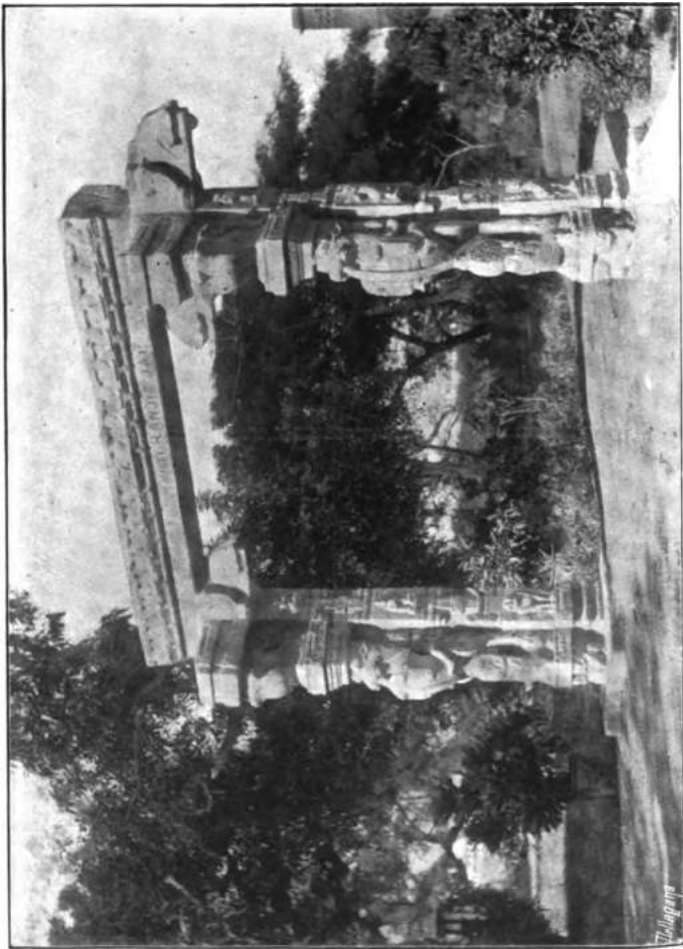


# OLD DIARY LEAVES



ANCIENT RUINED TEMPLE PORTAL, ADVYAR.

[Frontispiece.]

# OLD DIARY LEAVES

THE ONLY AUTHENTIC HISTORY OF  
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

SECOND SERIES, 1878-88

BY

HENRY STEEL OLCOTT

PRESIDENT-FOUNDER OF THE SOCIETY

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" . . . Nothing extenuate,  
Nor set down aught in malice."

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LONDON

THE THEOSOPHICAL PUBLISHING SOCIETY  
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## INTRODUCTION

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THE Diary from which the present series of chapters has been compiled was opened in January 1878, three years after the formation of the Theosophical Society at New York, by the late Madame Blavatsky, myself, and a few others, and has been systematically kept up ever since. Under the title, "Old Diary Leaves: The True History of the Theosophical Society," a volume, with illustrations, was published in the year 1895, by Messrs. G. P. Putnam & Sons (London and New York), which has had a wide circulation. It covered the period from the first meeting of my great colleague and myself in the year 1874, down to the sailing of our party from New York for Bombay in December 1878. The thread of our narrative, now taken up, leads us from that point onward to the autumn of 1883, embracing the novel and exciting incidents of the establishment of our movement in India and Ceylon, from which such momentous results have followed. No important event has been omitted, no falsification of the record resorted to. Other volumes will be issued from time to time should there be a demand. I am proud of the fact that, although these memoirs have been appearing monthly in the *Theosophist* since March 1892, and

have been read by hundreds of living witnesses to the events cited, my veracity has not once been challenged, and but one slight inaccuracy pointed out. The growth of the Society has been as steady within the past four years as it had been up to the time of the publication of the first volume of these memoirs, the number of new branch charters issued having been 148, and the total, from the beginning up to the close of last year (1898), 592, as against 394 up to the close of the year 1894. These Branches are now grouped within eight administrative sections, whose head-offices are respectively at Benares, London, Paris, Amsterdam, Stockholm, New York, Sydney, and Auckland (N.Z.). The General Headquarters of the whole Society and the President-Founder's official residence are at Adyar, Madras. The work, therefore, already covers the greater part of the civilized world, while its literature finds its way over an even wider area, being read in the camps of miners and explorers, the huts of pioneers, and the cabins of ships sailing in all seas.

So world-covering a movement and so strongly based a Society is entitled to be taken seriously by men who think, and, since the Diary of one of its two chief founders gives the data for a truthful history of its rise and progress, and he, the survivor, alone knows all the facts, it seems to be his clear duty to write it while his memory is still strong and his strength unimpaired.

One motive which prompted me to begin was that I might leave behind me, for the use of the future historian, as accurate a sketch as possible of that great personality-

puzzle, Helena Petrowna Blavatsky, co-founder of the Theosophical Society. I declare upon honor that I have not written one word about her or her doings, save in the spirit of loyalty to her memory and to truth. I have not written a line in malice. I knew her as companion, friend, co-worker, equal—on the plane of personality; all her other colleagues stood with her in the relation of pupil to teacher, or as casual friends, or passing acquaintances, or mere correspondents. None knew her so intimately as I, for none save me saw her in all her many changings of mood, mind, and personal characteristics. The human Helena Petrowna, with her unchanged Russian nature; the Madame Blavatsky, fresh from the Bohemian circles of Paris; and the "Madame Laura,"—the bays and bouquets of whose concert tours of 1872-3 as a pianist, in Italy, Russia, and elsewhere, were not long wilted when she came to New York through Paris,—were as well known to me as, later on, became the "H. P. B." of Theosophy. Knowing her, therefore, so well, she was not to me what she was to many others—all goddess, immaculate, infallible, co-equal with the Masters of Wisdom; but a wondrous woman, made the channel for great teachings, the agent for the doing of a mighty work. Just because I did know her so much better than most others, she was a greater mystery to me than to them. It was easy for those who only saw her speaking oracles, writing profound aphorisms, or giving clue after clue to the hidden wisdom in the ancient scriptures, to regard her as an Earth-visiting *angelos* and to worship at her

feet; she was no mystery to them. But to me, her most intimate colleague, who had to deal with the vulgar details of her common daily life, and see her in all her aspects, she was from the first and continued to the end an insoluble riddle. How much of her waking life was that of a responsible personality, how much that of a body worked by an overshadowing entity? I do not know. On the hypothesis that she was a medium for the Great Teachers, only that and nothing more, then the riddle is easy to read; for then one can account for the alterations in mind, character, tastes, and predilections which have been touched upon in previous chapters; then the H. P. B. of the latter days fits on to the Helena Petrovna of New York, Paris, Italy, and all other countries and epochs. And what does the following passage (written in my Diary by her hand on the page for 6th December 1878) mean, if not that? It says: "*We* got cold again, I think. Oh, unfortunate, empty, rotten old body!" Was this "empty" body empty of its proper tenant? If not, why should the phrase have been written with her hand in a variant of her proper handwriting? We shall never get at the truth. If I recur again and again to the problem, it is because the deeper I go into these incidents of the past, the more exciting and baffling grows the mystery. So let us pass on once more and rejoin the pilgrims at New York, in the cabin of the good steamer "Canada," of the National Line, bound for London in the bitter month of December.

ADYAR, 1899.





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*From Photographs by*

Messrs NICHOLAS & Co., Photographers, Madras.



