an “angel”. Kṛṣṇa goes to the length of saying (chap. 8) that even residence in Brahma Loka is not desirable for a man who cares for *Svasvarūpajñānam*—the KNOWLEDGE OF SELF.

Under such circumstances, it is with considerable astonishment that every Hindu will receive the author’s astounding assertion that “Busiris, the angel”—(viewing him absolutely in the sense that the author would have us view him)—made an announcement sometime ago in a séance-room at Manchester or London to the effect that he was the author of the *Mahābhārata*. If the author’s declaration or announcement means the entity or “life-principle,” which was represented by Vyāsa on the mundane plane of existence 5,000 years ago, is now represented by Busiris on the Angelic plane of existence, or, to express the same thing in other words, that Vyāsa is now an angel called Busiris—his Hindu readers will not be able to reconcile it with the teachings of their ancient Ṛṣis; unless they are willing to admit that Vyāsa, instead of being, during his life-time, a great Ṛṣi on earth, was neither an adept, nor even an *initiate*, but merely a worshipper of a particular Angel or Deva, who spent his life-time in the contemplation of that Deva, longing

all the while for "angelhood," a dwelling in Svargam (or paradise) after death.

With these preliminary remarks, I shall now proceed to consider the claims of Busiris to the authorship of the *Mahābhārata*. The various passages, referring to this subject, in Mr. Oxley's book, may point to either of the following conclusions:

(1) That Vyāsa is now an angel, called "Busiris," as explained in the foregoing, and that, in writing his epic poem, he was inspired by the angel—collectively called Busiris.

(2) That, even supposing Vyāsa has already attained Mokṣa, or Nirvāṇa, and reached a higher plane of existence than that of an angel, still he is charged with having composed the *Mahābhārata* and the *Bhagavad-gītā* through inspiration received from the band of angels or *devajñānam*, now collectively represented by "Busiris," the *light-giver*.

Taking either of those two propositions, one may naturally expect that some evidence will be found either in the *Bhagavad-Gītā* or the remaining portions of the *Mahābhārata* in support of them. And, as the author assures us (p. 181) that the individuals, who collect the utterances of angelic intelligences and reduce them to written form, very "wisely keep their own personalities in the shade," we are led to believe that this expectation is likely to be realised. But the whole of the internal evidence, gathered by the author on behalf of his angelic hero, amounts only to this:

I. Vyāsa¹ means a "Recorder": therefore the word was purposely applied to Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana to indicate his real position as regards the authorship of the *Mahābhārata*.

Now I beg to submit, in reply to this argument, that Vyāsa does not exactly mean *a recorder*; but that it means *one who expands or amplifies*. The thing or doctrine explained or amplified by him, is a *mystery* to the uninitiated public. This term was applied to the *Highest* Guru in India in ancient times; and the author will be able to find in the *Liṅga-purāṇa* that the author of the *Mahābhārata* was the 28th Vyāsa in the order of succession. I shall not now attempt to explain the real meaning of the 28 incarnations therein mentioned,² but I shall only say that the entity, amplified and expanded by these *Mahātmās*³ for the instruction of their

¹ In no case can the term be translated as "Recorder." We should say, rather a "Revealer," who explains the mysteries to the neophyte or candidate for initiation by *expanding* and amplifying to him the meaning.—Ed.

² To one, who has even a vague notion how the mysteries of old were conducted, and of the present Arhat system in Tibet vaguely termed the "Reincarnation System" of the Dalai-Lāmas, the meaning will be clear. The chief Hierophant who imparted the "word" to his successor *had to die* bodily. Even Moses died after having laid his hands upon Joshua, who thus became *full of the spirit of wisdom of Moses*, and—it is the "Lord" who is said to have buried him. The reason why "no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day," is plain to an Occultist who knows anything of the supreme initiation. There cannot be *two* "Highest" Gurus or Hierophants on earth, living at the same time.—Ed.

³ "Grand Souls" in literal translation; a name given to the great adepts.—Ed.

highest circle of disciples was PRANAVA (see *Kūrma-purāṇa*). The author will be able to learn something about this mysterious *amplification* of PRANAVA *only* in the sacred region where Swedenborg advised his readers to search for the “Lost Word,” and in a few unexplored and unknown localities in India.

II. *Sañjaya*—according to Mr. Oxley—was purposely introduced into the story to give to the reader an indication of the way in which divine truths were communicated by “Busiris” to Vyāsa. On page 61 the author writes, in this connection, as follows: “*Sañjaya* means a *messenger*, (and, if interpreted by modern Spiritualist experiences, refers to the communicating spirit or angel) who is gradually absorbed into the individuality of the organism of the recorder who assumes the name or title of Kṛṣṇa.”

It will be very interesting to know on whose authority the author says that *Sañjaya* in Samskrit means a *messenger*? No one would feel inclined to quarrel with him, if he only gave fanciful names to imaginary angels. But is it fair, on the author’s part, to misconstrue Samskrit names without possessing any knowledge of that language, and to represent, to the English and Indian public, that the “crude notions” of modern Spiritualists and his own speculations completely harmonize with the teachings of the sacred books of the Āryans? The author says (p. 55) that—

“An understanding of the grand Law of Influx (but little dreamt of and still less comprehended by the

mass), enables us to receive the statement of the *new* Angel Busiris, that he was the author of the *Mahābhārata*.”

Though I do not know much about the author’s “grand Law of Influx,” I know of a particular Law of *efflux* (but little dreamt of by authors and still less comprehended by their readers) which enables me to perceive that mere fancies are often mistaken for realities, especially when the said authors think that they are “inspired.”

If *Sañjaya* really represented the angelic intelligence which communicated the truths embodied in the *Bhagavad-gītā* to Vyāsa, it is surprising to find in the last chapter—the very chapter, in fact, which in the opinion of the author, contains the key for the clear understanding of the whole philosophy—*Sañjaya* informing Dhṛtarāṣṭra that *by favour of Vyāsa* (*Vyāsa prasādena*) he was able to hear the mystic truths revealed by Kṛṣṇa. *Sañjaya*’s meaning would be rendered clear by the account of the arrangement made by Vyāsa for getting information of the war between the Pāṇḍavas and the Kauravas to the blind Dhṛtarāṣṭra given at the commencement of Bhīṣmaparva. Vyāsa, in fact, endowed *Sañjaya*, for the time being, with the powers of *dūradṛṣṭi* and *dūraśravaṇam*, and made him invulnerable, so that he might be present on the battlefield and report everything to the blind old man. These facts recorded in the *Mahābhārata* are quite inconsistent with the author’s theory unless we are

prepared to admit that Vyāsa has published deliberate falsehoods, with the intention of concealing the real authorship of the *Mahābhārata*. But the author informs us that “recorders,” like Vyāsa, “very wisely keep their own personalities in the shade”. I must, therefore, assume that the author’s suppositions about Sañjaya and angelic intelligences are erroneous until the facts are proved to be incorrect.

III. Again in page 54 of his book, in giving his interpretation of the words *kṛṣṇa* and *dvaipāyana*, he says that *kṛṣṇa* means black, and *dvaipāyana*, *difficult to attain*, which “spiritually interpreted symbolises the states of mankind to whom the revelation was made”.

The author evidently means to suggest, by this passage, that the appellation given to Vyāsa contains some evidence of the revelation made by Busiris. And here, again, the author is misinterpreting the Samskrit word *dvaipāyana* to create a fresh evidence for his favourite theory. This name was given to Vyāsa, because he was born in a *dvīpam* or island (on the Ganges) as will be seen from the *Bhārata* itself. Unless the author can successfully demonstrate that all the Samskrit words he has misconstrued really belong to the mysteries language to which the two words he has selected—“Osiris” and “Busiris”—belong, and which he alone can understand, mistakes, like these, cannot but produce an unfavourable impression upon the mind of the Hindu reader.

This is the whole of the internal evidence brought to light by the learned author in support of the claims of Busiris. If such evidence is really worse than useless, for the reasons above-mentioned, on what other grounds are we to admit the truth of the alleged declaration made by Busiris in England? The author is likely to take up his stand on his theory about the composition of sacred books in general, and on the direct evidence supplied by the claimant himself.

As regards the first of the two propositions above-mentioned, I have already shown that, to the Hindu mind, the fact that Vyāsa was an adept and a Mahātmā in his life-time, and that other fact that he is now an angel or Deva—are irreconcilable. I admit that there is no *prima facie* improbability in the fact of an angel giving information to a mortal, although my opinions, regarding the nature of so-called “angels,” differ vastly from those of the author. But no one, I venture to affirm, who is acquainted with Eastern adepts and the powers possessed by them, will be willing to admit that an adept like Vyāsa would ever be under the necessity of learning spiritual truths from an angel or a Deva. The only infallible source of inspiration with respect to the highest spiritual truths, recognized and respected by an Eastern adept, is the eternal and infinite MONAD—his own Ātmā, in fact. He may make use of the assistance of the elementals and the semi-intelligent powers of nature whenever he is pleased to do so. But his own inherent powers can give him

all the information or instruction which angels like Busiris can ever give him. I do not profess to say anything about the way in which spiritual truths are being learnt by the "adepts" of France, the "adepts" of America, and, probably, also the adepts of Patagonia and Zululand alluded to by "Alif" in his review of the author's book in the *Psychological Review*; but Vyāsa was an Eastern adept; and, it must be presumed that he possessed at least the powers now exercised by adepts in Tibet and India. In the Hindu Purāṇas, there are, no doubt, instances recorded of initiates having received information and instruction through the assistance of intelligent powers of nature. But there is very little resemblance between such powers and angels like Busiris. When the author succeeds in finding out the mode in which an adept communicates with these powers, and obtains a clue to construe the *cipher* which nature herself uses, he will be in a better position to understand the difference between spirit communion in a séance-room and the way in which initiates of ancient Āryāvarta gathered their information on various subjects. But what necessity was there for anything like special revelation in the case of the *Mahābhārata*? As regards the facts of history mentioned therein, there could not be any need for Vyāsa's interiors being opened; as he had merely to record the events occurring before his very eyes. He was, in fact, the "father" of Pāṇḍu and Dhṛtarāṣṭra, and all the events mentioned in the *Mahābhārata* took

place during his lifetime. As regards the various philosophical discourses such as *Bhagavad-gītā* in *Bhīṣmaparvam*, "*Sanat Sujātīyam*" in "*Udyogaparvam*" and *Uttāra-gītā* in *Anuśāsanikaparvam*, many of the learned Pandits of India are of opinion that originally they were not included in the *Mahābhārata*. Whatever may be the strength of the reasons given by them for saying so, it is clear to those, who are acquainted with the real history of Āryan thought, that all the esoteric science and philosophy contained in the *Mahābhārata* existed long before Vyāsa was born. This work did not mark the advent of a new era in Āryan philosophy or introduce into the Āryan world a new Dispensation, as the author has imagined. Though Vyāsa is generally spoken of as the founder of the Vedāntic doctrine, it was not for the *Mahābhārata*, or anything contained in it, that he obtained this title, but on account of his celebrated *Brahmasūtras* which are supposed to contain a complete exposition of the doctrines taught by the Vedāntic school. This book is particularly referred to in the 5th verse of the 13th chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, where Kṛṣṇa informs Arjuna, that the nature of *kṣetram* and *kṣetrajña* has been fully defined in the *Brahmasūtras*. Not knowing anything about the existence of this great philosophical work, the author thought that the Samskrit expression *Brahmasūtras* merely meant "precepts taught of truths divine". If the author had known anything about the importance of the work in question, Busiris

would, no doubt, have announced himself by this time the author of the *Brahmasūtras* also. If these *sūtras* were composed by Vyāsa before Kṛṣṇa revealed the truths of the *Bhagavad-gītā* to Arjuna, as we are led to infer from the words used in this śloka, there was no necessity whatsoever for the assistance of Busiris in composing the *Bhagavad-gītā*, as the "philosophy of spirit" contained in it was already fully contained in the said *Sūtras*.

The author will probably say: "I see no reason why I should not believe the statement made by Busiris." He may argue that he knows for certain that "it was made by an angel; and as an angel cannot, under any circumstances, utter a falsehood," he has to believe that "the *Mahābhārata* is really the production of Busiris".

The learned author has informed the public in page 51 of his book, that, after making the important declaration that he was the author of the *Mahābhārata*, Busiris proceeded "to give an interesting account of the civilization and manners and customs of the inhabitants in his day, *long antecedent* to the system of caste which now prevails in India". Unfortunately we do not find the whole of this interesting account published by the learned author for the benefit of the public. But the only statement of an historical importance contained in the sentence above quoted—that the system of caste did not prevail at the time when Busiris was in India in human form—is such as to make everyone who is

acquainted with Indian history doubt the veracity of Busiris. *Rgveda* speaks of the four castes of the Hindus (see Max Müller's Lectures, etc.), and, as the author admits that *Rgveda* existed long before the composition of the *Mahābhārata*, the system of caste must have also existed before Busiris had appeared in human form in this country. Again, *Śāntiparvam* and *Anuśāsanikaparvam* of the *Mahābhārata* will distinctly show to the author that the system of caste existed when Busiris was living here as Vyāsa. And moreover, in the 13th verse of the 4th chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā* itself, Kṛṣṇa says that he had already created the four divisions of caste (*cāturvarṇyam mayā śṛṣṭam*). This statement of Busiris, then, is clearly wrong. It is very surprising that an angel should lose his memory in the course of his transformation from man to angel, or should wilfully make false statements with reference to well-known facts of history. Under such circumstances, no one will be prepared to admit that Busiris was the author of the great poem, if there is no other evidence in support of it, but the value of his own statements.

We have thus seen the degree of reliance that can be placed on the revelation from angels, who delight in giving now and then sensational news to the public through their friends and admirers in séance-rooms. So long as the so-called celebrated "Historical Controls" continue to give incorrect information regarding the events and facts in history, the public in general, and

the Hindus in particular, ought to be excused for not giving credence to all that is claimed by Spiritualists on behalf of the "disembodied spirit" and "spirit communion".

I have purposely refrained from saying anything about the real agency at work in producing the so-called spirit manifestations, and from testing Busiris and his pretensions by examining the very basis of modern Spiritualism from its first principles. Unless the real points of divergence between Spiritualism and Theosophy in their fundamental doctrines are first settled, there will be little or no profit in stating merely the conclusions arrived at by Theosophists about the séance-room phenomena. Conclusions based on the systematic investigation and discoveries made by the brightest intellects of Asia, for thousands of years, are liable to be often mistaken for idle speculations and whimsical hypotheses, if the ground, on which they rest, is masked from view. I can hardly be expected to undertake a complete discussion of the subject within the limits of one article. I have already given a brief and general statement of my views about Spiritualism in a paper published in *The Theosophist*.

As the present review has already reached an inordinate length, I shall now bring it to close. The author's views about the Astro-Masonic basis of the *Bhagavad-gītā* and his elucidation of some of its important doctrines will be examined in my next paper.

An article by Mr. W. Oxley, under the above heading, has appeared in *The Theosophist*. It is intended to be a reply to the strictures contained in my review of *The Philosophy of Spirit*, published in *The Theosophist*; but a considerable portion of it is devoted to the exposition of some of the important doctrines of what is termed "Hierosophy and Theosophy," as understood by the author. I shall first examine the author's defence of Busiris and the statements contained in his treatise on *The Philosophy of Spirit* regarding the authorship of *Mahābhārata*, and then proceed to point out his misconceptions of the real doctrines of "Theosophy," and the fanciful nature of his speculations on the doctrines of the new system of Esoteric Philosophy and Science which, it is confidently predicted, will soon supplant the existing systems of Eastern Brotherhoods, and which is hereafter to be known under the name of "Hierosophy".

Mr. Oxley is pleased to state at the commencement of his article that whatever may be the views of *orthodox Brahmins* regarding his theories and speculations, "enlightened Buddhists" would not be unwilling to sympathize with and receive him as an ally in the work of reform.