# OLD DIARY LEAVES.

## SECOND SERIES.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### THE VOYAGE OUT.

**T**HOUGH we left American soil on the 17th of December (1878), we did not get away from American waters until 12.30 P.M. on the 19th, as we lost the tide of the 18th and had to anchor in the Lower Bay. Imagine the state of mind of H. P. B. if you can! She raged against the captain, pilot, engineers, owners, and even the tides. My Diary must have been in her portmanteau, for in it she wrote:—

“Magnificent day. Clear, blue, cloudless [sky], but devilish cold. Fits of fear lasted till 11. *The body is difficult to manage.* . . . At last the pilot took the steamer across the Sandy Hook bar. Fortunately we did not get

stuck in the sand ! . . . All day eating—at 8, 12, 4, and 7. H. P. B. eats like three hogs."

I never knew the meaning of the phrase written by H. P. B.'s hand in my Diary on 17th December 1878: "All dark—but tranquil," until at London, when her niece translated for me an extract from the letter written by her aunt to her mother (Mme. Jelihovsky) from London on 14th January 1879, and which she has kindly copied out for the present use. H. P. B. writes her sister:—

"I start for India. Providence alone knows what the future has in store for us. Possibly these portraits shall be the last. Do not forget your *orphan*-sister, now so in the full meaning of the word.

"Good-bye. We start from Liverpool on the 18th. May the invisible powers protect you all!

"I shall write from Bombay *if I ever reach it.*

"ELENA.

"LONDON, 14th January 1879."

If she ever reached it? Then she was not certain that she would; that New York prediction might come true. Very well; but how, then, about all this romance we have been having circulated, about her having had complete foreknowledge as to our Indian career? The two clash.

There were but ten of us passengers aboard; our three—H. P. B., Wimbridge, and myself; a Church of England clergyman and wife; a jolly, red-faced young Yorkshire squire; an Anglo-Indian army captain and wife; and another lady and gentleman. Can anyone fancy what that wretched clergy-

man passed through, what with sea-sickness, the biting, damp cold, and daily wrangles with H. P. B. ! And yet, although she gave him unreservedly her opinion of his profession, enforced at times with expressions fit to curdle his blood, he had the breadth of mind to see her nobler qualities, and at parting almost wept for losing her. He actually sent her his photograph and begged hers in exchange.

We had fine weather for only three full days. On the 22nd it changed, and—as H. P. B. records it—“Wind and gale. Rain and fog came pouring into the saloon skylarks (*sic*). Everybody sea-sick except Mrs. Wise and H. P. B. ; Moloney (myself) sang songs.” The next morning was fine again, but a terrific gale burst on us in the afternoon, and the Captain was “telling fearful stories of shipwreck and drowning the whole evening. Mrs.—and Mr.—frightened out of their wits.” After that the storm-fiends pursued us as if they were in the service of the opponents of our T. S. It seemed as though all the winds that Æolus tied up in paper bags for Ulysses had broken loose and gone on the rampage. One entry of mine runs through the pages for 20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th, 28th, 29th, 30th and 31st December, viz., “Here follow a train of days and nights of ennui, turmoil, and distress. By night, tossed about like a shuttlecock between battledores. By day, the hours hanging so heavily as to seem whole days each. A small company of incongruous passengers, tiring of the sight of each others’ faces.” H. P. B. writes on one day’s page : “Night of tossing and rolling ; H. S. O. sick abed ; monotonous, stupid, wearisome. Oh for the Land ! Oh for India and HOME !”

We sat out the Old Year and welcomed the New. The ship's bells rang Eight-bells twice, and down in the engine-room, agreeably to custom, there was a charivari of bells, pans, steel bars, and other sonorous objects. On New Year Day, 1879, we entered the British Channel in a sea of fog, typical of our as yet unmanifested future. Steaming very carefully and shaving by a number of vessels, we took the pilot, a very old, moss-grown sort of man, at 2.30 P.M., and at 5.30 had to anchor off Deal. As the Captain discovered later, his vision had become so impaired that he could not properly distinguish a red from a green light, and we would certainly have come to grief but for the unflagging vigilance of Captain Sumner—a splendid fellow, an ornament to the British merchant service. If the pilot had not become blear-eyed with age, he would have taken our ship straight through to Thames Haven, and so saved us a full day's misery in the Channel.

As it was, a dense fog closed in upon us, and we felt our way along so cautiously that we had to anchor again the second night, and only reached Gravesend the following morning, where we took train to London, and so finished the first stage of our long voyage. We were received with charming hospitality by Dr. and Mrs. Billing at their suburban house at Norwood Park, which became the rallying centre of all our London friends and correspondents; among them Stainton Moses, Massey, Dr. Wyld, Rev. and Mrs. Aytoun, Henry Hood, Palmer Thomas, the Ellises, A. R. Wallace, several Hindu law and medical students, Mrs. Knowles, and other ladies and gentlemen. On the 5th

January I presided at a meeting of the British T. S. at which there was an election of officers.

Our time in London was completely filled with odds and ends of Society business, receipts of callers and the paying of visits to the British Museum and elsewhere; the whole spiced with phenomena by H. P. B. and séances with Mrs. Hollis-Billing's spirit guide, "Ski," whose name is known throughout the whole world of spiritualists.

The most striking incident of our stay in London was the meeting of a Master by three of us as we were walking down Cannon Street. There was a fog that morning so dense that one could hardly see across the street, and London appeared at its worst. The two who were with me saw him first, as I was next to the kerb, and just then my eyes were otherwise occupied. But when they uttered an exclamation, I turned my head quickly and met the glance of the Master as he looked back at me over his shoulder. I did not recognize him for an acquaintance, but I recognized the face as that of an Exalted One; for the type once seen can never be mistaken. As there is one glory of the sun and another glory of the moon, so there is one brightness of the average good man or woman's face, and another, a transcendent one, of the face of an Adept: through the clay lamp of the body, as the learned Maimonides calls it, the inner light of the awakened spirit shines effulgently. We three friends kept together in the City and went together back to Dr. Billing's house, yet on entering we were told by both Mrs. Billing and H. P. B. that the Brother had been there and mentioned that he had met us three—naming us—in

the City. Mrs. Billing's story was interesting. She said that the front door was locked and bolted as usual, so that nobody could enter without ringing. Yet as she left her sitting room to go to H. P. B.'s room through the hall, she almost ran up against a tall stranger who was standing between the hall-door and H. P. B.'s room. She described him as a very tall and handsome Hindu, with a peculiarly piercing eye which seemed to look her through. For the moment she was so staggered that she could not say a word, but the stranger said, "I wish to see Madame Blavatsky," and moved towards the door of the room where she sat. Mrs. Billing opened it for him and bade him enter. He did so, and walked straight towards H. P. B., made her an Oriental salutation, and began speaking to her in a tongue the sounds of which were totally unfamiliar to Mrs. Billing; although her long practice as a public medium had brought her into momentary contact with people of many different nations. Mrs. B. naturally rose to leave the room, but H. P. B. bade her stay and not to mind their speaking in a strange language together, as they had some occult business to transact.