Buddhists may not be very much interested either in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, its authorship, or its correct interpretation, and consequently they may not take the trouble of arriving at any particular conclusions about the correctness of the author's interpretation of its philosophy,

or the justness of his views concerning its authorship. But if the author would publish another small treatise to explain the philosophy of spirit contained either in the Tripitakas, or in the Dharma Cakra Pravartana Sūtra, and assert that the real authors of these works were better known to certain mediums in England than to all the Buddhist Lāmās and Arhats put together, that they were, in fact, certain angels called by names which they never heard in their lives, and that Gautama Buddha's interiors were opened to let in spiritual light and wholesome life influx from the sphere of solar angels, he will have an opportunity of ascertaining the opinion of "enlightened Buddhists" on the real value of his speculations and the extent of their usefulness in promoting the cause of Buddhist philosophy and Buddhist reform. I hardly ever expected that a philosopher of Mr. Oxley's pretensions would think it proper to attack orthodox Brahminism and inform the public that his reading of the doings of orthodox people in past history and observations of their spirit and action in present times has not left a very favourable impression on his mind, when the said statement is perfectly irrelevant to the argument in question. Busiris must, indeed, have been reduced to desperate straits when this counter-attack on "orthodox Brahminism" is considered necessary to save him from annihilation. But what does Mr. Oxley know of "orthodox Brahmins"? So far as I can see, his knowledge of the doctrines of orthodox Brahminism

is all derived from the perusal of a few incorrect English translations of the *Bhagavad-gītā*; he is confessedly ignorant of the Samskrit language, and is, therefore, unable to derive information from any of our Samskrit works. He must have based his assertion, perhaps, on the statements of some interested missionaries, who are generally fond of abusing orthodox Brahminism when they find themselves unable to convert Hindus to their creed by fair argument. Under such circumstances, what is the good of informing his readers that he does not patronize "orthodox Brahminism," when he is not prepared to point out in what respects orthodox Brahminism is bad, and how far my connection with it has tended to vitiate my arguments against the claims of Busiris to the authorship of *Mahābhārata*? I beg to inform the author that if there is reason to condemn any of the rites, ceremonies, or practices of modern Brahmins, their Brahminism would be heterodox Brahminism, and not orthodox Brahminism. The true orthodox Brahmins are the children of the mysterious *Fire-mist* known to Eastern Occultists. The two Samskrit words, *baḍaba* and *baḍabaja*, generally applied to Brahmins, will reveal to the author the real basis of orthodox Brahminism, if he can but understand their significance. The real orthodox Brahmin is the *astral man* and his religion is the only true religion in the world; it is as eternal as the mighty law which governs the Universe. It is this grand religion which is the foundation of Theosophy. Mr. Oxley is but

enunciating a truism—a truism to Theosophists, at least—when he says that “esoteric truth is one and the same when divested of the external garb in which it is clothed”. It is from the stand-point of this esoteric truth, that I have examined the theories of the author explained in his book, and arrived at the conclusion that they were mere fancies and speculations, which do not harmonize with the doctrines of the ancient WISDOM-RELIGION which, in my humble opinion, is identical with the real orthodox Brahminism of ancient Āryāvarta and the pre-Vedic Buddhism of Central Asia. I shall now request my readers to read my review of “The Philosophy of Spirit” in connection with the article under consideration fully to appreciate the relevancy of Mr. Oxley’s arguments.

I stated in my review that as regards the *facts of history* mentioned in *Mahābhārata*, there could not be any need for Vyāsa’s “interiors being opened,” and that as regards the philosophy contained therein, there was no necessity for anything like a special revelation by angels like Busiris. The learned author objects to this statement for two reasons which may be stated as follows:

1.—Vedic allegories have about as much literal historical truth in them as the Hebraic allegories, etc. Therefore, *Mahābhārata* does not contain any *facts of history*. It is hardly necessary for me to point out the fallacy and worthlessness of such an argument.

Argument No. 2 is still more ridiculous; when stated in plain language, it stands thus:

Orthodoxy insists on a literal interpretation of such books as *Mahābhārata*.

Mr. Oxley is not favourably disposed towards “Orthodoxy”. And, therefore it necessarily follows that *Mahābhārata* contains no facts of history, and that Vyāsa’s “interiors were opened” to let in light from Busiris.

Having urged these two useless arguments in defence of Busiris, the learned author proceeds to notice the *sixteen states* mentioned in my review, after giving me due warning that I should meet him as a Theosophist, and not as an orthodox Brahmin. He says that as his twelve states are qualities, he has, in fact, twenty-four states when I have only sixteen, and treating these latter, according to his own method, he asserts that Eastern Theosophists have not gone beyond his eighth stage of ascent. If I were to tell him in reply to this statement, that my states are also dualities, he will probably say that his twelve states are so many *trinities*. Anyhow, Mr. Oxley’s number must be greater than my number; and this is the grand result to be achieved at any cost. Mr. Oxley will do well to remember that just as a geometrical line may be divided into parts in an infinite number of ways, this line of ascent may similarly be divided into various stages in an innumerable number of ways. And, in order to ascertain whether the very last stage reached by Eastern adepts is higher or lower than the last stage conceived by Mr. Oxley he ought to examine

carefully the characteristics of our last stage, instead of merely comparing the number of stages without knowing anything about the basis of our division. I beg to submit that the existence of any state or condition beyond the *ṣoḍaśāntam* (sixteenth state) mentioned in my review is altogether inconceivable. For, it is the *Turiyakalā* which is *niṣkalā*; it is the *Grand Nothing* from which is evolved, by the operation of the external law, *every existence*, whether physical, astral, or spiritual; it is the condition of Final Negation—the *Mahā Śūnyam*, the *Nirvāṇa* of the Buddhists. It is not the *blazing star* itself, but it is the condition of perfect unconsciousness of the entity thus indicated, as well as of the *Sun*, which is supposed to be beyond the said star.

The learned author next points out that there cannot be any difficulty or objection “to accepting as a *possibility*, that the actual author of *Mahābhārata* should put in, not an objective, but a subjective, appearance in London, or elsewhere *if he chose so to do*”. Quite true; but he will never choose to do so. And consequently, when such subjective appearance is stated to have taken place, very strong grounds will be required to support it. So far as I can see, all the evidence is against the said statement. Subjective appearances like these are generally very deceptive. The mischievous pranks of *Piśācam*s or elementals may be often mistaken for the subjective appearances of solar angels or living adepts. The author’s statement about the supposed

astral visits of “the venerable *Kūt-Hūmi*” is now contradicted by *Kūt-Hūmi*’s chela under the orders of his Master. Unfortunately, *Busiris* has no chela in human form to contradict Mr. Oxley’s statements. But the account of *Kūt-Hūmi*’s visits will be sufficient to show how very easily the learned author may be deceived by devils and elementals, or by his own uncontrolled imagination. I respectfully beg to suggest to Mr. Oxley that it may be argued in conformity with his own mighty “law of influx,” that the *Piśācam* or elemental, whom he mistook for *Vyāsa*, might have put forth a false statement, being unable to maintain “concurrent consciousness at both ends of the line,” or for the same reason, and labouring under a similar difficulty (for we are told by the author that even the highest *Deva* cannot transcend “the law of conditions”), *Busiris* might have mistaken himself for the author of *Mahābhārata*, having lost the consciousness of what he really was before he had put in the subjective appearance in question.

The learned author reminds me that *Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana* “is only the supposed author of *Mahābhārata*,” and confidently asserts that “no man living knows who were the authors of the Hindu sacred records, or when and where they were written and published,” relying upon the authority of Professor Monier Williams, who stated in his book on “Hinduism” that *Sanskrit* literature is wholly destitute of trustworthy historical records.

This assertion does not prove that Busiris was the real author of *Mahābhārata* for the following reasons:

I. With all due respect to the learned Professor, I venture to affirm that the general proposition relied upon is not correct. We have got trustworthy historical records which no European has ever seen; and we have, besides, the means of finding out any historical fact that may be wanted, or of reproducing in its entirety any work that might have been lost. Eastern occult science has given us these powers.

II. Even if the general proposition is correct, it cannot reasonably be inferred therefrom, that, when the names of the authors of Samskrit works are mentioned in the said works themselves or in other books, which may be considered as authoritative, no reliance should be placed on such statements.

III. Even if such inference were permissible, it cannot be contended, in the absence of any reliable independent evidence, that, because the author of a certain Samskrit book is not known, it should be presumed to be the production of an angel.

The following statement is to be found in the author's book, p. 51: "Busiris expressly declared: 'I am the author of *Mahābhārata*, and I can answer for five thousand years of time, for I was then on earth'; and he goes on to give an interesting account of the civilization, and manners and customs of the inhabitants of his day, long antecedent to the system of caste which now prevails in India." We are now informed by

Mr. Oxley that the words, "long antecedent to the system of caste which now prevails in India," were not uttered by Busiris, but that they were written by himself. Even then, Busiris has undoubtedly some connection with the statement. "The interesting account of the civilization, and manners and customs of the inhabitants of his day," given by Busiris, is either consistent with the existence of caste at that time, or it is not. If it is, the author's statement does not harmonize with the account of Busiris, and I do not suppose that the author will venture to contradict the statements of an angel. I should, therefore, assume that the account given by Busiris is inconsistent with the existence of caste at the time he appeared in human form.

If so, the account in question flatly contradicts all the statements in the *Mahābhārata* itself, which refer to the system of caste (see *Śāntiparvam* and *Anuśāsanika-parvam*). The author's quotation of Professor Williams' opinion regarding *Puruṣa Sūkta* does not show that it does not properly form a portion of *Rgveda*, and no reasons are given for holding that the system of caste mentioned in *Bhagavad-gītā* is not properly speaking a system of caste. And here again the author thinks it necessary to condemn orthodox Brahminism for the purpose of enforcing his arguments. If the author really thinks that he will gain his cause by abusing "orthodox Brahminism," he is entirely mistaken.

After giving us a brief account of the progress of the United States and predicting the future downfall

of orthodox Brahminism, the learned author informs his readers that it would be better not to notice what in his opinion might be urged to prove that my criticisms are from a mistaken stand-point. Certainly, the author has acted very prudently in making this declaration; any attempt on his part to answer the main arguments urged by me would have ended in a disastrous failure.

It is always difficult for a foreigner to understand our religious philosophy and the mysteries of our Purāṇas, even when he devotes a considerable portion of his time and energy to the study of Samskrit literature and the real secrets of Eastern occult science can only be revealed by an INITIATE. So long as Europeans treat the opinions of Hindus with contempt and interpret our religious books according to their own fancies, the sublime truths contained therein will not be disclosed to Western nations. Mr. Oxley evidently thinks that there is no initiate in India who can interpret our religious books properly, and that the real key to esoteric Hinduism is in his possession. It is such unreasonable confidence that has hitherto prevented so many European enquirers from ascertaining the real truth about our ancient religious books.

Mr. Oxley means to assume a certain amount of importance by putting forth the following astounding assertion. He says in his article: "What, if I state to my reviewer that perchance—following the hint and guidance of Swedenborg—I and some others may have

penetrated into that sacred region (Central Asia) and discovered the 'Lost Word'!"

If I had not seen the author's book and his articles in *The Theosophist*, I would have refrained from saying anything against such a statement on the assumption that no man's statement should be presumed to be false, unless it is proved to be so. But from the following considerations, I cannot help coming to the conclusion that the author knows nothing about the "Lost Word".

(1) Those who are in possession of it are not ignorant of the "art of dominating over the so-called forces of Nature".

The author confesses that he and his associates are ignorant of the said art.

(2) Those who are acquainted with the Mighty Law embodied in the "Lost Word" will never affirm that the "Infinite Monad receives influx of energy from the Planetary Spirits" as stated by the author.

(3) The author's assertion about the flow of energy from solar angels shows that he is not acquainted with the real source of creative energy indicated by the Name.

Here ends Mr. Oxley's reply to my criticisms. He then proceeds to explain the doctrines of Hierosophy. I shall now examine Mr. Oxley's notions of Theosophy and Hierosophy. It is not easy to understand his definitions of the two systems of philosophy

thus indicated; and no definite issue or issues can be raised regarding the important distinction between the said systems from the meaning conveyed by these definitions. But he has explained some of the important doctrines of Theosophy and Hierosophy from his own standpoint for the purpose of comparing the two systems. Though he believes that "it will be admitted" that he has "not either under- or over-stated the case for Theosophy," I respectfully beg to submit that he has entirely misunderstood the main doctrines inculcated by it.

The learned writer says that Theosophists teach that in the instance of wicked and depraved people, the spirit proper at death takes its final departure. This statement is certainly correct; but the conclusions drawn from it by Mr. Oxley are clearly illogical. If this doctrine is correct, says the author, then it will necessarily follow that to all intents and purposes to *plain* John Brown "life eternal is out of the question". He then expresses his sympathy for pariahs, vagabonds, and other unfortunate poor people and condemns the doctrine for its partiality to "Rājāhs, Mahārājāhs, plutocrats, aristocrats," etc., etc., and rich Brahmins and its want of charity towards others who constitute the greater portion of humanity. Here it is quite clear that the fallacy in Mr. Oxley's argument consists in the change of adjectives. From the main doctrine in question it follows that "life eternal is out of the question" not to *plain* John Brown, but to *wicked* and

depraved John Brown; and I can hardly see any reason why the author should so bitterly lament the loss of immortality so far as utterly wicked and depraved natures are concerned. I do not think that my learned opponent will be prepared to maintain that all pariahs, vagabonds, and other poor people, are all depraved and wicked, or that all Rājāhs, Mahārājāhs, and other rich people are always virtuous. It is my humble opinion that utterly wicked and depraved people are in the minority; and loss of immortality to such persons cannot seriously be made the ground of an objection to the Theosophical doctrine under consideration. Properly speaking theosophy teaches not "conditional immortality," as the author is pleased to state, but conditional mortality if I may be permitted to use such a phrase. According to Theosophy, therefore, annihilation is not the common lot of mankind unless the learned author is in a position to state that the greater portion of the human race are wicked and depraved—beyond redemption. Theosophists have never stated, so far as I know, that adepts alone attain immortality. The condition ultimately reached by ordinary men after going through all the planetary rounds during countless ages in the gradually ascending order of material objective existence is reached by the adept within a comparatively shorter time than required by the uninitiated. It is thus but a question of time; but every human being, unless he is utterly "wicked and depraved," may hope to reach that

state sooner or later according to his merits and Karma.

The corresponding Hierosophic doctrine is not fully and definitely stated in the article under review, but the views of the author regarding the same may be gathered from his treatise on the philosophy of spirit. They may be summarized as follows:

(1) The four discredited degrees in the human being called "animal, human, angelic, and deific," show that *every* human being (however wicked and depraved) will ultimately reach immortality.¹

(2) There is no rebirth in the material human form, there is no retrogression at any time.

And there is this interesting passage in the author's book:

(3) "The thread of life is broken up at the point where it appeared to be broken off by physical dissolution, and every one will come into the use and enjoyment of his or her own specific life, i.e. whatever each one has loved the most, he or she will enter into the spirit of it, not using earthly material or organisms for the same but spiritual substances, as distinct from matter as earth is from atmospheric air; thus the artist, musician, mechanic, inventor, scientist, and philosopher will still continue their occupations but in a spiritual manner."

¹ Had Mr. Oxley said instead—"every human monad" which changes its personalities and is in every new birth a new "human being," then would his statement have been unanswerable.

Now as regards the first proposition, it is not easy to understand how the existence of four discredited degrees in a human being or any number of such degrees necessarily leads to unconditional immortality. Such a result may follow if deific or angelic existence were quite consistent with, or could reconcile itself to, a depraved and wicked personality or individuality or the recollection of such personality. The mere existence of an immortality principle in man can never secure to him unconditional immortality unless he is in a position to purify his nature, either through the regular course of initiations or successive re-births in the ordinary course of nature according to the great cyclic Law, and transfer the purest essence of his individuality and the recollection of his past births and lives to his immortal Ātmā and the developed and purified spiritual Ego in which they inhere.

The second proposition above stated is opposed to all the ancient traditions of Eastern nations and the teachings of all the Eastern adepts, and I do not think that any passage in support of it can be found in the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

The last statement above-quoted is certainly a very extraordinary proposition; and I shall be very happy if the author can point out any authority for it in the *Bhagavad-gītā* or in the other portions of the *Mahābhārata*.

Whatever may be the nature of the purely ideal or subjective existence experienced in Devachan after death

and before the next birth, it cannot be held that the artist or musician carries on his "occupations" except by way of ideation.

I shall now leave it to the readers to say whether this assertion is really "based upon foundations more substantial than mere fancies and speculations".

The second doctrine of Theosophy which Mr. Oxley notices in his article is that "occult powers and esoteric wisdom can only be attained by the severest asceticism and total abstention from the use of the sensual degrees in nature in their physical aspect". If this doctrine is universally admitted, he says, physical embodiment would be impossible. I can safely assure him that this contingency is not likely to happen under the present conditions of our planet; and I am unable to understand how physical embodiment is desirable in itself. It yet remains to be proved that "occult powers and esoteric wisdom" can be acquired from the teachings of Hierosophy without the restrictions imposed by esoteric Theosophy.

The learned author further adds that under the conditions abovementioned "the powers of adept life cannot be perpetuated by hereditary descent". He evidently thinks that this fact discloses a very great defect in the Theosophical system. But why should adept life be perpetuated necessarily by hereditary descent? Occult wisdom has been transmitted from Guru to disciple without any serious break of continuity during thousands of years in the East. And there is no danger

of adept life ceasing to exist from want of transmission by hereditary descent. Nor is it possible to bring into existence a race of hierophants in whom occult knowledge will be acquired by birth without the necessity of special study or initiation. The experiment was tried, I believe, long ago in the East, but without success.

The author will be in a position to understand the nature of some of the difficulties which are to be encountered in making any such experiment from a perusal of Bulwer Lytton's *Zanoni*.

The world has yet to see whether "under the sway of Solar Angels," the adepts trained under the system of Hierosophy, can retain their powers and knowledge after having renounced "asceticism, abstinence and celibacy," and transmit the so-called "adept life" to their descendants.

Speaking of the attitude of Theosophists towards spiritualism, Mr. Oxley observes that they hold that the so-called spiritualistic phenomena are due to the "intervention of enlightened living men, but not disembodied spirits". I shall be very glad if the learned author can point out any foundation for this statement in the utterances of Theosophists. Strangely enough, he says further on that, in the opinion of the Theosophists, such phenomena are due to "wandering shells and decaying *reliquiæ* of what was once a human being". This is no doubt true in the case of some of the phenomena at least: and the author should not presume to say that any one of these phenomena has

its real origin in the action of *disembodied living conscious beings*, unless he is fully prepared to state exactly who these mysterious beings are, and demonstrate, by something weightier than mere assumption, the fact of their real existence. He is entirely mistaken in supposing that the *modus operandi* in the case of the so-called spiritualistic phenomena are precisely the same as in the phenomena produced by Eastern adepts. However I do not mean to say anything further about this subject here as it has been already fully discussed in the columns of *The Theosophist*.

Mr. Oxley objects to my statement that "the human spirit (7th principle) has a dignity, power, and sacredness which cannot be claimed by any other God, Deva or Angel of the Hindu Pantheon". Although I had taken care to inform my readers that by *human spirit*, I meant the immortal and unborn 7th principle or Ātmā in man, he construed the expression to mean the spirit or life principle in the human degree of his peculiar classification. It would have been better if he had taken the pains to understand my language before venturing to assert that my statement was against the doctrine taught by Kṛṣṇa. So far as I can see, his notions about the seven principles in man so often mentioned in this journal are utterly confused and incorrect. As the English language is deficient in the technical phraseology required for expressing the truths of Āryan philosophy and science, I am obliged to use such English words as can be got to convey my meaning

more or less approximately. But to preclude the possibility of any misunderstanding on the part of my readers I clearly intimated in the passage in question that by human spirit I meant the 7th principle in man. This principle, I beg to submit, is not derived from any angel (not even from Busiris) in the universe. It is unborn and eternal according to the Buddhist and Hindu philosophers. The knowledge of its own *Swarūpam* is the highest knowledge of self: and according to the doctrines of the Advaita school of Āryan philosophy, to which I have the honor to belong, there is in reality no difference between this principle and Paramātmā.

Mr. Oxley believes that the claims of the Spiritualists have virtually been admitted by the Theosophists, inasmuch as in the opinion of the latter "communications may be established with other spirits". But the learned author fails to perceive that by the word "Spirit" Theosophists mean something quite different from the so-called "disembodied spirits" of the Spiritualists. The belief in question does not therefore amount to any concession to the claim of the Spiritualists as is supposed by him.

The esteemed author then proceeds to explain some of the important doctrines of Hierosophy, which, he takes particular care to add, are not to be considered by his readers as mere "fancies and speculations". Hierosophists seem to believe that the influx of life flows from the "Infinite monad" mentioned by me in

the first part of my review on *The Philosophy of Spirit*. Mr. Oxley's conception of this monad is not, then, quite consistent with the views of Eastern occultists. Properly speaking, this monad or centre is not the source of cosmic energy in any one of its forms, but it is the embodiment of the great Law which nature follows in her operations.

The learned author then asserts that "Esoteric Theosophists" and their great leaders have admitted that there is an "influx" of energy from the planetary spirits to the monad above mentioned. Here again, I am sorry to say, Mr. Oxley is misrepresenting the views of Theosophists according to his own imagination. And the statement itself is thoroughly unphilosophical. This transmission of energy from the planetary spirits to the Great Law that governs the Universe, is inconceivable to every ordinary mortal. It does not appear that the monad referred to by Mr. Oxley is a different entity from the monad alluded to in my article. He himself says that it is not so. Then the only conclusion to which I can come under the circumstances of the case is that Mr. Oxley has put forward these strange and groundless statements about the action and reaction of cosmic energy between the Infinite Monad and the planetary spirits without having any clear and definite ideas about these entities. The truth of this statement will be confirmed on examining his views about the nature of the work done by the planetary spirits. These spirits, it would appear, "detain

myriads of elementals in the spheres of interior Nature," i.e., the next plane of life immediately contiguous to this; and compel them in the most tyrannical manner to obey their commands and produce effects which are calculated to perpetuate their own peculiar qualities in the plane of material existence. I confess I do not know anything about the beings who exercise such despotical functions. They are not the planetary spirits of the Theosophists; and if they have any existence outside the region of Mr. Oxley's fancy, I beg to request he will be kind enough to enlighten the public about the nature of these mysterious and dreadful tyrants. I can assure him that the orthodox Brahmins, whom he is so very unwilling to patronize, have nothing to do with such planetary spirits; nor do they know anything of them. I am really delighted to hear from my learned opponent that the Solar Angels are fully prepared to fight for the liberty of our unfortunate elementals and put an end to this abominable tyranny within a very short time; and if, among other beautiful and useful occupations, arts and sciences that exist in the world inhabited by these angels, (since we are told that the artist, musician, mechanic, minister, scientist, philosopher will "still continue their occupations" in this world of spirit)—a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals will have its place along with other associations, then the Solar Angels would surely deserve to be nominated as its most honorary and honoured members.

The learned author concludes his interesting exposition of the principles of Hierosophy by proclaiming to the world at large that "under the sway of Solar Angels, neither asceticism, abstinence, nor celibacy, as such, will find place, but the perfection of life's enjoyment will be found in the well regulated use of all the faculties to which humanity is heir".

Whether this novel system of philosophy and ethics is really "rhapsodical and utopian," or not, the public—especially the Indian—will have to decide. But I can affirm without any fear of contradiction that this system has not the slightest foundation in anything that is contained in the *Bhagavad-gītā* or in any other religious or philosophical book of the Hindus. It is simply the result of the author's independent speculations and must rest upon its own strength. In my humble opinion it is clearly erroneous and unphilosophical.

I shall now take leave of Mr. Oxley and request him to kindly excuse me for the adverse criticism contained in my articles. I shall be very glad if my strictures can induce him to re-examine carefully the philosophy of spirit contained in the *Bhagavad-gītā* and scrutinize the reasons for the conclusions arrived at by him in his book on the fundamental questions of occult philosophy and ethics. With his intuition and intelligence, he will no doubt be in a position to open out for himself a way to understand the mysteries of the Eastern arcane sciences—if he only avoids the

temptation to leap to general conclusions from insufficient data, and draw inferences prematurely before the whole range of our ancient science and philosophy is carefully explored by him.

I am very happy to hear that my learned antagonist has joined our Theosophical association, and I hope he will henceforth work in fraternal concord with his Eastern brothers for recovering the grand truths taught by the ancient Hierophants and promoting the cause of Universal Brotherhood.

RETROGRESSION IN RE-BIRTH

In his able review of Mr. Oxley's *Philosophy of Spirit*, Mr. Subba Row, criticising the author's views of the Hierosophic doctrine, remarks:

"The second proposition (there is no re-birth in the material human form, *there is no retrogression at any time*) is opposed to all the ancient traditions of Eastern nations and the *teaching of all the Eastern adepts*."

The italics are mine. The proposition is certainly not in union with "all the ancient traditions of Eastern nations," but is the portion of it which I have italicised (there is no retrogression at any time), though certainly opposed to ancient Hindu traditions, really at variance with the "teaching of all the Eastern adepts"? Unless I am mistaken, you have all along strenuously maintained it as one of the truths of occult philosophy that re-birth in a *lower* state is impossible, that there is

no *going back* in the scale of existence, that "nature invariably shuts the door behind her": in other words, that there is no retrogression. Exactly the proposition advanced by Mr. O. and objected to by Mr. S. R. !

Will you or the learned reviewer kindly explain this ?

H.

BOMBAY, 2nd December, 1883.

Editor's Note.—We have "strenuously maintained," and still maintain, that there is no "retrogression" in the dead-letter sense as taught by exoteric Hinduism—i.e., that the re-birth of a man in the *physical* form of an animal was impossible on this earth. But, we never affirmed that there was no *moral* retrogression—especially in the interplanetary spheres; and that is what is combated by Mr. T. Subba Row, for Mr. Oxley means "retrogression" in that very sense, we believe.

II. ESOTERIC SPIRITUALISM

THE LAW OF "INFLUX" AND "EFFLUX"

BY WILLIAM YEATES

Fellow of "The British Theosophical Society"

[In giving room to the following clever paper, it is but just that its several points should be answered by Mr. T. Subba Row, against whom it is directed, now and here, and without having to postpone the reply for another month. Most of the foot-notes, therefore, are his.—Ed.]

THE October number of *The Theosophist* for 1882 contains strictures on Mr. William Oxley's article (in the September number) by a respected Eastern Brother, Mr. Subba Row. In the latter, quoting from the former's words to the effect "that there cannot be any difficulty or objection to accepting as a *possibility*, that the actual author of the *Mahābhārata* should put in, not an objective but a subjective appearance in London, or elsewhere, *if he chose so to do*" Mr. Subba Row remarks: "Quite true; but he will never choose to do so."

After making the admission of the possibility is there not an inconsistency in adding the latter clause, coming as it does from a defender of the true faith in

orthodox Brahmanism?¹ It sounds like a claim on Mr. Row's part to a perfect knowledge of the motives which actuate the exalted one. On what grounds does Mr. Row claim his right to the knowledge as to what the real author of the *Mahābhārata* "chooses to do"?²

From the *Bhagavad-gītā*, I learn that the one who (in a certain state) is described as the "Lord of all created beings," used this language, "Having command over my nature, I am made manifest by my own power: and as often as there is a decline of virtue, and an insurrection of vice and injustice in the world, I make myself manifest: and thus I appear from age to age." Through thus taking command over his own nature, and all men, I hold that for all practical purposes, he does choose a *chela in human form*: i.e., one who takes on the clothing of *The Sun*, by means of the divine ray in which he makes Himself evident: and more, that there are *chelas in human form*, through whom the powers of The Grand Spirits Identity will be unfolded in due order, even as it has been in past ages. What is true in regard to the Great one, is true in regard to spirits

¹ Our esteemed correspondent and brother is wrong here. We say again—Mr. T. Subba Row is no "defender of the true faith in orthodox Brahmanism," for the present "orthodox Brahmanism" is rather *heterodox* than orthodox. Our brother Mr. T. Subba Row is a true Vedāntic Advaiti of the esoteric, hence genuine Brahman faith and—an occultist.—Ed.

² On the *grounds* of the genuine and authentic teachings of the true "exalted one" himself *as* correctly understood, on the grounds of the esoteric teaching of the "real author of the *Mahābhārata*," rightly comprehended by the *initiated* Brahmins alone.—T.S.R.

of lesser degree, who also can have chelas of a degree corresponding with them.

According to *The Theosophist*, a Rāja Yogī Brother has the power to assume whatever form he pleases, and to communicate with spirits either in, or outside the body. Why then should it be deemed incredible that one, such as undoubtedly was Vyāsa, can take command of his own life and nature in the forms beneath him, and assume the name of "Busiris," in order to make himself manifest through a medium?¹ Does not the greater include the less?

"If I pass entirely under the dominion of my highest, or seventh principle," I can, while in that state, receive a communication from spirits of that degree, and translate the substance to other; just as a *chela in human form* would do with a message, or communication received from the Brothers. The modes of manifestation may be diverse, but the same law is operative in both instances; surely, then, Mr. Subba Row must be mistaken in his assertion that "Busiris has no *chela* in human form". For most certainly, He, who has ascended to such an altitude, has command over his own nature in all those who subsist in the atomic life of his Spiritual Body; or it is only such that he can command, or "control". Likewise the

¹ For the simple reason that the alleged teachings and esoteric interpretations of "Busiris" clash entirely with the teachings and interpretations of both Vyāsa and the initiates of the esoteric school. The "spirit" of Vyāsa cannot well contradict, and without giving reasons for it, the teachings of the latter when alive.—T.S.R.

Brothers themselves, they are able to command the unseen atoms who subsist within, or beneath, their own order; but can they so command the interior lives of life atoms which form the Spiritual Body of another of different order, and it may be, superior to their own? Herein lies the difficulty of any attempt to mould the new order of the modern Spiritualistic movement, according to the genius of the order of Eastern Occultism. Before this can be accomplished, command over the invisible heads of the Spirit bands must first be obtained.

The inner Voice of the Angel of God speaks through the intuitions to all men and women who belong to this order of life, and who form the body, Church, or system, telling each one in their own order, the way to the Resurrection of the life; (some partake of the life of more than one order) and everyone who perceives a ray of light, should follow it, for it will lead them to the summit of the Mount to which they are called, whether it be that of a Planetary or Solar order Adeptship.¹

As matter is within matter; spirit within spirit; atom within atom; and as Influx is within Efflux; even so there are orders within orders of Intelligences, both of a Planetary and Solar nature. From these we derive our life, and from them (mediately), we receive that which form the higher qualities of our life. It matters little how the life quality is divided in its descent

¹ I confess to my inability to distinguish between the two kinds of adeptship called "Solar" and "Planetary" since the terminology is not in vogue among Asiatic Occultists, but belongs, most likely, to the new Western "Hierosophy".—T.S.R.

or ascent to the atom from whence it came and returns; the line may be extended until the atom becomes invisible to the external man; but invisibility becomes visible in the lives of the whole body of atoms who came out from that ONE which can never be divided into less than one. Even so, it is possible for us to be inducted into a perceptive knowledge of the direct presence of the Angelic parents who gave us birth into the inmost quality of their life, and in which we live, and move, and have our being. By means of such outbirths, we partake of the differentiations of every Father and Mother through whom we came besides that of our own, and these augmented qualities will take eternity to unfold themselves; and in view of such a truth, there can be no place found for annihilation; inasmuch as the annihilation of one atomic quality in the child's life would be the annihilation of him who gave it birth.¹ Can a part of God be destroyed?² In the universal

¹ Eastern esoteric philosophy denies the theistic idea that "the whole body of atoms" came out from some "ONE atom," and teaches that there is no difference between the 7th principle of man and that of universal nature. "Hence a child may be annihilated as a *personality*, whereas his 6th and 7th principles, the one *divine monad*, remain unaffected by this disintegration of freed atoms of still *particled* matter known as Soul."—T.S.R.

² "A part of God!" Before we venture to talk of a *part*, we ought to make sure of the existence of the *whole*; or at least learn to know something more than we do of the Essence of that "God" people are so freely discussing about. The Advaita philosophy teaches to believe in one universal Principle it calls Parabrahmam and to eschew *idols*. Hence it rejects the idea of a personal God, whether called by the latter name or that of ONE ATOM, the Father and Creator of all other atoms.—T.S.R.

life, I maintain, that not one single atom can be lost.¹

Creation is infinite, with an endless capacity for growth and development. But if only the law of Efflux were operative there could be no improvement. Like produces Like, and although there might be an endless procession of variations—they would be but a mere repetition of the series of like to like again, and no improvement in the forms evolved from the parent stock.² But with the Law of Influx in operation, the forms are respective of new and higher qualities, which when evolved produce new and living forms of a higher and more interior order. It is only the recognition of this that can account for the development and manifestation of new forms of life of all kinds. To produce

¹ "Atom lost?" No atom is ever lost but atoms combine in transitory groups which are entities, which are atomic congeries. So that if one personality is "annihilated," this is but a breaking up of an atomic group, and the freed atoms are drawn into new combinations—the 6th and the 7th principles being of course excluded—T.S.R.