Whether or not this dark and mysterious Hindu caller brought H. P. B. a reinforcement of her psychical power or not I cannot say, but at the dinner-table that evening she gladdened her hostess's heart by bringing up for her, from under the edge of the table, a Japanese teapot of exceeding lightness; I think at her request, though I will not be sure about that. She also caused Massey to find, in a pocket of his overcoat in the hall, an Indian inlaid card-case; but I



pass that over with a bare mention, as the thing might be explained away on the hypothesis of trickery, if one were disposed to challenge her good faith. I shall treat in the same way an occurrence which struck us all—in our then uncritical frame of mind—as very wonderful. On the evening of 6th January, "Ski" told me to go to Madame Tussaud's Exhibition, and under the left foot of Figure 158 I should find a note to myself from a certain Personage. The next morning Rev. Aytoun, Dr. Billing, Mr. Wimbridge, and I, accordingly went to the wax-works show and actually found the note described in the place designated. But it is recorded in my Diary that on the morning of 6th January H. P. B. and Mrs. Billing went together to the British Museum, and, since they were out of doors, nothing prevented their going to Madame Tussaud's if they had been so minded. So, evidentially—as the S. P. G. falterers would say—the case is valueless, although I then thought and still think it was a genuine phenomenon. The next evening we sat again in a seance with Ski, and were well pleased to hear him acknowledge that he was a messenger of the Masters, and pronounce the names of several. He also threw at me in the darkness a huge silk handkerchief, on which were written the names of several of them. It was a yard-and-a-quarter square in size!

The next evening, after dinner, H. P. B. explained to ourselves and two visitors the duality of her personality and the law which it illustrated. She admitted without qualification that it was a fact that she was one person at one moment and another the next. She gave us an astounding

bit of proof in support of her assertion. As we sat chatting in the gloaming, she silent near the window with her two hands resting on her knees, she presently called us and looked down at her hands. One of them was as white, as sculpturesque as usual; but the other was the longer hand of a man, covered with the brown skin of the Hindu; and, on looking wonderingly into her face, we saw that her hair and eyebrows had also changed colour, and from fair brown had become jetty black! Say it was a hypnotic *Mâyá*, yet what a fine one it was: produced without the utterance of a word by way of suggestion! It may have been a *Mâyá*, for I recollect that the next morning her hair was still much darker than naturally, and her eyebrows quite black. She noticed this herself on looking into the mirror in the drawing-room, and remarking to me that she had forgotten to remove all traces of the change, she turned away, passed her hands over her face and hair two or three times, and, facing me again, she was her natural self once more.

On the 15th January we sent on our heavy baggage to Liverpool; on the 17th I issued an Executive Notice appointing, *ad interim*, Major-General A. Doubleday, U.S.A., F.T.S., Acting President of the T. S.; Mr. David A. Curtis, Acting Corresponding Secretary; and Mr. G. V. Maynard, Treasurer: W. Q. Judge was already elected Recording Secretary. This arrangement was for the purpose of carrying on the work at the New York Headquarters until the future disposal of the Society should have been decided upon, according to what should happen after we had settled at Bombay. The same evening, at 9.40, we left

from Euston for Liverpool, after a delightful stay of a fortnight with and among our kind friends and colleagues. Many were there to see us off, and I remember, as if it had happened but yesterday, walking to and fro the vast waiting-room with Dr. George Wyld, and exchanging views upon religious matters. The next day we passed at the Great Western Hotel, Liverpool, and at 5 P.M. embarked on the "Speke Hall" in a downpour of rain. The vessel was dirty and disagreeable to see; and what with that, and the falling of the rain, the smell of damp tapestries and carpets in the saloon and cabins, and the forlorn faces of our forty fellow-passengers, all equally disgusted as ourselves, it was a wretched omen for our long voyage out to India. Filth and noise when embarking at New York; filth, noise and bad smells when embarking at Liverpool; it needed all the bright dream of sunny India, and the phantom mind-pictures of our anticipated Hindu friends, to keep up our courage.

We lay at anchor in the Mersey all the night of the 18th, but got away by the next dawn. My Diary shows how it looked to us: "On board everything is in a pitiable plight. The vessel is loaded almost to the water's edge—it would seem—with railway iron. There is a rough sea and nearly every wave comes aboard of us. Wimbridge and I are quartered in a cabin forward on the main deck, and are cut off from communication with the saloon aft. It is as much as a landsman's life is worth to attempt the transit. How bad it is for seafaring stewards is shown in the fact that we got nothing to eat until 3 P.M." The same misery went on

the next day, and but for a basket of bread and butter that had been given us in London, and that by good luck had been put into our cabin, we should have gone hungry enough. Meanwhile H. P. B. was making it lively for the servants and her fellow-passengers who, with one or two exceptions, were shocked by her ironclad language, outraged by her religious heterodoxy, and unanimously voted her a nuisance. The ship being struck by a tremendous sea, H. P. B. was pitched against a leg of the dining-table and got her knee badly bruised. The third day we two got her peremptory command to come aft and show ourselves; so we rolled our trousers up to our knees, took our shoes and stockings in our hands, and made rushes through the slip-sloppy water on deck, between the rolls of the ship. We found the saloon in confusion, the carpets up, water and wet things everywhere, and smells that one might expect after a ship's cabin had been shut up for two or three days. H. P. B. laid up in her cabin with her lame knee, and through the confined space of the small cabins her strong voice would ring out the name of the stewardess, "Meeses Yetz" (Mrs. Yates), in stentorian tone. O, Bay of Biscay, under what an unalluring aspect wert thou presented to us, poor, sea-sick wretches!

Cape Finisterre was passed on the night of 23rd January, and so were we delivered from the raging Bay. But we got no observation of the sun that day, and the passing from our cabin to the saloon was like wading through a wet ditch or a mill flume. The next day the weather broke and we had an azure sky and a sapphire sea. The air was balmy

and spring-like, and our bedraggled passengers crawled out to bask in the brightness of the day. The rose-and-opal tinted shores of Africa, seen through a pearly haze, rose like fairy cliffs out of the sea. At the rate of 250 to 300 miles a day, we sailed up the Mediterranean, past Gibraltar, past Algiers, on to Malta, where we anchored for the night on the 28th January, and filled the coal-bunkers. We went ashore and viewed the picturesque fortress and town, so famed in history for the deeds of heroism done by its besiegers and defenders. Off again the next morning, with the ship besmeared with coal-dust in its every nook and cranny; and, as if in keeping, we encountered bad weather almost as soon as we left port. The wretched ship rolled and pitched like mad, shipping seas that would not have been even noticed on a vessel less deeply laden. All brightness fled, of course, from the faces of the passengers, and we were miserably sea-sick; our only compensation being that H. P. B. herself, who had been ridiculing us for our weakness of will and holding herself up for a pattern, was overtaken by Karma and was sick also. It was our turn to jibe and jeer, and we paid her back in kind.

Port Said was reached on 2nd February, visited by us all, and then came the blessed rest for the storm-tossed ones, of two days and nights in the Suez Canal. This, it is to be remembered, was in the days before the use of the electric search-light made night passages possible through the Canal. The "Speke Hall" entered it at 10.30 A.M. on the 2nd; tied up that night opposite the Arab village of Khandara—where, at an Arab coffee-house, we had

genuine black coffee and some smokes of *narguilehs*; the next night, we tied up at a station five miles from Suez, where I passed a merry evening at the station-master's house, in company with two Corsican pilots who talked French fluently; and at last, in the early dawn, emerged into the Red Sea and began the third and final stage of our sea-pilgrimage to the Land of Desire. Letters met us at Suez from some of our Hindu friends, which quickened our feverish anxiety to get to our destination as soon as possible. That night the moon paved with silver the waters of the Gulf of Suez, and we felt as if we were sailing on a dream-sea. Nothing of moment happened until the 12th, when a flue burst in the boiler, and we had to stop for repairs. Patched up, it burst again the next day, and there were two long waits, and many precious hours lost and much irritation felt by us, to be checked thus when we ought to be close to the Bombay lights. On the 15th, at noon, we were but 160 miles away from them, and the next morning entered Bombay Harbour. I had sat up on deck until 1 o'clock in the morning, looking at the majesty of the Indian sky, and straining my gaze for the first glimpse of the Bombay light.