² "Creation infinite." For "creation" read *universe*, and then the "endless capacity for growth and development" would fit in better, and there would be no contradiction to comment upon. As here written it reads like a theological paradox. For if the whole *creation* is "infinite" and there is still in it "an endless capacity for growth and development," then it becomes the antithesis of "creation". And if the writer means that cosmic matter was created and infused with a law of "growth and development," then cosmic matter must have been created out of nothing which is scientifically absurd. "Efflux" and "Influx" sound here like words without meaning. It is *Influx* that brings into being everything, and it is *Efflux* that changes conditions and obliterates all temporary forms, to evolve out of them the one *Eternal Reality*.—T.S.R.

these, it must be evident that the germs of this new order of life were begotten from above within the transformed soul; and in no case is it a repetition from the "old seed after its kind". Hence it is, that the new order of spiritual life appearing in the West, so diverse in its manifestation to that of the East, is scarcely comprehended by the latter, in the light as I have shown it. In the Hebrew Record we read that the *young Samson* "as yet, knew not his strength". Neither, as yet, is the spiritual power of the child of the Occident known or comprehended by his elder Brother of the Orient. Will the Brothers of the Orient take to the stripling by recognising him as the "Heir of the Inheritance," and send down a little of the hoarded stores to nurture the new-born life in the valley below?

The *Theosophist* admits that notwithstanding the vantage ground of the possession of ancient stores of occult knowledge the Oriental system has, from time to time, declined: and in spite of repeated revivals at different epochs, every effort to restore it to the traditional pristine glory of the Golden Age has failed.¹

¹ We beg to be permitted to emphatically deny the statement. Neither *The Theosophist*—i.e., its editor nor any one of the Founders, has ever admitted anything of the sort about the "Oriental system," whatever some of its contributors may have remarked upon the subject. If it has degenerated among its votaries in India (a fact due entirely to the cunning of its dead letter interpretation by the modern *orthodox* Brahmin who has lost the key to it) it flourishes as high as ever in the Himalayan retreats, in the Āsrama of the initiated Brahmin, and in all the "pristine glory of the Golden Age".—Ed.

Now assuming that one section of the Brothers succeed in resuscitating their order on the old lines, what security can we have that, at best, it would be but a sprouting out from the decaying trunk of the old tree of knowledge, as is proved by the history of the past?

The ancient Hindu, Brahminical, Buddhistic, Egyptian, Hebrew or Arabic, Christian and Muhammadan systems are mere variations from the same stock, all of which were best at their beginnings. How comes it, that notwithstanding the more immediate presence, influence, and tutelage of the Brothers to the Indian populations, that these confessedly have become degraded, and have lost their own spirituality and power?¹

What other fate can befall us, as a Theosophical Society, if the very roots of our life, as such, draw their vitality from a decaying Tree, whose fruits, leaves, and branches are of "efflux" growth, and that of a descending order; inasmuch as it ignores the inmost "Law of Influx" from the Tree of Life of an inner

¹ The "tutelage of the Brothers to the Indian populations" is a fancy based on a misconception. Ever since Buddhism with its esoteric interpretations of the Vedas and other sacred books was driven out of the country by the ambition and jealousy of the Brahmins, the *truths* of esotericism began to fade out of the memory of those populations until there now remains hardly one Brahmin in ten thousand who understands the Śāstras at all. Hindus were degraded for the same reason that life and spirit have gone out of Christianity. The increase of wealth-bred sensuality quenched spiritual aspiration and intuition, plugged the ears that once listened and shut the eyes that once saw the teachers. And at last by gradual deterioration of species, multiplications of war, and increased scarcity of food supply, the prime question became that of a struggle for life, to the obliteration of spiritual yearnings.—T.S.R.

causation? All outgrowths in that direction must, of necessity, sooner or later exhaust their vitality.

It is the new influx from the Grand Central Sun of all existences, that causes of the soul to rise to higher states and forms of consciousness; and by means of this, the newly evolved states therefrom, form a new series of a system—on an ascending scale which will never retrograde, as have done and do, the grades of a purely Planetary Cycle of incarnations, whose occultations shut out the direct light of Grand Eternal Sun.

The teachings of 'Theosophy' appear to imply that there is a latent power possessed of self-sufficient energy, sufficient in itself for the evolvment of a new species, without the intervention of a still higher power.

For instance, can this alleged self-sufficient energy form an object without existing materials? Can it create a thought or an idea of a new form, absolutely independent of that which comes into the mind from the ideal realm of being from whence all germs are derived?¹

If it were possible to sever the lines of the subtle—but externally invisible—thread of life which extends from the Parent Tree of life in the midst of the universal Garden to the external circumference of its physical manifestation; and to maintain such severed lives'

¹ Most assuredly not. But this neither proves existence of the *one* Atom, separated from and differentiated by its unity from all other atoms, nor does it point to the necessity of one. At any rate, even our English Brother's "one atom" or God can hardly create "an object" without existent materials or matter.—T. S. R.

vitality; then, I admit, the Law of Efflux would be an all-sufficient cause for the appearance and perpetuation of those new and higher forms of life which have been evolved and manifested at different epochs.

If any order—dependent solely on the traditional observances of those who ages ago derived their light at first and second hand from the fountain of all light—should deny us the privilege of using their stores of ancient experimental knowledge by interposing impractical barriers; yet no order can prevent our access to the Grand Fountain of Light and Love, where we may drink freely of the waters of Life.¹ Is not this better than being confined to partake of a descending stream of wisdom which silts up its outlets with the sands of ages—leaving a portion of its strength and power at every stage of its descent, until, at length, it is lost in the desert waste, where so many famish; and who cannot reach the purer water higher up the stream? Nor is it so with those systems which are on the ascending plane and order. By virtue of their being ever subject to the direct energy of the Divine Solar ray, they have power to do that which other systems never could accomplish.

¹ The "Grand Fountain of Light and Love" is a very poetical metaphor—and no more, when applied to an unproved abstraction. We admit of such a fountain but not outside of, independent from, past, present and future humanity, (the crown of the evolution on our globe) every individual atom of which is a drop of that "Water of Life" the agglomeration of the drops of which forms that "one Fountain"—T. S. R.

How can a system impart that which it admits it does not possess, *viz.*, the *dual* states of adeptship? Where there are no feminine adepts in the order, it must ultimately yield to that dual power which is able to polarise and prepare both male and female atoms for the state in which they are fitted to be drawn up into the 'Celestial Marriage'. When intromitted into this state these wedded atoms act and re-act until every quality of their united being rotates and vibrates up and down the *seven* sides of the ray until becoming all radiant with light and heat in themselves, they are able to project the new born germs of a higher and purer life into the souls of those beneath them, who are drawn into the same state, and who, in their turn, may give out their several degrees of light and heat, and life to all around; and so on *ad infinitum*.¹

By these intermediates the mass of mankind receive the new order of life *unconsciously* according to their

¹ Again an unwarranted assertion whichever way we see it. There *are* "female" adepts in the Brotherhood, and of a very high order. Therefore, there being such, in fact, the deductions drawn from a mistaken premise fall. And if our opponent had in mind in writing the above sentence, something more abstract and vague than a mere physical difference of sexes, then he will allow me perhaps, to tell him that our esoteric philosophy *proves* that outside of the world of gross matter there is no such difference, the latter itself occurring (even on our earth) as an accident due to gestation and not as a result of such or another male or female germ. Even the Christian Bible, the youngest of the many attempts to religious philosophy, teaches him that in the resurrection the people "neither marry nor are given in marriage". So that, "Celestial marriage," whatever this may mean in modern Esotericism, appears to be but a figure of speech. Our readers might also be benefited were they explained what it meant by a "Dual Adept".—T. S. R.

respective deeds, but the dual adepts will receive it consciously by direct influx. In order that new life-forms may be generated, the new life-force of a higher and purer order, must inflow into prepared atoms to receive the same both on this and other earths.

How, except through the Divine Solar state of a wedded pair, can this higher and purer life be generated? With this in view, it can be seen that the 'Brothers'—with their celibate conditions of adeptship—cannot possibly beget a higher, or purer, order of life than their own; hence it follows that a system, based on such a principle, cannot perpetuate itself.¹

It is at the culmination of a seventh cycle—a symbol of the Celestial Sun-day—that another Ray is shot forth across the universal Earth, and those who are prepared to receive its influence, and give birth, or ultimatum, to higher forms of life, upon the respective earths they inhabit, according to its degree of development in the series; for as so ably shown by the writer

¹ Not necessarily. Our critic seems to forget—or perchance never knew—that an adept has means of *inbreathing*, into his chosen "chela" besides his own "high order of life," to use his own expression, that of one still higher than himself, i.e., of the highest Bodhisattva living or dead, provided the purity of his own life permits to him the performance of the mysterious assimilation. But we can assure our Brother, that without that "celibate" mode of life, against which he seems to protest so strongly, no adept could ever reach such a degree of power. Souls as well as spirits are sexless, and it is a great mistake to say that no "male monad" (?) can incarnate in a female body or *vice versa*. Mental and moral statement. It is owing to previous Karma that we discover so often characteristics or idiosyncracies as met daily in life contradict the masculine traits in weak female bodies and feminine tenderness and nervousness in strong men.—T. S. R.

of "Fragments of Occult Truth," the varied earths of a system, all differ as to states of mental and spiritual development; and yet not one could suffer deprivation of this Cyclic action from the 'Grand Sun,' without all the rest suffering from such loss to any specific member of the Solar family. Here comes in the distinction and difference between the guidance and teaching of the Planetary and Solar *Guru*. The one is the Forerunner, and prepares the way for the other; and it is the latter one who leads his Chelas—both masculine and feminine—beyond the Tree of Knowledge, even to the Tree of Life itself.¹

It is the leaves of this Tree—the life-giving power, which are to be given for the "healing of the nations," and by this means the long-lost, and neglected ones, which the Occult system would hopelessly consign to annihilation, are to be gathered up and utilised by the great Economiser; so that there shall be nothing lost; and thus the fragments of the (apparently) long-lost Orb shall be collected and form a shining Sun to enlighten the still denser darkness of the nether realms.

In the above few hints, (for your space would not permit of more) I have shown *a use* for the elementals, *reliques*, etc., etc., which Occult science does appear to recognise; and did your space permit I should be glad to show the necessity for these in the formation of

¹ Does our Brother, who speaks so often of the "Tree of Life," know its *real esoteric significance*? Let him prove it, by hinting at the grand mystery, and if he does show his knowledge—then verily will our Mahātmās be at his orders!—T. S. R.

earths, and sustenance of life-forms thereon, and the position they occupy in the Cosmos; but I content myself with this bare outline.

Modern spiritualism, when viewed as an entirely new and diverse (from all that preceded) order of life,—which, instead of being the best at its beginning, commences at Zero—is a factor which is overlooked in this respect by the *Theosophist* in its response to Mr. Terry of Australia—(who is a personal acquaintance of my own) and is hardly satisfactory to those who accept the higher aspects of a more advanced spiritualism. Occultists say that the only safe and right way in dealing with unseen forces, entities, intelligences, or whatever else, is according to *their* method: and that to seek for or allow ‘Controls’ to use the human organism, is wrong, if not positively dangerous to the morals of those who permit it; but to my view, the right or wrong of this depends upon the use we make of it, and we must not be forgetful, that this “Controlling power and influence” sometimes comes with a resistless force and the sensitives are completely helpless to withstand.¹

Even the ‘invocation’ of spiritual beings, if the modern practice of Séance-holding can be so called, which affords conditions for spiritual manifestations—is quite in conformity with the rituals and ceremonials

¹ Exactly; and since in this mad inrush of controls the poor sensitive may at any time be knocked off his moral feet down the precipice of spiritual degradation, why tamper with so dangerous a gift? Adepts never encounter a “resistless force,” since adeptship means *self-control* first and then control over all forces of nature external to himself.—T. S. R.

of the ancient Indian system; as, for instance, the *Sāmaveda* says, “Come, O Father, *along with the spirits of our Fathers.*”¹ If this practice was observed, and formed an integral part of religious worship—and if this was done under the aegis of the Church itself in far back ages; surely with our increase of knowledge, and, we may hope, with improved morals, we may now safely engage in it with safety to both sides, provided the motives are pure and worthy. Are there not any adept “Brothers” of British or European extraction in sufficient sympathy with the efforts of their own countrymen to open up a direct correspondence with those who are striving to attain to a higher order of Life?²

[A full reply is left over for a future article.]

¹ We invite our brother’s attention, in reference to this quotation, to what *Manu* says (IV, 123, etc.) of this practice. The *Sāmaveda* dealing with the Spirits of the dead, he says that “even the sound of it (the *Sāma-veda*) is *impure*”.—T. S. R.

² This seems hardly a fair question. Our correspondent first assumes that our adepts are of an inferior order, and neither living nor capable of showing a way to “a higher order of life,” and then despairingly asks if there are no adepts to teach him. What talented beings there may be in the “Solar” and “Planetary” orders—we cannot say, our experience having been confined to human adepts. But among these, we should certainly say that on the terms stated there is not one among our Brothers, whether of British or Asiatic extraction, who would volunteer for the service.—T. S. R.

III. THE "OCCULT WORLD"

HAPPY MR. HENRY KIDDLE'S DISCOVERY

I HAVE been watching with considerable interest the effect produced on the Western Public by Mr. Sinnett's book on "Esoteric Buddhism"; and I have not been disappointed in my expectations. There is nothing surprising in the attitude of the Spiritualists towards Theosophy and its Teachers. Startled by the strange phenomena—erroneously called *spirit* manifestations, which have been witnessed during the last few years, the majority of the so-called Spiritualists have firmly persuaded themselves into the belief that those manifestations indicate a turning point in the history of mankind, that they are destined to introduce into the world a sublime system of religious philosophy which will supplant every other existing system whether in the East or in the West, and that for the first time in the annals of this globe man is being permitted through the instrumentality of the manifestations to have a glimpse into the mysterious inner world. They are not probably aware of the fact, or they are extremely unwilling to believe, that these phenomena were known

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in the East for long ages and that their mysterious causes were carefully studied by esoteric mystics. They are evidently offended at being told that these phenomena are rather stale to the Eastern nations; that there is nothing very profound either in their manifestations or in their immediate causes, that they can never unravel the real mystery of the manifested Cosmos or of the human Spirit (7th principle)! and that all *they* can teach was long ago known to the Eastern Occultists. And probably there is another reason why the Spiritualists and the Theosophists of the West do not treat the teachings embodied in Mr. Sinnett's *Occult World* and *Esoteric Buddhism* with the serious attention that they deserve. Western nations are accustomed to look upon the Easterns as their inferiors in *every respect*. In their opinion, as it seems, muscular strength is always co-existent with intellectual power and spiritual insight; and European political ascendancy means and includes intellectual and spiritual superiority. Hence they are too proud to admit that there are mystics in the East who know a good deal more about nature and her laws than all their scientists, philosophers, Spiritualists and religious teachers put together. The discovery of Mahātmās in the East is almost a nightmare to them; and they would feel very happy to get rid of it as soon as possible. Therefore instead of carefully examining the theories propounded in Mr. Sinnett's book, they are trying their best to ferret out a few facts and incidents which will enable them to disprove the

existence of our Mahātmās, render it extremely doubtful; or if both these courses be found impracticable, to show the Sādhus extremely inferior to themselves. Several prominent Spiritualists have already been giving absurd, superficial and one-sided accounts of the doctrines contained in Mr. Sinnett's book apparently with a view to allay the fears of orthodox Spiritualists, to soothe their own feelings and to vindicate the importance and incomparable grandeur of the "New Dispensation" ushered into the civilized and enlightened West by spirit-rapping and table-turning; while some other Spiritualists are probably consoling themselves with the idea that even if the Mahātmās should be proved to have an actual existence (outside of Madame Blavatsky) they cannot be anything more than spirits (Piśācas!), or, at best—strong physical mediums. Under such circumstances anything like argument with the Spiritualists is worse than useless. Mere phenomena, however wonderful, can never prove to their satisfaction either the actual existence of Adepts or the nature of true Adeptship. Any phenomena that you may show them will at once be attributed to the agency of spirits (as they are called by them) or elementals as we call them, and classed with their own *séance* room manifestations. Even if we were to effect an impossibility and induce one of our Eastern Adepts to appear in London and prove his existence and knowledge before their eyes, these phenomena-hunters would proclaim him by way of compliment an excellent medium and nothing more.