It came at last, as it were, a lamp rising out of the sea, and I went to bed to rest my weary body for the next day's work. Before sunrise I was on deck again, and as we steamed rapidly towards our anchorage, revelled in the panorama of the Harbour that was spread before me. Elephanta, ahead of us, was the first locality we asked to be shown us, for it was the type and visible representative of that Ancient India, that sacred Bharatavarsha, which our hearts had yearned to

see revived in the India of to-day. Alas ! as one turned towards promontory of the Malabar Hill the dream was dispelled. The India we saw there was one of sumptuous bungalows, framed in the luxury of English flower-gardens, and surrounded with all the signs of wealth gained in foreign commerce. The Aryavarta of the Elephanta era was blotted out by the garish splendour of a new order of things, in which religion and philosophy have no part, and the sincerest worship is paid to the Queen's idol on the current rupee. We have become used to it now, but at first sight it gave us the painful sensation of our first disillusionment.

The ship's anchor was hardly dropped before we were boarded by three Hindu gentlemen in search of us. All seemed strangers to us, but when they pronounced their names I opened my arms and pressed them to my breast. They were Mooljee Thackersey, Pandit Shyamaji Krishnavarma, and Mr. Ballajee Sitaram—all holders of our Society's diplomas. No wonder I did not recognise Mooljee, clad as he was in the artistic dress of his Bhattia caste, the dhoti and top coat of white muslin and the red turban with its quaint helmet-like shape and horn pointing forward above the brow. When he and I crossed the Atlantic together in 1870, he wore European dress throughout, and did not in the least resemble his present self. Shyamaji's name has since become famous throughout Europe as a learned pandit coaching Professor Monier Williams ; and H. P. B. and I felt for him from first to last a sort of parental affection. Our three friends had passed the night on board a "bunder-boat," waiting for us, and were as joyful for our arrival as

we were to come. It was a great disappointment not to be met by Hurrychund Chintamon, our chief correspondent, and, until then, our most respected one: we had not yet found him out. As he did not make his appearance, we went ashore with the others in their bunder-boat and landed on the Apollo Bunder. The first thing I did on touching land was to stoop down and kiss the granite step; my instinctive act of pooja! For here we were at last on sacred soil; our past forgotten, our perilous and disagreeable sea-voyage gone out of mind, the agony of long deferred hopes replaced by the thrilling joy of presence in the land of the Rishis, the cradle country of religions, the dwelling-place of the Masters, the home of our dusky brothers and sisters, with whom to live and die was all we could desire. All the cruel things that our fellow-passengers had told us on board ship about their moral weakness, their sycophancy, their inability to keep faith and command the respect of Europeans, were forgotten already; for we loved them for their ancestry and for their very present imperfections, nay, we were prepared to love them for themselves. And, in my case at least, this feeling has continued down to the present day. In a very real sense to me, they are my people, their country my country: may the blessings of the Sages be and abide with them and with it always!







## CHAPTER II.

### SETTLING DOWN AT BOMBAY.

**I**T was a burning hand that the Indian Sūrya Deva laid upon our heads as we stood on the platform of Apollo Bunder. The noonday Bombay sun of mid-February is a surprise to a Western visitor, and we had time to feel its full power before Mr. Hurrychund came to our rescue. He had gone off to the steamer just after we had disembarked, and so caused us to wait for him on the fiery quay, with the air all in a hot quiver about us.

Besides Hurrychund and the three gentlemen above mentioned, I do not recollect any others having come to greet us on landing—a fact which was bitterly resented by the members of the A'rya Samaj, who charged their then President, Hurrychund, with selfish design in keeping his colleagues uninformed of our movements so that he might enjoy the first of our company by himself.

The streets of Bombay charmed us with their strikingly Oriental character. The tall apartment-houses in stucco, the novel dresses of the motley Asiatic population, the

quaint vehicles, the overpowering influence of the whole picture on our artistic perceptions, and the delightful sense of being at last at the goal of our long-nourished expectations, amid our dear "Heathen," to meet and live with whom we had crossed so many seas and buffeted so many storms—all these vivid impressions filled us with delight.

Before leaving New York, I had written Hurrychund to engage for us a small, clean house in the Hindu quarter, with only such servants as were indispensable, as we did not wish to waste a penny on luxuries. We were taken to a house of *his own* on the Girgaum Back Road, standing in a comparatively forlorn compound, and adjoining his glass-roofed photographic studio. It was certainly small enough, but being predisposed to find everything charming, we felt perfectly contented. Cocoa-palms nodded their fronds over our roof, and Indian sweet-scented flowers rejoiced our sense of smell: after the dismal sea-voyage it seemed like Paradise. The ladies of our friends' families called on H. P. B. and Miss Bates, and a number of Hindu and Parsi gentlemen on our whole party; but the rush of visitors began the next morning, news of our arrival having by this time been spread. Wimbridge—an artist—and I sat by the hour together watching the throngs that passed along the street, fairly intoxicated with the innumerable subjects for pencil and color which we saw—every hackery, bullock, dray, and human figure an art study.

We had formed one acquaintanceship on the "Speke Hall" that turned into a lasting friendship, that of Mr. Ross Scott, B.C.S., a noble fellow and an Irishman of the

better sort. His long conversations with us about Eastern Philosophy had resulted in his joining our Society. He called on the evening of our first day ashore, and provoked H. P. B. to doing a phenomenon that was quite new to me. They were sitting together on a sofa and I was standing with Hurrichund at the centre table, when Scott reproached H. P. B. for her evident intention of letting him go North to his official post, without giving him the least proof of the existence of the psychical powers in man, of which she had so much spoken. She liked him very much, and so consented to comply with his request. "What shall I do for you?" she asked. He snatched the handkerchief she was holding in her hand, and, pointing to her name "Heliona" embroidered across one corner, said: "Well, make that name disappear and another to take its place." "What name do you want?" she rejoined. Looking towards us, where we stood at a distance of a few paces, he pointed to our host and said: "Let it be Hurrichund's." We came over to them on hearing this, and saw what was done. She gave Scott to hold tight in his hand the embroidered corner of her handkerchief, retaining the opposite corner herself. After a minute or so she told him to look. He did so, found the substitution of names had been made, Hurrichund's being there in the same kind of embroidery, and, in the first impulse of excitement, cried out: "Where is your physical science now? This beats all the professors in the world! Madame, if you will give me that handkerchief, I'll pay £5 into the A'rya Samaj treasury!" "Take it, and welcome," she said, and he thereupon

counted out into Hurrychund's hand five golden sovereigns. I do not recollect this fact having been communicated to the press, but the story was at once spread by the dozen or more eye-witnesses, and helped to intensify the interest which the arrival of our party had created among educated Indian gentlemen.

On the evening of 17<sup>th</sup> February, a reception was held at the photographic studio, at which over 300 invited guests were present. The usual welcome address, with garlands, limes and rose-water as accompaniments, was given us, and H. P. B., Scott, Wimbridge, and I replied, as well as we could, in view of the deep emotion which stirred in us. My Diary says: "The occasion fairly brought the water to my eyes. The long-expected moment comes at last, and I am face to face with my spiritual kinsmen." It was unalloyed happiness, springing from the feeling of the heart, under the control of the intellect; not an evanescent gust of emotion, destined to die out soon and react into a sense of disenchantment and disgust.

The second day following, a party was made up to witness the Shivarâtri anniversary celebration at Elephanta Caves. We enjoyed the picnic like so many school-children, the day giving us a series of surprises and novel sensations. The bunder-boat "Sultan," to begin with, with its strange rig and model, its Muslim crew, its quaint cabin, its primitive fire-place, where rice and curry were cooked most skilfully. Then the ancient caves, with giant sculptures seen in *chiaroscuro*; huge lingams, paint-smearred, ever dripping with oblations and decked with flowers; the

ablutions of the pilgrims in the adjacent pond and their circumambulations of the Shivalingam; the *pūjāris* touching the worshipper's temples with water that has bathed the stone symbol; the crowds, with their — to us — novel Eastern costumes; the painted and ash-besmeared sanyāsis, cramped into painful postures and successfully appealing to pious charity; the scores of Indian children; the sweetmeats vendors; a troop of jugglers doing the mango trick and other *tours de force* so badly as to deceive no sharp eye; and our lunch in the verandah of the keeper's cottage, whence we saw in one picture the moving, chattering throngs in the foreground, and the wide expanse of the harbour, under a cloudless azure sky, with the towers and roofs of distant Bombay on the horizon line. Then came the sail home before a free wind, our bunder-boat skimming along like a bird and beating a European yacht that ran on the same course. After more than twenty years the whole comes vividly back to my mind's eye like a freshly-painted panorama.

Visitors thronged daily to us in increasing numbers, a packed roomful of Parsi gentlemen with their wives and children being followed, immediately afterward, by a like number of Hindu families. A black Jain monk, with shaven crown and his body naked to the waist, came and, through an interpreter, cross-questioned me, at great length, upon religion. Presents of ripe fruit were sent with messages of greeting. A special performance of the Hindu drama "Sitaram" was given in our honor at the Elphinstone Theatre. We found ourselves quartered in the most

conspicuous box, bedecked with garlands of jessamine and roses, given huge bouquets, supplied with refreshments, and, on our rising to leave, having to receive an address, read to us from the stage! The play was not over by any means, but our powers of endurance had reached their limit: we went at 9 P.M. and left the theatre at 2.45 A.M.

The sweetness of this evening was followed by our first taste of bitterness the next morning. Mr. Hurrychund, after strenuous pressure, rendered his accounts. The bloom was off the plum: our supposed hospitable entertainer put in an enormous bill for rent, food, attendance, repairs to the house, even the hire of the three hundred chairs used at our reception, and the cost of a cablegram he had sent us, bidding us hasten our coming! The "demnition total" made my eyes stare; for, at that rate, we should soon find ourselves with empty pockets. And it had been given out and generally understood that we were this person's guests! Protests came, one thing led to another, and we finally discovered that the considerable sum of over six hundred rupees (not then a vanishing silver disc but a substantially valuable token) which we had sent through him to the A'rya Samaj, had got no further than his hand, and a precious clamour arose among his Samajist colleagues. I shall never forget the scene when H. P. B., at a meeting of the A'rya Samaj, let loose at him the bolts of her scorn, and forced him to promise restitution. The money was returned, but our dealings with the man came to a sudden stop. We set to work to find a house for ourselves, and got one for less than half the rent he was charging us for his own—for he

had constituted himself our landlord. We changed quarters, bought furniture and other necessaries, and on 7th March settled ourselves down in the little house, 108, Girgaum Back Road, for the next two years. Thus was shattered our first ideal of the progressive, patriotic, fervently religious Hindu, and, to say truth, the lesson went to our hearts. To be thus deceived and played with at the outset of our Indian career was a sore sorrow; but, for the dear sake of India, we threw off the feeling of depression and kept on our way. Meanwhile our friend Mooljee Thackersey had, on the 2nd March, found us a servant, the Guzerati boy, Babula, whose fidelity to H. P. B., up to her leaving India, all know, and who is still my pensioner. He has a rare talent for languages, and, with Magliabecchi's environment, might have become as great a linguist. When he entered our service he spoke English and French, Goanese, Guzerati, and Hindustani, although but about fifteen years old, and has later acquired a perfect knowledge of Tamil, after our removal to Madras.

Every evening we held an *impromptu* durbar, when the knottiest problems of philosophy, metaphysics, and science were discussed. We lived and breathed in an atmosphere of mind, amid the highest spiritual ideals. I see entries in my Diary of the first appearance on our scene of friends who have since been closely identified with the progress of the Theosophical movement. For example, on the 8th March, our acquaintance and friendship began with Janardhan Sakharam Gadgil, one of the most brilliant of the Bombay University graduates; then, and until his recent re-

tirement from worldly occupation to assume the religious life, a Baroda Judge. My notes on him testify to the immediate and deep impression made upon me by his learning, dignity of ideals, and thirst for spiritual knowledge. Yet I seem to have had some foresight as to the unlikelihood of his becoming a practical co-worker with us, for I have written in the Diary: "A far wiser and cleverer man than myself. May be made an extraordinary ally—if he has the *pluck*." He never quite had that from being hampered by his official surroundings and the unpopularity which our cause had from the first with the ruling class. Mentally, he was not ripe for official martyrdom, though his heart pushed him that way. Yet he was ever an openly declared member of our Society; taking usually in good-natured indifference the taunts he had to bear from friends, chief among them his official superior, the Dewan of Baroda, the late Sir T. Madhava Row, K.C.S.I.,—a great statesman, but a confirmed sceptic and a moral prisoner of the Sirkar.

There came to us, about that time, M. B. Namjoshi, of Poona, and Sorabji J. Padshah; the former since known as an active politician of the Sarvajanic Sabha, of Poona, the latter a brilliant young Parsi, whose devotion to the Society and ourselves personally has never weakened nor wavered for a single day. On March 18th, our young Shyamji Krishnavarma sailed for England to join Professor Monier Williams at Oxford, and help him, and himself, to fame. For Shyamji attended one of the Oriental Congresses, and—although by caste a non-Brahmin—astonished the savants with his recitations of mantras; he came home a



Pandit, and later on was Dewan of a Native State. Other two notable acquaintances were the brothers M. M. and A. M. Kunte, of whom the first was a famed Sanskrit Pandit and Professor, the other an M.D. and Demonstrator of Anatomy in Grant Medical College, Bombay. Of all our new-found friends, these were the most effusive and complimentary; of all we have ever known in India, the Doctor showed the most distressful lack of moral courage and most excited my contempt. He was a member of our Council, on terms of closest intimacy with us, most lavish in offers of assistance; his house ours, his fortune, his horses and carriage: we were his brethren indeed. One evening, at a Council meeting, he took the chair at my request, while I presented certain grave formal charges made by Swami Dyānand against Hurrychund, and at the adjournment we parted excellent friends. Two days later, the Doctor's servant brought me a letter resigning his connection with the Society, without a word of explanation. I could not believe my eyes and thought it some stupid joke; but, hastening to his house, was bewildered by his telling me that it was sober earnest. After repeated demands for an explanation, the truth came out. The Principal of the Medical College had advised him not to have his name connected with ours, as the Government suspected our Society of having political designs! And so, instead of manfully defending us and declaring our perfect indifference to politics, which he, as one of our intimate friends and councillors, could so easily have done, this Doctor of wealth and large practice, who was not in the least dependent on his paltry college appoint-

ment, went straight home and put his cowardice into writing! Every decent American and Englishman will understand the feeling of contempt with which I turned my back on him for ever. The next day, smarting under this sense of injustice, I wrote to the Professor that as his brother foresaw possible inconvenience from sticking to our Society, I hoped that no feeling of delicacy would prevent his own withdrawal if he shared the uneasiness. His answer was his written resignation! I said to another Hindu friend, whom I knew to be really dependent on his paltry Government appointment of 40 rs. per month: "Martandrao Bhai, suppose, on going to office to-morrow morning, you should find on your desk a note to the effect that you had to choose between your membership in the Theosophical Society and your place, as we were under suspicion of political designs, what would you do?" The man's face grew serious, he seemed as if casting up the chances, and then, in a stumbling sort of utterance peculiar to him, and with a shake of the head and compression of the lips, he answered: "I—I could—d not go against my principles!" I threw my arms about him and shouted to H. P. B. in the next room: "Come! come and see a true Hindu and a brave man!" That man's name is Martandrao Babaji Nag-nath; he is a Maratha Brahmin.