Hence, it is not difficult to foresee that so long as the general body of Spiritualists or their leaders are satisfied with their own illogical and fanciful hypothesis and make no attempt to investigate scientifically their phenomena and their causes in connection with the ancient systems of religious philosophy and occultism, it is impossible to expect them to give a patient hearing to the teachings of our Mahātmās. To a real scientific investigator who is attempting to ascertain the general law governing a particular class of phenomena, even the suggestion of a plausible hypothesis is of considerable value. The Mahātmās have never declared that they would give a systematic and exhaustive exposition of the Occult Science, but only that they intended to place before the general public a few general doctrines which might suggest some reasonable hypothesis by which the experience of ancient mystics and the so-called Spiritualistic phenomena of modern time may be knit together, and brought under one general law, and which may also show to some extent the scientific basis of all ancient religions whose teachings are generally supposed to be diametrically opposed to those of modern science. To every genuine Occultist and every student of science these doctrines are of immense importance; especially at the present time, when old religious systems are dying out for want of real vital strength, when science has as yet found no means of penetrating into the inner world of noumena, and when the strange manifestations taking place in *séance*-rooms are rejected

by the majority of the men of science as absurd superstitions, while they are regarded by the Spiritualists as indicative of the existence of disembodied Spirits!

Our Eastern doctrines having been proclaimed by the general body of Spiritualists as impertinent intruders, leaders of that body seem to have discovered at last a very simple means for getting rid of them. Mr. Henry Kiddle has found out that the Mahātmā whose instructions are embodied in Mr. Sinnett's publications has committed an act of plagiarism in borrowing certain sentences from one of his lectures without admitting his obligation. He tells us, he wrote to Mr. Sinnett about his discovery more than a year ago; and though Mr. Sinnett distinctly states that he never heard from him, this American discoverer has been very persistently complaining to the public of the great injury done to him. This is considered as a very "grave charge" by the Spiritualists, who suppose that it "strikes at the very root of the pretensions of the Adepts". But if these Spiritualists, "Perplexed Readers," and "Students" who are making such a terrible fuss about the matter were to examine the passage in question carefully, they will, perchance, be able to perceive that there is evidently some confusion and mistake in the whole matter, and that the probabilities of the case are against the truth of Mr. Kiddle's complaint. Upon a closer examination of it I find that—

I. So far as the leading idea in the passage is concerned, if any body has committed literary theft

it is the complainant himself and not the accused. I find no reference to Plato in the passages quoted from Mr. Kiddle's lecture in his letter published in *Light*,¹ and the complainant has very prudently omitted the reference to the Greek philosopher that precedes the passages which he reproduces from the Mahātmā's letter.

II. There seems to be nothing very sublime in the language used by Mr. Kiddle in the passage under consideration; and it may be easily seen from the other letters written to Mr. Sinnett by the Mahātmā concerned, that the said Mahātmā's English vocabulary is not more limited than his own and that he is not wanting in power of expression. It is, therefore, very difficult to see why the Master should have borrowed Mr. Kiddle's language, unless some good reason can be shown for it.

III. There are certain expressions and certain alterations of Mr. Kiddle's language in the passage in question which show that the Mahātmā never intended to borrow Mr. Kiddle's ideas and phrases, but that he rather intended to say something against them. Where the Spiritualistic lecturer says that "the world advances," the Mahātmā says that "world *will* advance" for the purpose of showing that this change in ideas must inevitably take place by reason of the great cyclic Law to which the Universe is subject.

¹ Nor is there in his now famous lecture at Lake Pleasant, for we have procured and carefully read it.—*Ed.*

Where the lecturer says that "the agency called Spiritualism is bringing a new set of ideas into the world," the Mahātmā emphatically affirms that "it is not physical phenomena" that he and his brother Occultists study, but "these universal ideas" which are as it were the noumena underlying all physical manifestations. The contrast between the Mahātmā's view of the relationship between these ideas and physical phenomena, and Mr. Kiddle's view is striking. The latter thinks that new ideas are being introduced into the world by physical phenomena, while the former thinks that new physical phenomena have begun to manifest themselves by reason of a change in these general ideas (noumena) which govern all physical phenomena in the objective world. It seems to me that even the word 'idea' has been used in two different senses by the Mahātmā and Mr. Kiddle respectively. The former means by the word 'idea' the original form or type according to which the objective manifestation takes place. And this is Plato's meaning which the Spiritualistic lecturer has not properly understood. Mr. Kiddle, on the other hand, uses the same word in the sense it is ordinarily used by English writers. And again, where the lecturer speaks of "the universal reign of law as the expression of the divine will," the Mahātmā postulates the existence of "an immutable Law" not depending on any divine will.

But "A Perplexed Reader," writing to *Light*, says

that the Mahātmā "has omitted inconvenient words and has so distorted the ideas he has borrowed as to divert them from their original intention to suit his own very different purpose". If there is a difference of words and ideas, where is the offence? Or is it a law of plagiarism that the person who borrows from another's writings should do so without making the slightest alteration in the passage extracted? If this "Perplexed Reader" were not also a perplexed thinker, he would have seen that these very alterations in the passage in question go very far to show that there was no intention on the Mahātmā's part to borrow Mr. Kiddle's inaccurate language and erroneous ideas, and that there is some misconception—some mistake in all this.

IV. It is quite evident from the wording of the passage under examination that there is "something wrong somewhere". Plato is introduced into it rather abruptly and the grammatical construction of the last sentence is by no means clear. Apparently there is no predicate which refers to "ideas larger," etc.

A part of the sentence is thus evidently lost... From the foregoing consideration it will be clearly seen that it could not have been the Mahātmā's intention to *borrow* anything from Mr. Kiddle's lecture. On the other hand, the Mahātmā's emphatic declaration immediately preceding the passage in question, that Adepts of the "Good Law" do not believe in any other but planetary spirits, his remarks regarding the

insufficiency and worthlessness of mere physical phenomena in unraveling the mysteries of the noumenal world, and his enunciation of the existence of an immutable law in no way subject to the divine will, the existence of which is assumed by the lecturer—all tend to show that the Mahātmā's real intention was rather to criticise than adopt the views of the Spiritualists as embodied in Mr. Kiddle's remarks. Therefore, from a careful perusal of the passage and its contents, any unbiassed reader will come to the conclusion that somebody must have greatly blundered over the said passage and will not be surprised to hear that it was unconsciously altered through the carelessness and ignorance of the Chela by whose instrumentality it was "precipitated". Such alterations, omissions and mistakes sometimes occur in the process of precipitation; and I now assert, I know it for certain *from an inspection of the original precipitation proof*, that such was the case with regard to the passage under discussion. I can assure the "Student" who throws out a suggestion in his letter to *Light* that there might be some deep psychological problem involved in the matter in dispute, that there is one, and that one is no other psychological mystery than the above indicated. The Mahātmā against whom the accusation has been brought will, of course, think it beneath his dignity to offer any explanation in his own defence to Mr. Kiddle or his followers and supporters. But I hope Mr. Sinnett will be good enough to place before the public as soon as possible

such explanation or information as he may be permitted by the Mahātmā concerned, with regard to the "Mystery" of the passage in question and the manner in which the letter which contains the said passage was received by him.

In conclusion I cannot but regret that some writers in the Spiritualistic organs and other English journals have thought it fit to drag our Mahātmā's name into public print without any necessity for doing so, using, moreover, such remarks and insinuations as are fully calculated to be highly offensive to those who have the good fortune to be personally known to, and acquainted with, the Mahātmā in question. The reproach contained in the *Protest* of 500 Hindu Theosophists—just published in *Light*—may be fairly applied to many a Spiritualist besides "G. W. M. D."

IV. THE VIRGIN OF THE WORLD

THIS is the title of a recent publication in English of some of the books generally attributed to Hermes. The first book, however, is the only part of the publication to which this heading is strictly appropriate. Two philosophical discourses named "Asclepios on Initiation" and "Definitions of Asclepios" and a few fragments of Hermetic philosophy are added to it, with two introductory Essays by Mr. Maitland and Dr. Kingsford, which are very interesting and instructive.

It will be a most interesting study for every occultist to compare the doctrines of the ancient Hermetic philosophy with the teachings of the Vedāntic and Buddhist system of religious thought. The famous books of Hermes seem to occupy with reference to the Egyptian religion the same position which the Upaniṣads occupy in Āryan religious literature. As there were forty-two provinces in ancient Egypt, and the body of Osiris was cut up into forty-two pieces, so there were forty-two books of Hermes. This, however, is not the number of the Vedas nor of their sub-divisions, as Mr. Maitland seems to suppose. This number is one of the characteristic features of Egyptian mysticism, and

veils a profound truth. It has nothing to do with the number of stars in any particular constellation, as some Egyptologists have imagined. So long as these investigators of the Egyptian religious doctrines erroneously believe that they are based on the signs of the Zodiac, the motions of the heavenly bodies, or the appearance of particular groups of stars, it will be impossible for them to penetrate into the profound depth of their meaning. These books of Hermes, if they can be discovered, will no doubt put an end to all such speculations. But Hermes said, "O Sacred Books of the Immortals, ye in whose pages my hand has recorded the remedies by which incorruptibility is conferred, remain for ever beyond the reach of destruction and of decay, invisible and concealed from all who frequent these regions, until the day shall come in which the ancient heaven shall bring forth instruments worthy of you, whom the Creator shall call souls."

This passage has a double meaning, applicable alike to the works of the Divine Hermes and the human Hermes; and the time is yet distant when the true Hermetic philosophy and the ancient civilization of Egypt will be revived in the natural course of evolutionary progress. The works that are now being published as Hermetic, however, do not appear to be the real Hermetic books which were so carefully concealed, though they contain fragments of true Hermetic philosophy coloured by Grecian thought and mythology, and *The Virgin of the World* was probably based on

some Egyptian compilation professing to be one of the Hermetic books. It is curious to notice that in it we find Isis informing Horus that the animal signs were placed in the Zodiac after those of human form, which would be the case when the equinoctial point was at the beginning of Gemini. Moreover, as will be shown further on, the main doctrines taught by the discourse are in harmony with the religious doctrines of ancient Egypt. But the prominent references to Zeus, Kronos, Ares, and Aphrodite unmistakably show that it can in no wise be considered as one of the ancient Hermetic books. In the context in which such names occur, Hermes would no doubt have referred to the corresponding deities of Egyptian mythology. By referring to page 9 it will be seen that the writer identifies Hermes with Mercury, which no ancient Egyptian properly acquainted with his ancient philosophy would have done. Hermes is "cosmic thought," as is stated in another part of this discourse. Strictly speaking, he is the universal mind in his divine aspect, and corresponds with Brahmā in the Hindu religion. Just as the Vedas and the Upaniṣads are said to have originated from Brahmā before the evolution of the manifested Cosmos, the Egyptians declared that their religious books originated from the Divine Hermes. Hermes, like Brahmā, is represented (p. 10) as taking part in creation. Such being the case, it will be erroneous from the Egyptian standpoint to represent him as Mercury. Hermes is further spoken of as the teacher and initiator

of Isis, though in one place the Great Master and the Ruler of the Universe addresses the mysterious goddess as the soul of his soul and the holy thought of his thought. Isis, the great cosmic Virgin, is the sixth principle of the Cosmos. She is the generative power of the Universe—not Prakṛti, but the productive energy of Prakṛti—and as such she generates ideation in the universal mind. Even in her human incarnation she cannot properly be placed in the position of a pupil of Hermes. The human incarnation of Isis is not the descent of soul into matter, as is the case with the rape of Persephone. Curiously enough in referring to this incarnation in her discourse to Horus, Isis speaks thus: "The Supreme God . . . at length accorded to earth for a season thy father Osiris and the great goddess Isis." Who then is this Isis who addresses Horus? Possibly the term Isis was applied to every incarnated soul, as the term Osiris was applied to every departed spirit in the later times of Egyptian history; but even this supposition will be found inconsistent with some portions of the dialogue under consideration. The author of the book, whoever he was, did not comprehend in its true light the mysterious connection between Isis and Hermes, and, trying to imitate the tone and form of the real Hermetic dialogues (which were repeated during the times of initiation only) according to the traditions current in his time, wrote the dialogue under review in the form in which it is now presented to the public. Before proceeding to notice in detail the

doctrines inculcated in this book it is necessary to point out that Persephone is not the Cosmic Virgin, and cannot be represented as such from the standpoint of Hermetic philosophy. This title is only applicable to the great Isis, and not to every soul which is encased in matter and which ultimately manifests itself as the spiritual intelligence of man. The Cosmic Virgin is the maiden mother of the manifested Universe and not the Virgin mother of incarnated Christ (Spirit).

Isis occupies in the cosmos or macrocosm the same position which the soul that has fallen into the clutches of matter occupies in the microcosm. Isis is the mother of the Logos manifested in the Cosmos, as the soul is the Virgin mother of the regenerated spirit; Isis is the mother of Adonais, while the incarnated soul is the mother of Christ: but the former alone is entitled to be called the Cosmic Virgin, and not the latter. In our humble opinion the Cosmic Virgin is not the Virgin manifested in the Cosmos, but the Virgin mother of the Cosmos. The contrast is not between the Virgin of the Cosmos and the "perpetual maid of heaven," but between the macrocosmic Virgin and the microcosmic Virgin. Consequently in the discourse of the Cosmic Virgin to her divine son, we find a general account of cosmic evolution, and not a mere description of the descent of soul into matter. It must be remembered in this connection that the human incarnations of Isis and Osiris should not be taken as mere allegorical representations of the incarnations of spirit. They were

placed on quite a different footing by the ancient Egyptian writers; and in this very discourse Isis said that she would not and dared not "recount *this* nativity" and "declare the origin" of the race of Horus. The so-called myth of Osiris is the great central mystery of Egyptian occultism, and has probably a closer relation with the appearance of Buddha than has usually been imagined. It must further be stated here that the Greek God Dionysos has no proper position to occupy in the Egyptian Pantheon. Dr. Kingsford speaks of the "incarnation, martyrdom, and resuscitation of Dionysos Zagreus" in the essay prefixed to this book. She says that Dionysos was intended to mean the spirit, and adds further on that "the spirit of Dionysos was regarded as of a specially divine genesis, being the son of Zeus by the immaculate Maiden Kore-Persephoneia. . . ." If so, Dionysos is the seventh principle in man, the Logos that manifests itself in the microcosm. But we are informed at the end of the essay that "Osiris is the microcosmic sun, the counterpart in the human system of the macrocosmic Dionysos or Son of God". This latter statement is clearly inconsistent with what has gone before, and is evidently the result of misconception—a misconception generally prevalent in the minds of the Western Hermetic students regarding the real position of Osiris—and an attempt to interpret the higher mysteries of the Egyptian religion by the mythological fables of ancient Greece, which, though elegant and refined in form, bear

no comparison whatever to the allegories of the ancient Egyptian writers in point of occult significance.

There is a remarkable passage on page 34 of the book under consideration which, if closely examined, may throw some light on the subject. Isis informs Horus that "on high dwell two ministers of the Universal Providence; one is the guardian of the Souls, the other is their conductor, who sends them forth and ordains for them bodies. The first minister guards them, the second releases or binds them, according to the Will of God". The real position and duties of Osiris may perhaps be gathered from this significant paragraph. It will not be very difficult to ascertain the name of the other minister, who has a nearer relationship with the Macrocosmic Sun than Dionysos, from a careful examination of the religious doctrine of Egypt. But as it is the business of the Sphinx to propose riddles, not to solve difficulties on such subjects, nothing more can be said in this connection. Buddha and Śaṅkarācārya may perhaps disclose the real mystery of these two ministers.