Visitors kept on crowding our bungalow, and stopping until late every evening to discuss religious questions. Old and young, it was all the same; and thus did we come, so early in our connection with the Hindus, to know the difference between Western and Eastern ideals of life, and

the greater dignity of the latter. Questions of wealth, color, business, or politics scarcely ever crossed our threshold ; the Soul was the burning topic of debate, and, then, for the first time, H. P. B. and I became absorbed in the problems of its cyclic progressions and reincarnations. We were completely happy in our retired cottage under the cocoa-palms. The arrivals and departures of wealth-laden steamers, the hurly-burly of the Bombay mart, the agonising strife of the share and cotton markets, the petty rivalries of officialdom, the receptions at Government House, did not even enter our thoughts : we were satisfied to be—

“ The world forgetting, by the world forgot.”

Fanatics, if you please ; crazy enthusiasts ; dreamers of unpractical dreams ; devotees of a hobby ; dupes of our imaginations. Yet our dreams were of human perfectibility, our yearnings after divine wisdom, our sole hope to help mankind to higher thinking and nobler living. And, under those umbrageous palms, we were visited in person by Mahâtâmâs ; and their inspiriting presence made us strong to proceed in the path we were treading, and rewarded us an hundredfold for all the treacheries, and jibes, and police surveillance, and slanders, and persecutions we had to undergo. So long as they were with us, what mattered it who might be against us ? The world had not conquered us, but we were destined by our Karma to vanquish its indifference and ultimately deserve its respect.

We knew not, but those Adepts knew, that we two were to serve as the necessary nuclei for the concentration and

diffusion of that âkâshic stream of old Aryan thought which the revolution of cycles had brought again into the focus of human needs. An agent is always indispensable as the vortex-ring of these intellectual and spiritual recrudescences, and, imperfect as we were, we yet were good enough to serve the present purpose, since we had at least the enthusiasm of sympathy and the quality of obedience. Our personal defects counted as nothing in the balance of the public need. Alexandre Dumas, sr., in *Les Hommes de Fer*, poetically puts this idea. "There are moments," says he, "when vague ideas, seeking a body to make themselves man, float above societies like a mist on the surface of the earth: whilst the wind pushes it over the mirror of the lakes and the carpet of the plains, it is but a formless vapor, without consistence or color; but if it encounters a great hill, it attaches itself to its crest, the vapor becomes a cloud, the cloud a shower, and while the brow of the mountain girds on its aureole of lightnings, the water which filters away mysteriously, gathers itself together in the deep cavities, and emerges at its foot, the spring of some great river which, ever swelling, crosses the land or society, and which calls itself the Nile or the *Iliad*, the Po or the *Divina Commedia*."

In these very latest days, a man of science has exhibited large and beautiful pearls, which he compelled some captive shell-fish to make, by placing pellets of wax inside their shells, and leaving the creatures to cover them with a coating of lovely pink nacre in obedience to their natural instinct. The pinch of wax, in this case, was intrinsically

valueless, but it made the nucleus without which the pearls would not have been formed by the animal. So, in a sense, we pioneers of this Theosophical movement served as nuclei around which was formed the sparkling sphere of Aryan wisdom, which is now exciting the wonder of contemporary scholarship by its beauty and its precious worth. Personally, we may have been as intrinsically valueless as the scientist's balls of beeswax, yet what has gathered around this movement of ours is what the world most needed. And each of our earnest fellow-workers is serving as a separate nucleus for the crystallisation of this spiritual nacre.





### CHAPTER III.

#### LAYING FOUNDATIONS.

**I**NTIMATE as Mr. A. P. Sinnett has long been with the Founders of the Theosophical Society, and closely as his name has for years been identified with its name, fame and literature, our acquaintanceship, like all other things, had a beginning. It began with a letter, of date 25th February 1879—nine days after our landing at Bombay—in which, as Editor of the *Pioneer*, he expresses to me the desire of becoming acquainted with H. P. B. and myself, in case we should be coming up country, and his willingness to publish any interesting facts about our mission to India. In common with the whole Indian press, the *Pioneer* had noted our arrival. Mr. Sinnett writes that, from having had a number of chances in London to investigate certain remarkable mediumistic phenomena, he felt more interest than the average journalist in occult questions. The laws of the phenomena being as yet unfathomed, the manifestations given mainly under unsatisfactory conditions, and the intelligence behind them a confusing jumble of assertions

and theories, his curiosity had not been properly satisfied nor his reason convinced. I replied on the 27th, and even if that number was in no other instance fateful of good luck, it certainly did in this one mark the beginning of a most valuable connection and gratifying friendship. Mr. Sinnett's kind offices came at a time when most needed, and I have never forgotten nor ever can forget that we, personally, and the Society lie under a deep debt of obligation to him. Just landed; known to be identified with Asiatic thought and unsympathetic with the ideals of the Anglo-Indian community; having settled in a retired bungalow, in the heart of the Native quarter of Bombay; having been enthusiastically welcomed and accepted by the Hindus, as champions of their ancient philosophies and exponents of their religions; making no call at Government House nor social advances to the European class, and that class being as densely ignorant of Hinduism and Hindus as they were of us and our plans—we really had not the least right to expect favor from our racial kinsfolk, nor to be surprised that Government should suspect us of ulterior motives. Not another Anglo-Indian Editor was disposed to be kind to us, or to be just in his discussion of our views and ideals. Mr. Sinnett alone was our true friend and conscientious critic; but he was a powerful ally, since he controlled the most influential newspaper in India, and more than any other journalist possessed the confidence and respect of the chief officers of Government. Much is to be said later on about the progress of our acquaintance, so for the present it need only be mentioned that a brisk correspondence was

kept up between Mr. and Mrs. Sinnett and our two selves, and that, in the beginning of the following December, we paid them a visit at Allahabad, when a number of interesting circumstances occurred, to be noted in their proper sequence.

It has been remarked already that the Bombay Parsis were friendly from the beginning, calling upon us with their families in numbers, asking us to their homes, dining with us, and pressing me to preside and distribute prizes at an anniversary of a Parsi girls' school. While still in America, I had made friendly overtures to Mr. K. M. Shroff, who had just completed a lecturing tour in my country and returned home. He accepted membership, and on all occasions after our arrival at Bombay rendered us loyal help. He was a young man at that time, and not by a long way as influential in his community as he has since become, but he had innate that capacity for hard work which is the prime factor of success in life. Far more influential Parsi gentlemen than he called on us, among them Mr. K. R. Cama, the Orientalist, and his famous father-in-law, the late Mr. Manockjee Cursetjee, the reforming pioneer, whose charming daughters were, with him, received at several European Courts and universally admired. I see in my Diary that at our first meeting—on 6th March 1879—I pressed upon Mr. Cama's attention the necessity of organising Parsi religious work along Theosophical lines. And I have never ceased doing the like whenever I could get the attention of an influential Parsi. It is a burning shame and disgrace to their community, that their *Shetts* are so



hypnotised by the narcotics of money-getting and worldly success, that they let year after year pass by without using some small portion at least of their great wealth in searching out the fragments of their sacred books in the four corners of their motherland, and doing for their faith, by archaeological research and exploration, what the Christians have done for theirs in Egypt and Palestine. It is a loss to the whole world that the splendor of this magnificent religion is not widely known. Parsi charity is princely, but with all the treasure that has been given by them to objects of public utility, it is sad to think that no millionaire among them, however pious and orthodox, has put aside one little lakh to endow a Parsi Research Society of the kind above hinted at, although it would have helped Zoroastrianism more than all their libraries, hospitals, schools of arts, gymkhanas, drinking fountains, or Prince of Wales' statues.

It has always struck me with wonder, when talking with Anglo-Indians, to see in what distinctly different worlds they and we live in the East: theirs but an extension of their home life, and filled up with threadbare amusements and distractions to make their resting hours pass by with a minimum of ennui: ours a living of Eastern ideals and a thinking of Eastern thoughts, with no spare time for amusements, nor felt necessity for the distractions of games, parties, and violent exercise. Without the personal experience, one could not imagine there was such a contrast. As I write, the memories of those earliest weeks at Bombay come back to me, and without an effort I seem to be able to recall the pettiest incidents of our life in palm-shaded

Girgaum. I remember the compulsory awakening at dawn by the vociferous cawing of countless crows. I remember how my artistic instinct was constantly excited, on glancing about our reception-room or verandah, and noting the pictures of costume, character, and racial types that I saw. I remember the sustained conversations in English, the common medium of communication between the races of the Indian Empire, and the talks and consultations aside in Guzerati, Mahratti, and Hindustani, between fellow tribesmen and castemen. I can in fancy see the lanterns glinting amid the shrubbery, and the columnar trunks of the palm grove brought out into luminous relief by their light. I see ourselves clad in thin clothing and fanned with painted punkahs by Indian servants, the while often wondering how it could be so balmy and warm here and the air so fragrant with odours, while at home icy March winds were sweeping through the streets, and the frozen pavements were ringing like steel under the horses' shoes, and the starving poor huddled together in their misery. It was almost the daily repetition of a pleasant dream. The only link between us and our homes in the West, were the letters that came by each mail, and the tie of sympathy in a common work between us and our then few colleagues at New York, London, and Corfu.

The talk, one evening, had embraced the problem of the universal diffusion of intelligence throughout the Universe, and an amusing proof of its existence in one of the stupidest of birds was about that time given us. There was a fowl-house behind our kitchen, tenanted by a flock of chickens

and one family of ducks—a clumsy Muscovy drake and his three wives. Miss Bates, of our quartette, had the management of the poultry in her hands, and, as usual, they would run towards her whenever she came that way. On a certain evening, after finishing our dinner, we lingered chatting at table, when a loud quack from beneath Miss B.'s chair caused us to start up in surprise. It was the waddling, clumsy, old drake, which, as soon as he saw Miss B. noticing him, quacked again and again, shook his tail, and flapped his wings as though something troubled him. He moved, still quacking, towards the door, looking back at her as though asking her to follow him. We saw that his strange behaviour meant something, so we all followed him out of doors. He led us towards the coop, where a great row seemed to be going on—hens screaming, ducks quacking for dear life. Evidently they had been, or were still being, disturbed by rats. Presently, by the light of our lantern, we saw that one of the old drake's wives had thrust her head and neck through the bamboo slats of the coop, and got caught there by slipping down to a point where a projecting knot of one of the bamboos had narrowed the slit so as to pin her neck fast when she sank: she must have been attacked by some vermin, and, flying in her fright against the palings, passed her neck through, but struck her breast heavily against them and fallen. She would have been strangled if her two sister-wives had not thrust their backs under her, and there they were supporting her weight, while the drake, escaping through a badly fastened door, came and called for Miss Bates' help! The attention of

Messrs. Romanes and Herbert Spencer is invited to this proof of animal intelligence.

Shortly after our settlement in Girgaum occurred an incident which H. P. B. has embalmed as a permanent record, in her delightful *Caves and Jungles of Hindustan*. When I give the simple, sober facts, the reader can see how the glow of her splendid imagination has transformed them beyond recognition, and out of a commonplace incident created a picturesque and awesome romance. As we were sitting in the early evening, a sound as of the monotonous drubbing on a drum caught my attention. It went on and on in the same key, playing no air, but just making a wearisome succession of muffled throbs in the evening air. One of the servants being sent to trace it out, returned after awhile and reported that it was a tom-tom being beaten at a neighbouring house, to announce that a "wise woman" was going to be obsessed by a "goddess," and answer questions about matters of personal interest. The temptation to "assist" at so weird a performance prompted us to go to the spot and see what was up. So H. P. B. took my arm and we went to the house. In a mud-plastered room of fifteen or twenty feet square, we saw thirty or forty low-caste Hindus standing along the walls, some cocoa-nut oil lamps attached to the sides, and, squatting in the centre of the floor, a wild-looking woman, with her hair unbound, swaying her body from side to side, and jerking her head with a circular motion so as to make her long ebon tresses swirl about her, sometimes horizontally, like whip-lashes. Presently a youth entered from the back door, carrying a

broad, low-rimmed circular platter, on which burnt some lumps of camphor, near some pinches of red powder, and some shiny green leaves. He held it near the sybil's face, which she plunged into the camphor-smoke, and sniffed the fumes with murmurs of pleasure. Anon, she sprang to her feet, clutched the brass platter, waved it to right and left, renewed the whirling of her head, and then, with lissom step keeping time to the throbs of the tom-tom, sailed about the room peering into the awe-stricken faces of the Hindu spectators. Having thus made the circuit several times, she suddenly darted towards a woman in the crowd, thrust the platter towards her, and told her something in Marathi, which, of course, we could not understand, but which, it appears, related to her private concerns. Whatever it was, the effect was evident, for the woman started back as if in terror, raised her clasped hands towards the dancing prophetess, and seemed deeply moved. The same thing was repeated with various other spectators, after which the seeress whirled into the middle of the room, spun hither and thither for awhile, chaunted what seemed to be a mantram, and then rushed from the room through the back door. After a few minutes she returned, with her hair dripping with water, flung herself again to the ground, whirled her head as before, again received the tray of burning camphor, and repeated the performance of darting at people and telling them what they wished to know. But her voice was somewhat different this time and her motions less convulsive, which, we were told, was due to the fact that she had passed under the control of another goddess

when she plunged her head into the vessel of water, kept ready outside the door. The novelty of the thing soon wore off for us, and we returned to the house. Only this, and nothing more. There are the simple facts, and nothing more happened. But now, if the reader will turn to *The Caves and Jungles of Hindustan* (p. 176, "A Witch's Den"), he will see what H. P. B. made out of them. Instead of a wretched hovel in the densest quarter of Bombay, with an audience of coolies, we are led on elephants, by torchlight, through a dense forest, "two thousand feet above the Vindhya ridge"; the dead silence is broken by the regular hammering tread of the elephants; "uncanny voices and murmurs" are heard; we dismount from our elephants and scramble through thickets of cacti; we make a party of thirty, including the torch-bearers; the Colonel (viz., myself) orders all the rifles and revolvers to be loaded; after leaving most of our clothing on the thorns of the prickly-pears, climbing a hill and descending into another ravine, we reach the "den" of the *Kangarin*—"the 'Pythia of Hindustan,' who 'leads a holy life,' and is a prophetess." Her cave of Trophonius is in a ruined Hindu temple of "red granite," her habitation in a subterranean passage, where, the people believed, she had lived three hundred years. The square before the temple is lit up by an enormous bonfire, and crowded by "naked savages like so many black gnomes," who jump through some devil-dance to the sound of drums and tambourines. A white-bearded old man springs out and whirls himself around, with arms spread like wings and showing his wolf-like teeth, until he