II

Most of the important doctrines explained to Horus by his divine mother are in perfect harmony with the corresponding teachings of Hinduism and Buddhism, as will be seen from the following explanations. Horus represents the regenerated spirit of man, and it is to

him that the Cosmic Virgin unveils herself and reveals the mysteries of human existence.

In tracing the evolution of the physical man Isis commences by giving an account of the origin of the spiritual monad. God, it would appear, took out of himself such essence as was necessary, and "mingling it with an intellectual flame, he combined with these other materials in unknown ways; and having, by the use of secret formulae, brought about the union of these principles, he endowed the universal combination with motion. Gradually in the midst of the protoplasm glittered a substance more subtle, purer and more limpid than the elements from which it was generated.... He called it *self-consciousness*". The name given to it is very appropriate; it is the germ of prajñā, the point of consciousness, the monad which ultimately evolutes the human being. This explanation is similar to that given by alchemists of the composition of the philosopher's stone. Mercury, described as Śivavīryam by the Hindus, is considered by the alchemists as the essence of God, while the intellectual flame is represented by sulphur. The mysterious salt is the other material spoken of in the above account, and it is the azoth that begins to glitter in the composition. This has a profound significance, and gives a clue to the solution of that perplexing problem—the nature and origin of consciousness. Isis points out that myriads of souls were thus formed, and that they were authorized to take part in the creation of the material world and

the lower organisms, and were forbidden to transgress certain limits assigned to their action. In course of time, however, they rebelled, and with a view of imprisoning them in organisms and thereby curtailing their power and freedom, God convened a meeting of the celestials and asked them "What they could bestow upon the race about to be born?" Sun, Moon, Kronos (Saturn), Zeus (Jupiter), Aries (Mars), Aphrodite (Venus), and Hermes (Mercury) responded to this call and promised to invest human nature with various qualities, intellectual and emotional, good and bad, peculiarly appertaining to the nature of the donors; and Hermes constructed organisms out of the existing material for the monads to inhabit. Thus was formed the man before his fall. With the transition from simple self-consciousness to the plane of mind and its varied activities there came then a change of Upādhi also, from a mere centre of force to an astral body. While the spiritual monad is evolved by God himself, the latter Upādhi is represented as the work of subordinate powers.

There yet remained one more step of descent into matter. The souls perceived the change in their condition and bewailed their fate; hopes of a better and happier future were held out to them, and it was further pointed out that if any of them should merit reproach they would be made to inhabit abodes destined to them in *mortal organisms*. In spite of this warning the necessity for a further degradation of the spiritual monad

soon arose. Man as an astral being was in a transition stage; and this condition was not such as could be permanently maintained. Mental faculties acting without any weight of responsibility to control and restrain their action were likely to produce evil results. The genius of the law of Karma soon arose from the earth in the form of Momos and pointed out to Hermes the evil results which would inevitably follow if mankind were allowed to remain in their then condition. The wisdom of Hermes soon designed "a mysterious instrument, a measure inflexible and inviolable, to which everything would be subject from birth even to final destruction," and which would be the bond of created entities—in short the inexorable law of Karma. The instrument forthwith operated, it would seem, as Karmic impulses were already being generated by man, owing to the very mental qualities with which he was invested; and the consequence was that souls were incorporated. This is the summary of the account given by Isis of the gradual evolution of the Kāraṇa Śarīra, Sūkṣma Śarīra, and Sthūla Śarīra. The constitution of these Upādhis was also to a certain extent indicated, as well as the nature of the conscious energy and its functions manifested in and through the said Upādhis. This three-fold division of a human being is in agreement with the Vedāntic classification of the various Upādhis.

Man thus left encased in matter, with his internal light altogether clouded and obscured, began to grope in the dark. Without a guide, a teacher and enlightener,

mankind developed tendencies which if left unchecked would lead to a still lower level of existence. Confusion and discord reigned supreme. Even the very elements could not bear the presence of man. Loud were the complaints made by the whole of nature against the moral and spiritual chaos that prevailed. It was found that if left to himself man would be unable to liberate his soul from the trammels of matter and attain to salvation. As long as he remained a trinity merely he would remain an imperfect being. It was necessary to convert this trinity into a quaternary. This condition of things had to be remedied, and "forthwith God filled the Universe with His divine voice: 'Go,' said He, 'Sacred offspring, worthy of your father's greatness; seek not to change anything, nor refuse to my creatures your ministry.'"

This divine Voice is the Logos—the seventh principle in man. He is the real Īśvara of the Vedāntins and the Saviour of mankind. Through Him alone can salvation and immortality be secured by man; and the end and object of all initiation is to ascertain His attributes and connection with humanity, realize His sacred presence in every human heart, and discover the means of transferring man's higher individuality, purified and ennobled by the virtuous Karma of a series of incarnations, to His feet as the most sacred offering which a human being can bestow.

God further found necessary to send a teacher and a ruler to mankind to disclose to them the laws of initiation

and point out the way to reach their own Logos. In spite of the presence of Ātmā in his own heart, man might remain ignorant of that sacred presence unless the veil of ignorance were removed from his eyes by a spiritual teacher. To meet this necessity God thought of sending down into the world such a teacher and made the following promise to the complaining elements:

"I will send an *efflux* of myself, a pure being who shall investigate all your actions, who shall be the dreadful and incorruptible judge of the living: and sovereign justice shall extend its reign even into the shades beneath the earth. Thus shall every man receive his merited deserts."

This efflux manifested itself as Osiris and his female counterpart Isis.

This nativity, the mystery of which Isis refuses to disclose even to Horus, does not however correspond with the nativity of Christ.

Christ or Christos is the divine voice or Logos which manifests itself in every man; and the Biblical narrative of Christ is an allegorical account of every regenerated spirit generally. It is not the historical value of the Biblical account which is of importance to mankind in general, but its philosophical and occult significance, as asserted by Dr. Kingsford and Mr. Maitland. But it will be erroneous to look upon the incarnation of Buddha or this nativity of Osiris and Isis in the same light as that of Christ. Every Buddha

is also a Christ; but every Christ is not a Buddha. Every man may become a Christ and identify himself with Christ, but it is not open to every man to develop into a Buddha. Every true Kabalist knows that Christ is the son of man, and not Ennoia, the *primitive man*; or to express the same thing in Buddhist phraseology, Christ is a Bodhisattva and not a Buddha. It must be remembered that by the term Christ I do not refer to any particular individual, but to the spiritual entity with reference to which the Bible account has its philosophical importance. The germ of a Bodhisattva is in every man, but not the germ of a Buddha; hence when a Buddha is evolved by humanity in the course of its progress, his appearance will become a matter of historical importance. The appearance of Osiris was placed on the same footing, and was looked upon in the same light by Egyptian initiates. Osiris is not the Logos, but is something higher than the Logos. The Logos itself has a soul and a spirit as everything else has which is manifested; and there is nothing unreasonable in supposing that Osiris or Buddha may represent the soul of the Logos. The Sphinx cannot and dare not say anything more on the subject. The reader may find a very interesting and instructive commentary on the foregoing statements in the second volume of *Isis Unveiled*.

We will now proceed with the account of Isis. The reign of order and justice commenced with the appearance of Isis and Osiris; who, amongst other

things, taught mankind the secrets of the occult science and the sacred mysteries of initiation. After finishing their work on earth the divine couple were recalled by "the inhabitants of heaven".

After having thus traced the descent of spirit into matter and indicated the provision made by God for securing salvation to mankind, Isis proceeds to give replies to certain questions put to her by Horus. The first question relates to royal or kingly souls. The royalty herein referred to is spiritual royalty. Now and then men like Buddha, Śaṅkarācārya, Christ, Zoroaster and others have appeared on earth as spiritual leaders and rulers of mankind. In point of spiritual development and elevation of moral character they stand at such an enormous height above the level of ordinary humanity as to lead mankind into the belief that they are special incarnation of divinity. This popular belief, however, is not endorsed by Isis, whose way of accounting for the appearance of such men is in harmony with the teachings of occult science. She explains to Horus that "souls destined to reign upon the earth descend thither for two causes. There are those who in former lives have lived blameless, and who merit apotheosis; for such as these royalty is a preparation for the divine state. Again there are holy souls, who for some slight infringement of the interior and divine Law receive in royalty a penance whereby the suffering and shame of incarnation are mitigated. The condition of these in taking a body resembles not that of others; they are

as blessed as when they were free". If this reply of Isis is properly understood and accepted by the generality of people, sectarian strife, discord and bigotry will almost cease to exist.

There are differences, it would appear, among these royal souls, due to the nature of the angels and genii who assist them. The reader must not suppose that these powers are elementals; they are the guardians of the souls, whose teaching and guidance the souls follow, as declared by Isis. It is this guardian angel of the soul which is the Kwan-yin of the Buddhists and the Citkalā of the Hindus.

"How are souls born male or female?" asks Horus; and Isis answers thus: "There are not among them either males or females: this distinction exists only between bodies, and not between incorporeal beings. But some are more energetic, some are gentler, and this belongs to the air in which all things are formed. For an airy body envelopes the soul . . ." It is hardly necessary to state that the air referred to is the anima mundi—astral light—and that the airy body is the astral body of man. The next question answered by Isis relates to the various degrees of spiritual enlightenment seen amongst men.

The real difference between a man who has spiritual vision and discernment, and another who does not possess these faculties, is not to be found in the inmost nature of the soul; just as the clearness of

vision depends, not on the latent perceptive faculty of the soul or mind, but upon the nature of the organ of vision and the tunics in which it is enveloped, the clearness of spiritual or clairvoyant perception depends, not on the nature of the soul, but on the condition and nature of the Upādhis in which it is placed.

Consequently all progressive development consists in the improvement of the Upādhis; the soul is perfect from the beginning and undergoes no alteration during the course of evolution.

Isis further proceeds to point out differences in national character, physical, intellectual and spiritual, amongst the various races inhabiting the globe, and attributes them to differences in climate and position of their respective countries. The reference to the constellation Ursa Major has a mystic significance. The ancient Hindus calculated the period of one of their secret cycles with reference to the movements of the stars composing this constellation; and this cycle is related to the evolution of the various races and subraces on the globe.

Speaking of the agencies which cause "in living men during long maladies an alteration of discernment 'of reason' even of the soul itself," Isis points out "that the soul has affinity with certain elements and aversion for others" and that therefore its functions are sometimes disturbed and affected by changes in either the physical or astral body.

The last chapter of the treatise under review contains the explanations of Isis regarding existence in Devachan or Svarga.

Isis says that there are several regions between the earth and heaven, adapted to varying degrees of spiritual development, wherein "dwell the souls who are freed from bodies and those who have not yet been incorporated". These regions correspond to the various Devalokams (each Devagana has a separate *loka*) spoken of in Hindu books, and the *rūpa* and *arūpa lokas* of the Buddhists. The two mysterious ministers alluded to in the former part of this article exercise, it would seem, certain powers of supervision and control over the condition of the various Devachanis in accordance with the law of Karma. This law is set in motion by two energies described as memory and experience. The former "directs in nature the preservation and maintenance of all the original types appointed in Heaven". This refers to the record of Karma preserved in astral light. "The function of Experience is to provide every soul descending into generation with a body appropriate thereto." It is needless to state that this is a correct rationale of the doctrine of Karma from the Buddhist and the Hindu standpoint.

There is nothing more of importance to consider in this treatise. The points already referred to show that the same main doctrines of the ancient wisdom religion underlie every exoteric creed whether ancient or modern. It is not true, as Mr. Herbert Spencer says, that the

only statement with reference to which all the nations in the world agree in the matter of religious belief is that there is an unknown and unknowable Power in the universe. The religious history of humanity shows that there are a number of doctrines regarding the origin, the nature and the ultimate destiny of the human soul, highly philosophical and complicated, which form the foundation of every exoteric religion and which have influenced the religious sentiments of mankind from time immemorial. How are we to account for these beliefs? Have they any inherent special connection with human nature as it is? Or are they the outcome of a divine revelation during the infancy of the human race, whose influence has survived the vicissitudes of so many civilizations? If neither of these hypotheses is acceptable to the mind of a modern agnostic, can the evolution of these doctrines from a few simple ideas which are common to humanity in general be explained by the operation of known psychological laws? If the latter hypothesis is tenable, how is it that these products of human experience have not undergone any change in spite of great improvements in material civilization and mental culture?

It is not my object now to undertake a discussion of the above subject and offer my own solutions of the problem; I only beg to call the reader's attention to this important question, and request him not to lose sight of it in meditating on the origin and history of religious belief amongst mankind, and the possibility of

discovering a common platform on which the followers of the various religions on the globe may take up their stand with brotherly love and affection, forgetting the petty differences of their exoteric dogmatic creeds. The Sphinx does not think it necessary to say anything about the contents of the short philosophical dissertations appended to *The Virgin of the World* as they seem to contain more of Grecian speculation than of Egyptian wisdom.

V. "THE VIRGIN OF THE WORLD"

To the Editor of "The Theosophist"

IN your remarks upon my prefatory essay to *The Virgin of the World*, you assert that Persephone cannot be regarded as the Kosmic Virgin. She was, however, undoubtedly so regarded by all the neo-Platonic school, whose exponent, Thomas Taylor, in his *Dissertation of the Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries*, quotes largely from Greek Hermetic authors to prove this very point. I wish that my reviewer, before committing himself to the statement he has made on page 97 of the November number of *The Theosophist*, had made himself familiar with this standard work, and also with certain passages of Proclus, Olympiodorus, the Orphic hymns, Claudian, Apuleias, and other accredited and classic authorities, from all of which it is abundantly clear that the mythos of the rape of Persephone, the theme of the Mysteries, represented the descent into Matter, or Generation, of the Soul, and that the title "Kore Kosmou" was throughout the whole mythos attributed to Persephone, the daughter of Demeter or supermundane Intelligence.

Isis never represented the soul or sixth Principle (third) of the universe, but the eighth sphere; not properly a Principle, but an influence. Passages from the best authors are cited in my essay to prove this fact, and many more can be adduced. If, as is certain, Isis was identified with the Moon, and wore as an ensign the double horns of Selene, it is placed beyond doubt that she symbolised the Occult Power of Increase and Decrease, Good and Evil, and cannot possibly, therefore, be identified with the Soul whom she rejoices or afflicts according to an inflexible law. I cannot in the least understand your reviewer's reference to the *Egyptian* pantheon in connection with Dionysos-Zagreus. No pretence is made in my essay or elsewhere in the work, that Dionysos occupied such a place, although, of course, he had his correspondence therein. But the whole of my exposition follows the *Greek* Mysteries, and deals with their presentations. That Dionysos-Zagreus personified in these Mysteries the seventh Principle (Hermetically, the Fourth) in the universe—that is—the Divine and vitalizing Spirit, is no surmise or assumption of mine, but an undoubted fact, placed beyond controversy by the authorities already mentioned. This Dionysos-Zagreus, (*Dionusos Chthonios*) the Mystic Dionysos, must not be confounded with the later god, identical with Bacchus, the son of Semele. I will only add that there is no such inconsistency in my essay as your reviewer charges on me. Dionysos represents the Spirit or Seventh Principle (Fourth) whether

macrocosmically or microcosmically, and, as such, has been identified with Osiris, the Egyptian presentation of the same Principle. And Persephone is alike, in both aspects, greater and lesser, the Soul. But the Greek Mysteries dealt ostensibly with the *macrocosmic* presentation of the divine drama, and with its individual meaning by implication only. Hence Persephone is generally taken to signify the Soul in her larger acceptance as “Kore Kosmou” and hence also, her son Dionysos represents rather the son of God in the World than the son of God in Man.

And, in this connection, in order further to elucidate the function and position of Isis in the macrocosm as it is expounded by Hermetists and neo-Platonists, I may add that her counter-partial analogy in the microcosm, or individual, is found in the Genius,—the guardian angel of Christian Theosophy. This Genius is good or bad, helpful or hindering, bright or dark, favorable or hostile, according to the state of grace (Karma) which the Soul has acquired. The Genius sheds upon the Soul the light derived from her own celestial Sun. (See pp. 88 and 89 of the *Perfect Way*.)

In the Discourse accompanying the allegory of the “Virgin of the World,” I understand Isis to represent the Illuminatrix or Revealer; Osiris, the Saviour or Redeeming Principle; and Horus, the Initiate—offspring of a good “Karma” or state of Grace, and Divine Influx, by which parentage is exactly described the generation of every true “Jesus”.

I must content myself with a simple expression of dissent from your reviewer's appreciation of the relation existing between the Mysteries of Egyptian and of Grecian origin. No doubt I feel somewhat strongly on this point, because my own instruction and illumination in mystic doctrine have been obtained chiefly through the splendid arcana which I cannot, without regret, find characterised by your reviewer in a sentence evidently intended to disparage them, as "mythological fables".

Christmas, 1885.

ANNA KINGSFORD, M.D., F.T.S.

SIR,—In thanking you for the notice of this book in the November *Theosophist*, I wish to correct a misapprehension caused by your reviewer's statement that the books now being published do not appear to be the real Hermetic books. The misapprehension in question consists in the impression that this statement is made in contradiction of the position taken up by me. Whereas, the fact is it correctly describes that position, the only conclusion to which I have committed myself in the point being "that the doctrine contained in the Hermetic books is in part, at least, a survival from the times of ancient Egypt, and therein really Hermetic". I have not said a word to imply that I considered them the work of Trismegistus himself, or that the term Hermetic

meant other than a certain school or system of doctrine, originating, so far as the Western World is concerned, in Egypt, and bearing the name of Hermes Trismegistus, a name which has long been, for the Western World, a synonym for the intellectual principle.

Your reviewer's expression "misconception generally prevalent in the minds of the Western Hermetists" seems to me unfortunate as constituting an affirmation that the "Western Hermetists" are not rightly instructed concerning their own doctrine. Whereas all that your reviewer can possibly be in a position to affirm is that there is a divergency of view between his system and that of the West. That there may be and probably is such a divergency we "Western Hermetists" are quite ready to admit. But we are not ready to admit that the error, if any, lies with us. Rather do we hold, and believe, that the revival of occult knowledge now in progress will some day demonstrate, that the Western system represents ranges of perception, which the Eastern—at least as expounded in the pages of the *Theosophist*—has yet to attain.

EDWARD MAITLAND

P.S.—Allow me to state, in justice to my fellow-editor and myself that the responsibility for the defective title-page and table of contents does not rest with us, these not having been submitted to us prior to publication.

SIR,—Kindly permit me to say a few words with reference to the two letters sent by Dr. Kingsford and Mr. Maitland in connection with my review of the “*Virgin of the World*”.

If my critics had borne in mind that the subject-matter of my review was the *Virgin of the World* and not their introductory essays on Hellenic mysteries, they would no doubt have refrained from making all the irrelevant statements which their letters contain. There were but two specific references to these introductory essays in my article. One of my objections remains altogether unanswered, and the explanation given with reference to the other throws no additional light on the real question at issue as the following remarks will show.

The *Virgin of the World* was published though not as a genuine work of Hermes himself, yet as a treatise on Egyptian Mysteries. In reviewing it, therefore, I found it necessary to examine it by the light of the Hermetic science and not by that of Grecian philosophy. With reference to the title of the Hermetic Fragment under consideration, I made the following statement in my article—“... it is necessary to point out that Persephone is not the Cosmic Virgin and cannot be represented as such *from the standpoint of Hermetic philosophy*”. Dr. Kingsford objects to this statement on the authority of various writers *on Grecian philosophy*. If Grecian writers have bestowed this title on Persephone, it is no proof whatever that

Egyptian writers did the same thing. Persephone might be the Kore Kosmou of the Hellenic mysteries, but she was not the cosmic Virgin of the Egyptians. It will even be difficult to find the corresponding goddess of the Egyptian Pantheon. It cannot even be contended that the *Virgin of the World* not being a genuine Egyptian book, but a work written by some Grecian author, to some extent according to Egyptian models, the title in question might have been used according to the conception of Grecian writers in general. For, under such a supposition, there would be no connection whatever between the contents of the book and the title chosen for it. There is no special reference whatsoever to Persephone or any corresponding goddess in the treatise as we find it at present. The only female deity who figures prominently in it is Isis. Under these circumstances it would have been extremely absurd on my part if I had put on the title in question the construction now contended for by my critic and tried to force into the teachings of Isis by means of strained interpretations and far-fetched analogies any ideas relating to the position of Persephoneia in Grecian Mysteries. I beg to state further that the description, when judged by itself and not in connection with the usage of any particular class of writers, is more appropriate to the Egyptian Isis than to the Grecian Persephone.

It is my humble opinion that my critic has misconceived the position of the Egyptian Isis. What

is really meant by saying that Isis represented "the Eighth sphere" it is not easy to understand. She further says that Isis is not a *principle* but an *influence*. In spite of my critics' assurance to the contrary, I am unable to find any authority for these assertions in her introductory essay. Though the word principle is now rejected as inapplicable, yet I find in p. 27 of the said essay that Isis is "a *principle*" represented by the Kabbalists under the figure of Malcuth or the Moon. The reason assigned for disproving my statement that Isis represented the 6th principle of the Cosmos is stated as follows: "If, as is certain, Isis was identified with the moon, and wore as an ensign the double horns of Selene, it is placed beyond doubt that she symbolized the occult power of Increase and Decrease, Good and Evil, and cannot possibly therefore be identified with the soul whom she rejoices and afflicts according to an inflexible Law." To begin with, what proof is there that Isis was identified with the moon by Egyptian writers? There is no use in saying that Grecian writers identified her with Diana or Artemis. When the question whether Grecian writers rightly or wrongly interpreted the Hermetic doctrine of ancient Egypt is under discussion, it is improper solely to rely on their statements. The sign of the Crescent is no proof that Isis represents the moon. This symbol, which has a profound significance to every true occultist, is associated with a very large number of male and female deities in the Hindu religious philosophy; but not one of

them is on that account ever confounded with the moon. Isis has not got all the attributes of Diana or Artemis. She was never represented as a huntress for instance with a bow and arrows in her hands. Another Egyptian goddess—the Divine Neith—had these attributes. But Neith was clearly a Solar Deity in the Egyptian doctrine. It would be extremely unsafe for a student of comparative mythology to infer the identity of two deities belonging to the mystical conceptions of two very different nationalities from the mere fact that they have some similar attributes. Even admitting that the moon was a symbol of Isis, how does it follow from it that Isis was considered by the Egyptians as "the occult power of increase and decrease, good and evil"? The description itself conveys no definite idea, and there is no evidence to show that the Egyptians attached any such significance to the moon in their writings. Even supposing that the chain of inference is so far sound and that this influence called Isis rejoices and afflicts the soul, how is it shown thereby that Isis is not the Cosmic soul or the 6th principle of the Universe? Does Isis or the law of Karma afflict and rejoice the 6th principle or the spiritual intelligence of the Cosmos? If it does, it requires no doubt a "range of perception" which the Eastern system "has yet to attain" to comprehend the meaning of this statement. If it does not, the whole argument is simply worthless. The law of Karma and its influence is as much a manifestation of the energies of the Cosmic 6th principle as every other in all the

Universe; and the rejoicings and sufferings of the soul encased in matter do not disprove the real genuine claims of Isis to be regarded as the spiritual soul of the Cosmos.

I did not say and did not mean to insinuate in my articles that Dr. Kingsford made any incorrect statements as regards Dionysos Zagreus as is now alleged. I simply pointed out in my article that Dionysos as contrasted with Osiris had no place in the Egyptian Pantheon to preclude the possibility of any misconception that might otherwise arise regarding the real position of Osiris from certain passages in the introductory essay: and I must further state now that if Osiris is to be left out of account Dionysos has no correspondence in the Egyptian Pantheon.

The inconsistency pointed out in my article is in no way removed by the explanation now given. I beg to call the reader's attention to the following passages in the introductory essay in this connection.

1. "... The incarnation, martyrdom, and resuscitation of Dionysos Zagreus."

2. "For, Osiris is the *microcosmic* sun, the counterpart in the human system of the *macrocosmic* Dionysos or Son of God. So that these authors who confound Isis with Demeter, equally and quite comprehensibly confound Osiris with Dionysos..."

"The Hermetic books admit three expressions of Deity; first, the supreme, abstract, and infinite God eternally self-subsistent and unmanifest; secondly, the

only Begotten, the manifestation of Deity in the universe; thirdly, God in man, the redeemer, or Osiris."

Comparing these various statements with each other we find Dionysos, described as the macrocosmic sun or the only Begotten Son of God manifested in the Universe, undergoing incarnation, martyrdom and resuscitation as if he were the incarnated spirit. It is now asserted that Dionysos represents the spirit or 7th principle, whether *macrocosmically* or *microcosmically*. If so, he is identical with Osiris as is virtually admitted. Why then was it stated in the introductory essay that some authors confounded Dionysos with Osiris and Isis with Demeter? If one and the same principle is alike the Logos manifested in the Cosmos and the Logos manifested in man, what foundation is there for the *three* expressions of Deity above described? If the Greek Mysteries dealt ostensibly with the *macrocosmic* presentation of the Divine Drama, and with its individual meaning by implication only as is now asserted, this statement is altogether at variance with the following statements in the introductory essay: "The Greek Mysteries dealt *only with two subjects*, the first being the Drama of the rape and restoration of Persephone; the second that of the incarnation, martyrdom and resuscitation of Dionysos Zagreus." It cannot, surely, be contended that these form the subject-matter of the macrocosmic presentation of the Divine Drama; and we are further informed that the Hellenic Mysteries dealt *only* with these two subjects.

If so, the presentation is pre-eminently if not entirely microcosmic and the macrocosmic position assigned to Dionysos and the difference pointed out between him and Osiris in the introductory essay by reason of such position, is out of place in the Grecian mysteries. Any number of difficulties may be pointed out in the position assumed by Dr. Kingsford, and the explanation now offered is likely to make matters worse.

As regards the guardian angel of Christian Theosophy, I find it necessary to state that this guardian angel is not the counterpart of Isis. If Isis is not a principle but a mere influence as stated by my critic, it is difficult to understand how this influence can discharge the duties assigned to, and be invested with, the attributes of a guardian angel in the Christian doctrine.

With reference to Dr. Kingsford's letter I have only to state further that I did not use the expression cited for the purpose of disparaging the Grecian mystical doctrines. According to ordinary usage the expression in question was the only one which I could use to indicate that part of the Grecian literature which dealt with mystical and occult subjects. But my convictions are equally strong that there is a greater depth of occult significance in the allegorical fables of Egypt than in those of Greece, and that it will be extremely unjust to the Egyptian doctrine to interpret it in accordance with Hellenic notions.

Mr. Maitland's letter requires but very few words in reply. He makes no attempt to justify his assertion

that the number of the Vedas or their sub-divisions is 42, but raises a discussion which is altogether irrelevant and unnecessary. I do not see how he can hold me responsible for any misapprehension that might have arisen from his own words. Mr. Maitland seems to think that I have no right whatever to speak of the misconceptions regarding the Hermetic doctrine that seem to exist in the minds of the so-called "Western Hermetists," because the said doctrine is "their own doctrine," and it must therefore be presumed that they know all about it. If, by Hermetic doctrine Mr. Maitland simply means the doctrine now professed by the so-called "Western Hermetists" of the present day, there is some reason for the assertion made. But the expression is generally applied to the occult philosophy and the mystical doctrines of the ancient Egyptians, and when I spoke of the misconceptions regarding the Hermetic doctrine in my review, I had this system of philosophy in view and not any other doctrine to which my critic might apply the expression.

But if Mr. Maitland goes to the length of saying that the Hermetic doctrine of the ancient Egyptians can be claimed by the Western Hermetists "as their doctrine," I am bound to reject such a claim as simply absurd. The real Hermetic doctrine is far more closely connected with the Eastern systems of occult science than with the Western. A considerable portion of it has long ago disappeared from the West entirely. The old Hermetic doctrine dealt with various systems of

initiation. There were Mysteries of Isis, of Osiris, of Hermes, of Neith, of Amen-ra and various others divided into distinct groups. A few of the doctrines only belonging to the Mysteries of Isis and Osiris came to the West through Hebrew, Grecian and other sources considerably modified. The other parts of the true Hermetic doctrine were altogether lost to the West.

Under such circumstances it is highly desirable that "Western Hermetists" should be a little more tolerant and discreet. Mr. Maitland's reference to *The Theosophist* is entirely out of place in the present discussion. I must confess that I have as yet seen very little of this Western wisdom which is somewhere stored up in Europe. Possibly it has very wide ranges of perception not yet attained by the Eastern system as Mr. Maitland is pleased to state.

But as these ranges of perception have very little to do with the *Virgin of the World* or my review of the same, or with the introductory essays appended to it, it is unnecessary to enter into any controversy with Mr. Maitland on this subject.

THE SOLAR SPHINX

VI. THE IDYLL OF THE WHITE LOTUS

THE interesting story published under the title above mentioned has already attracted considerable attention. It is instructive in more ways than one. It truly depicts the Egyptian faith and the Egyptian priesthood, when their religion had already begun to lose its purity and degenerate into a system of Tantric worship contaminated and defiled by black magic, unscrupulously used for selfish and immoral purposes. It is probably also a true story. Sensa is represented to be the last great hierophant of Egypt. Just as a tree leaves its seed to develop into a similar tree, even if it should perish completely, so does every great religion seem to leave its life and energy in one or more great adepts destined to preserve its wisdom and revive its growth at some future time when the cycle of evolution tends in the course of its revolution, to bring about the desired result. The grand old religion of Chemi is destined to reappear on this planet in a higher and nobler form when the appointed time arrives, and there is nothing unreasonable in the supposition that the Sensa of our story is probably now a very high adept, who is waiting to carry out the commands of the Lady of the

White Lotus. Apart from these speculations, however, the story in question has a very noble lesson to teach. In its allegorical aspect it describes the trials and the difficulties of a neophyte. It is not easy, however, for the ordinary reader to remove the veil of allegory and clearly understand its teachings. It is to help such readers that I proceed to give the following explanation of the characters that appear in the story in question and the events therein related.

(1) *Sensa*, the hero of the story, is intended to represent the human soul.

It is the Kūṭastha Caitanyam, or the germ of Prajñā, in which the individuality of the human being is preserved. It corresponds with the higher and permanent element in the 5th principle of man. It is the ego or the self of embodied existence.

(2) *Seboua*, the gardner, is intuition. "They cannot make a phantom of me," declares *Seboua*; and in saying so this unsophisticated but honest rustic truly reveals his own mystery.

(3) *Agdmahd*, *Kamen-Baka* and the nine other high priests of the temple, who are the devoted servants of the dark goddess whom they worship, represent respectively the following entities:

- | | | | | |
|-------------------|----|----|----|------------|
| (1) <i>Kāma</i> | .. | .. | .. | Desire. |
| (2) <i>Krodha</i> | .. | .. | .. | Anger. |
| (3) <i>Lobha</i> | .. | .. | .. | Cupidity. |
| (4) <i>Moha</i> | .. | .. | .. | Ignorance. |
| (5) <i>Mada</i> | .. | .. | .. | Arrogance. |

(6) *Mātsarya* Jealousy.

(7, 8, 9, 10 and 11) .. The five Senses and their pleasures.

(4) The female characters that figure in the story are the following:

(1) The dark and mysterious goddess worshipped by the priests;

(2) The young girl who played with *Sensa*;

(3) The grown up girl met by him in the City;

(4) And lastly, the Lady of the White Lotus.

It must be noticed here that the 2nd and the 3rd are identical. Speaking of the fair woman of the City, whom he met apparently for the first time, *Sensa* says that as he gazed into her tender eyes it seemed to him that he knew her well and that her charms were familiar to him. It is clear from this statement that this lady is no other than the young girl who ran about the temple with him.

Prakṛti, say the Hindu philosophers, has three qualities, *Satva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. The last of these qualities is connected with the grosser pleasures and passions experienced in *Śthūlaśarīra*. *Rajoguṇa* is the cause of the restless activity of the mind, while *Satvaguṇa* is intimately associated with the spiritual intelligence of man, and with his higher and nobler aspirations. *Māyā*, then, makes its appearance in this story in three distinct forms. It is *Vidyā*, a spiritual intelligence, which is represented by the Lady of the White Lotus. It is the *Kwan-yin* and the *Prajñā* of

the Buddhist writers. She represents the light or the aura of the Logos, which is wisdom, and she is the source of the current of conscious life or Caitanyam. The young girl above referred to is the Mind of man, and it is by her that Sensa is led gradually into the presence of the dark goddess, set up in the holy of the holies for adoration by the priesthood whom we have above described.

The dark goddess herself is Avidyā. It is the dark side of human Nature. It derives its life and energy from the passions and desires of the human soul. The ray of life and wisdom, which originally emanated from the Logos and which has acquired a distinct individuality of its own when the process of differentiation has set in, is capable of being transformed more or less entirely into this veritable Kālī, if the light of the Logos is altogether excluded by the bad Karma of the human being, if the voice of intuition is unheard and unnoticed, and if the man lives simply for the purpose of gratifying his own passions and desires.

If these remarks are kept in mind, the meaning of the story will become clear. It is not my object now to write an exhaustive commentary. I shall only notice some of the important incidents and their significance.

Look upon Sensa as a human being, who, after running his course through several incarnations, and after having passed through a considerable amount of spiritual training, is born again in this world with his spiritual powers of perception greatly developed, and

prepared to become a neophyte at a very early stage in his career. As soon as he enters into the physical body, he is placed under the charge of the five Senses and the six Emotions above enumerated, who have it as their place of residence. The human Soul is first placed under the guidance of his own intuition, the simple and honest gardener of the temple, for whom the High Priests seem to have no respect or affection, and, when it has not yet lost its original purity, gets a glimpse of its spiritual intelligence, the Lady of the White Lotus. The priests, however, are determined that no opportunity should be given for the intuition to work, and they therefore remove the child from its guardianship and introduce him to their own dark goddess, the goddess of human passions. The very sight of this deity is found repulsive to the human soul at first. The proposed transfer of human consciousness and human attachment from the spiritual plane to the physical plane is too abrupt and premature to succeed. The priests failed in their first attempt and began to devise their plans for a second effort in the same direction.

Before proceeding further I must draw the reader's attention to the real meaning of the Lotus tank in the garden. Sahasrāra Chakram in the brain is often spoken of as a Lotus Tank in the Hindu mystical books. The "sweet sounding water" of this tank is described as *amṛtam* or nectar. See p. 349 of the second volume of *Isis Unveiled* for further hints as regards the meaning of this magic water. Padma, the White

Lotus, is said to have a thousand petals, as has the mysterious Sahasrāram of the Yogis. It is an unopened bud in the ordinary mortal, and just as a lotus opens its petals, and expands in all its bloom and beauty when the sun rises above the horizon and sheds his rays on the flower, so does the Sahasrāram of the neophyte open and expand when the Logos begins to pour its light into its centre. When fully expanded it becomes the glorious seat of the Lady of the Lotus, the 6th principle of man; and sitting on this flower the great goddess pours out the waters of life and grace for the gratification and the regeneration of the human soul.

Hatha Yogis say that the human soul in *Samādhi* ascends to this thousand-petalled flower through *Suṣumnā* (the *dath* of the Kabbalists) and obtains a glimpse of the splendour of the spiritual sun.

In this part of Sensa's life an event is related which deserves attention. An elemental appearing in the guise of a neophyte of the temple tries to take him out from his physical body. This is a danger to which a man is liable before he acquires sufficient proficiency as an adept to guard himself against all such dangers, especially when his internal perception is developed to a certain extent. Sensa's guardian angel protects him from the danger owing to his innocence and purity.

When the mental activity of the child commences and absorbs its attention, it recedes farther and farther from the Light of the Logos. Its intuition will not be in a position to work unshackled. Its suggestions come

to it mixed up with other states of consciousness which are the result of sensation and intellection. Unable to see Sensa and speak to him personally, Seboua sends him his beloved lotus flower surreptitiously through one of the neophytes of the temple.

Mental activity commences first by way of sensation. Emotions make their appearance subsequently. The opening mind of the child is aptly compared to a little girl playing with Sensa. When once the mind begins to exercise its functions the pleasures of sensation soon pave the way for the strong and fierce emotions of the human soul. Sensa has descended one step from the spiritual plane when he loses sight of the sublime lotus flower and its glorious goddess and begins to be amused by the frolicsome little girl. "You are to live among Earth-fed flowers," says this little girl to him, disclosing the change that has already taken place. At first it is the simple beauty of nature that engrosses the attention of Sensa. But his mind soon leads him to the dark goddess of the shrine. Avidyā has its real seat in mind, and it is impossible to resist its influence so long as the mind of man is not restrained in its action. When once the soul gets under the influence of this dark goddess, the high priests of the temple begin to utilize its powers for their own benefit and gratification. The goddess requires twelve priests in all, including Sensa, to help her cause. Unless the six emotions and the five sensations above enumerated are banded together she cannot exercise her sway completely. They support

and strengthen each other as every man's experience clearly demonstrates. Isolated, they are weak and can easily be subdued, but when associated together their combined power is strong enough to keep the soul under control. The fall of Sensa now becomes complete, but not before he receives a well merited rebuke from the gardener and a word of warning from the Lady of the Lotus.

Addressing Sensa, Seboua is made to utter the following words: "You came first to work; you were to be the drudge for me; now all is changed. You are to play, not work, and I am to treat you like a little prince. Well! Have they spoiled thee yet, I wonder, child?" These words are significant; and their meaning will become plain by the light of the foregoing remarks. It must be noted that the last time he went into the Garden, Sensa was taken, not to the Lotus Tank, but to another tank receiving its waters from the former.

Owing to the change that has come over him, Sensa is unable to see the Light of the Logos by direct perception, but is under the necessity of recognizing the same by the operation of his fifth principle. It is in the astral fluid that he floats and not in the magic water of the Lotus Tank. He sees, nevertheless, the Lady of the Lotus who pathetically says, "Soon thou wilt leave me; and how can I aid thee if thou forgettest me utterly?"

After this occurrence Sensa becomes completely a man of the world, living for the pleasures of the physical

life. His developed mind becomes his companion and the priests of the temple profit by the change. Before proceeding further I must draw the reader's attention to the possibility of eliciting from a child any desired information by invoking certain elementals and other powers, by means of magic rites and ceremonies. After the soul gets completely under the influence of Avidyā, it may either succumb altogether to the said influence, and get absorbed, as it were, in the Tamoguṇa of Prakṛti, or dispel its own ignorance by the light of spiritual wisdom and shake off this baneful influence. A critical moment arrives in the history of Sensa when his very existence is merged up for the time being with the dark goddess of human passion on the day of the boat festival. Such an absorption, however short, is the first step towards final extinction. He must either be saved at this critical juncture or perish. The Lady of the White Lotus, his guardian angel, makes a final attempt to save him, and succeeds. In the very holy of the holies, she unveils the dark goddess; and Sensa, perceiving his folly prays for deliverance from the accursed yoke of the hated priesthood. His prayer is granted, and relying upon the support of the bright goddess he revolts against the authority of the priests, and directs the attention of the people to the iniquities of the temple authorities.

It is necessary to say a few words in this connection as regards the real nature of soul-death and the ultimate fate of a black magician, to impress the

teachings of this book on the mind of the reader. The soul, as we have above explained, is an isolated drop in the ocean of cosmic life. This current of cosmic life is but the light and the aura of the Logos. Besides the Logos, there are innumerable other existences, both spiritual and astral, partaking of this life and living in it. These beings have special affinities with particular emotions of the human soul and particular characteristics of the human mind. They have of course a definite individual existence of their own which lasts up to the end of the Manvantara. There are three ways in which a soul may cease to retain its special individuality. Separated from its Logos, which is, as it were, its source, it may not acquire a strong and abiding individuality of its own, and may in course of time be reabsorbed into the current of Universal Life. This is real soul-death. It may also place itself *en rapport* with a spiritual or elemental existence by evoking it, and concentrating its attention and regard on it for purposes of black magic and Tantric worship. In such a case it transfers its individuality to such existence and is sucked up into it, as it were. In such a case the black magician lives in such a being, and as such a being he continues till the end of the Manvantara.

The fate of Bāṇasena illustrates the point. After his death he is said to live as Mahākāla, one of the most powerful spirits of Pramadaṅga. In some respects this amounts to acquiring immortality in evil.

But unlike the immortality of the Logos it does not go beyond Manvantaric limits. Read the 8th chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā* in this connection, and my meaning will become clear by the light of Kṛṣṇa's teaching. The occurrence in the boat of Isis, depicted in the book under consideration, gives some idea of the nature of this absorption and the subsequent preservation of the magician's individuality.

When the centre of absorption is the Logos and not any other power or elemental, the man acquires Mukti or Nirvāṇa and becomes one with the eternal Logos without any necessity of rebirth.

The last part of the book describes the final struggle of the soul with its inveterate foes, its initiation and ultimate deliverance from the tyranny of Prakṛti.

The assurance and the advice given by the Lady of the White Lotus to Sena in the holy of holies marks the great turning point in the history of his career. He has perceived the light of the Divine Wisdom and has brought himself within the pale of its influence. This light of the Logos, which is represented in the story as the fair goddess of the sacred flower of Egypt, is the bond of union and brotherhood which maintains the chain of spiritual intercourse and sympathy running through the long succession of the great hierophants of Egypt, and extending to all the great adepts of this world who derive their influx of spiritual life from the same source. It is the Holy Ghost that keeps up the apostolical succession or Guruparamparā as the Hindus

call it. It is this spiritual light which is transmitted from Guru to disciple when the time of real initiation comes. The so-called "transfer of life" is no other than the transmission of this light. And further, the Holy Ghost, which is, as it were, the veil or the body of the Logos and hence its flesh and blood, is the basis of the holy communion. Every fraternity of adepts has this bond of union; and time and space cannot tear it asunder. Even when there is an apparent break in the succession on the physical plane, a neophyte following the sacred law and aspiring towards a higher life, will not be in want of guidance and advice when the proper time arrives, though the last Guru may have died several thousands of years before he was born. Every Buddha meets at his last initiation all the great adepts who reached Buddhahood during the preceding ages: and similarly every class of adepts has its own bond of spiritual communion which knits them together into a properly organised fraternity. The only possible and effectual way of entering into any such brotherhood, or partaking of the holy communion, is by bringing oneself within the influence of the spiritual light which radiates from one's own Logos. I may further point out here, without venturing to enter into details, that such communion is only possible between persons whose souls derive their life and sustenance from the same divine ray, and that, as seven distinct rays radiate from the "Central Spiritual Sun" all adepts and Dhyān Chohāns are divisible into

seven classes, each of which is guided, controlled and overshadowed by one of seven forms or manifestations of the divine wisdom.

In this connection it is necessary to draw the reader's attention to another general law which regulates the circulation of spiritual life and energy through the several adepts who belong to the same fraternity. Each adept may be conceived as a centre wherein this spiritual force is generated and stored up, and through which it is utilized and distributed. This mysterious energy is a kind of spiritual electrical force, and its transmission from one centre to another presents some of the phenomena noticed in connection with electrical induction. Consequently there is a tendency towards the equalisation of the amounts of energy stored up in the various centres. The quantity of the neutral fluid existing in any particular centre depends upon the man's Karma and the holiness and purity of his life. When evoked into activity by being brought into communication with his Guru or Initiator it becomes dynamic, and has a tendency to transfer itself to weaker centres. It is sometimes stated that, at the time of the final initiation, either the hierophant or the "newly born," the *worthier* of the two must die (see page 38, *Theosophist*, November, 1882). Whatever may be the real nature of this mysterious death, it is due to the operation of this law. It will be further seen that a new initiate, if he is weak in spiritual energy, is strengthened by partaking of the holy communion; and for obtaining this

advantage he has to remain on earth and utilise his power for the good of mankind until the time of final liberation arrives. This is an arrangement which harmonises with the Law of Karma. The neophyte's original weakness is due to his Karmic defects. These defects necessitate a longer period of physical existence. And this period he will have to spend in the cause of human progress in return for the benefit above indicated. And, moreover, the accumulated good Karma of the period has the effect of strengthening his soul, and when he finally takes his place in the sacred Brotherhood, he brings as much spiritual capital with him as any of the others for carrying on the work of the said fraternity.

If these few remarks are borne in mind, the incidents related in the last five chapters will soon disclose their real significance. When Sensa gains his power of spiritual perception through the grace of his guardian angel, and begins to exercise it knowingly and voluntarily, he has no occasion to rely on the flickering light of intuition. "You must now stand alone," says the gardener, and places him in possession of his beloved flower, the full meaning of which Sensa begins to understand. Having thus gained the seat of spiritual clairvoyance. Sensa perceives the hierophants who preceded him and into whose fraternity he has entered. The Guru is always ready when the disciple is ready. The initiation preceding the final struggle for liberty from the bondage of matter is pretty plainly described. The highest Chohān reveals to him the secrets of occult

science, and another adept of the Brotherhood points out to him the basis and nature of his own personality. His immediate predecessor then comes to his assistance and reveals to him the mystery of his own Logos. "The veil of Isis" is removed, behind which White Lotus, his real Saviour, lay concealed. The Light of the Logos enters his soul and he is made to pass through the "baptism by Divine Fire". He hears the final directions given by his Queen and recognises the duty cast upon his shoulders.

His predecessor, whose soul is so "white and spotless," is commanded to give him a portion of his spiritual strength and energy. The three great truths which underlie every religion, however, disfigured and distorted, through ignorance, superstition and prejudice, are then taught to him for the purpose of being proclaimed to the world at large. It is needless for me to explain these truths here as their enunciation in the book is sufficiently plain. Thus fortified and instructed Sensa prepares for the final struggle. During these preparatory stages the passions of the physical man are, as it were, dormant, and Sensa is left alone for the time being. But they are not entirely subdued. The decisive battle is yet to be fought and won. Sensa begins to enter on the higher spiritual life as a preacher and spiritual guide to men, directed by the light of wisdom which has entered his soul. But he cannot pursue this course for any length of time before he has conquered his foes. The moment for the final struggle of the last initiation

soon arrives. The nature of this initiation is very little understood. It is sometimes represented in vague terms as a terrible ordeal through which an initiate has to pass before he becomes a real adept. It is further characterized as "the baptism by blood". These general statements do not in the least indicate the precise nature of the result to be achieved by the neophyte or the difficulties he has to encounter.

It is necessary to enquire into the nature of the psychic change or transformation which is intended to be effected by this initiation before its mystery is understood. According to the ordinary Vedāntic classification there are four states of conscious existence, namely Viśva, Taijasa, Prajñā, and Turiya. In modern language these may be described as the objective, the clairvoyant, the ecstatic, and the ultra-ecstatic states of consciousness. The seats or *upādhis* related to these conditions are the physical body, the astral body, the Kāraṇa Śarīra or the Monad and the Logos. The soul is the Monad: It is, as it were, the neutral point of consciousness. It is the germ of *prajñā*. When completely isolated no consciousness is experienced by it. Its psychic condition is hence compared by Hindu writers to *Suṣupti*—a condition of dreamless sleep. But it is under the influence of the physical body and the astral body on the one side, and the 6th and 7th principles on the other. When the attraction of the former prevails, the Jīva becomes Buddha and is subject to all the passions of embodied existence. The power of these passions grows

weaker and weaker as the neutral point we have indicated is approached. But so long as the neutral barrier is not crossed their attraction is felt. But when once this is effected, the soul is, as it were, placed under the control and attraction of the other pole—the Logos; and the man becomes liberated from the bondage of matter. In short he becomes an adept. The struggle for supremacy between these two forces of attraction takes place on this neutral barrier. But during the struggle the person in whose interest the battle is fought is in a quiescent, unconscious condition, almost helpless to assist his friends or strike hard at his enemies, though the result of the fight is a matter of life and death to him. This is the condition in which *Sensa* finds himself in passing through the last ordeal, and the description of the said condition in the book under examination becomes clear by the light of the foregoing explanations. It can be easily seen that the result of the fight will mainly depend upon the *latent* energy of the soul, its previous training and its past Karma. But our hero passes successfully through the ordeal; his enemies are completely overthrown. But *Sensa* dies in the struggle.

Strangely enough when the enemy is defeated, the *personality* of *Sensa* is destroyed on the field of battle. This is the final sacrifice which he makes, and his mother *Prakṛti*—the mother of his personality—laments his loss, but rejoices at the prospect of the resurrection of his soul. The resurrection soon takes place; his soul rises from the grave as it were, under the vivifying

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