falls senseless. A mammoth, four-horned skull of the "Sivatherium," heaped about with flowers, lies on the ground. Suddenly, the witch appears—whence or how none could say. She must have been a beauty from the description of the first view of her: "a skeleton seven feet high, covered with brown leather, with a dead child's tiny head stuck on its bony shoulders; the eyes set so deep, and at the same time flashing such fiendish flames all through your body, that you begin to feel your brain stop working, your thoughts become entangled, and your blood freeze in your veins." A very uncomfortable type of the worst genus of the astral tramp! She stands motionless for a while, holding a dish of burning camphor in one hand, a quantity of rice in the other. She looks like a carved idol, with her shrivelled neck encircled with "three rows of golden medallions," her head "adorned with a golden snake," her "grotesque, hardly human body covered by a piece of saffron-yellow muslin." Then follows a description of the obsession of the witch's body by a goddess; her convulsive movements; her vertiginous dancing, in which she moved faster than a dry leaf before the hurricane; the maddening glare of her eyes at you; her convulsions, leapings, and wild, hellish movements; the changes of one obsessing goddess for another, to the number of seven; her revelations and adjurations; an eerie dance with her own shadow; the beating of her head against the granite steps, and so on through twenty pages of as picturesque writing as can be found in our language. The mind that could do this wonderful thing is that of a true genius. What she did

in this instance, she did throughout the book—a minimum of fact was, in each case, made to cover a great area of fancy; as the small lamp in the engine head-light is by parabolic reflectors made to shine over the line like a sort of sun on wheels.

Whatever hopes we may have had of enjoying a retired life were soon dissipated. We not only found ourselves besieged by visitors, some most earnest and entitled to our help, but also drawn into a rapidly widening correspondence, with Hindus principally, about Theosophical matters. Our aims were described so distortedly by the hostile Anglo-Indian press, and that portion of the Vernacular press which, to the undoing of Indian ideals, feeds at the trough of belied "Progress," that we were compelled perforce to threaten legal proceedings against the Editor of the *Dnyanodaya*, the organ of the Presbyterian Marathi Mission, for a gross libel. An ample apology was at once given; yet all Missionaries were not slanderers *ab initio*, for the *Bombay Guardian*, a Missionary organ, said, *à propos* of the discourse mentioned below: "They who anticipated that the lecture would consist of a tirade against Christianity were mistaken. The report given is brief, but we are told by one who heard it, that the lecture was far more an attack upon Hinduism as it is, than upon Christianity." We had also to make a public statement. Accordingly, on the 23rd March, I gave my first public lecture in India at Framji Cowasji Hall, Dhobitalao (the Washermen's Quarter). For novelty and picturesqueness, the scene was the culmination of delight: the contrast between this sea



of multi-colored turbans, snowy muslin dresses, and keen, onyx eyes looking out of handsome brown faces, and the black-costumed, pale-faced, bare-headed audiences of the West, with no touch of bright color save in the women's bonnets, was most striking. The crowd was so dense as to pack the hall, balconies, and stairways, until not one more man could have been crowded in, yet as quiet, orderly, and attentive as though each person had had ample room. Our quartette sat on the platform, which was thronged by the leading personages of the different native communities of Bombay, and my discourse was listened to with breathless attention, interrupted from time to time by applause. It was really a historical event that, for the first time in the recollection of the oldest inhabitant, a Western man should uphold the majesty and sufficiency of Eastern Scriptures, and appeal to the sentiment of patriotic loyalty to the memory of their forefathers, to stand by their old religions; giving up nothing until after its worthlessness had been proven by impartial study. The spirit of the occasion possessed alike speakers and hearers, and there was a moment—I recollect—when I could not restrain my emotion, but had to stop because stifled sobs choked my utterance, I felt like a fool in thus losing my self-command, but I could not help it; the pent-up voice of my heart made my lips dumb, despite all I could do. My theme was "The Theosophical Society and its aims,"\* and contained as full explanations as I could give. It should be noted that the view taken then was that the redemption of any nation

\* *Vide Theosophy, Religion and Occult Science, p. 49 et seq.*

must come through its own self-evolved leaders, not from without, and that if the downfall of India was to be arrested, the inspired agent must be sought within her boundaries, not in foreign lands, nor among aliens. For ourselves, we utterly disclaimed all pretence of leadership or qualifications for the same. I believe, after twenty years' Indian experience, that this is the sound view, and the only tenable one. I also believe, as I then stated, that this necessary spiritual Teacher exists, and in the fulness of time will appear. For, truly, the signs of his coming multiply daily, and who shall say that our Society, Mrs. Besant, Vivekánanda, Dharmapála, and others are not the *avant couriers* of the blessed day when spiritual yearnings shall again fill the Eastern heart, and materialistic grovelings be things of the black past?

Naturally, under the circumstances, the above event made a pretty strong impression. The *Indian Spectator* said: "A greater mission never was conceived. Let the Aryans make common cause; let the Hindus, Parsis, Mahommedans, Christians forget their differences, and the day of India's regeneration is not far off." It was noted as a coincidence that the Address happened to be delivered on the day on which a new year and new era commenced, according to the Sak Salivan, the Calendar used at Bombay. The *Amrita Basaar Patrika* (8th May 1879) said our object was "the grandest ever undertaken by man," and prayed us to come and dwell at Calcutta. In the ear of the India of 1899, after the changes that have since been wrought in Native opinion, the following utterance of the

Editor of the *Patrika* will sound like rankest pessimism. He welcomed us, but said we came too late :

“What can the doctor do,” he asks, “when the patient is already stiff and cold? India is dead to all sense of honor and glory. India is an inert mass which no power of late has yet been able to move. . . . India has no heart, and those of her children who have yet any portion of it left, have been deadened by blank despair. Talk of regenerating India to the Indians? You might as well talk to the sands of the sea.”

This is emotional faint-heartedness, not the perspicacity and foresight of statesmanship. Shishir Babu forgot what even the elementary knowledge of agriculture as practised in his native village ought to have taught him, viz., that the seed must be planted before the shade of the tree can be enjoyed, or the cereal harvest be available as daily food. Events have belied his lugubrious prognosis, and the Indian peoples are already searching backwards together for the sources of Aryan ideals. It is but a little way they have gone, it is true, yet the “inert corpse” of India, which the Calcutta Jeremiah of 1879 depicted, has proved itself a very living entity, and is calling upon its children to look up the ancient scriptures once more for the profit of mankind.





## CHAPTER IV.

### MANY WONDERS.

**B**EGINNING with the 29th March (1879), there were a series of strange occurrences in which Mooljee Thackersey was an essential, sometimes the chief witness—excluding H. P. B. On the day in question she told Mooljee to fetch a buggy, and, when it came, mounted into it with him. She refused to answer his questions as to whither she was going, simply telling him to order the driver to turn to right or left or go straight ahead, as she might direct. What happened Mooljee told us on their return in the evening. She had directed the course by numerous windings of streets and country roads, until they found themselves at a suburb of Bombay, eight or ten miles distant, in a grove of coniferæ. The name is not written in my Diary, but I think it was Parel, though I may be mistaken. At any rate, Mooljee knew the place, because he had cremated his mother's body in that neighbourhood. Roads and paths crossed each other confusedly in the wood, but H. P. B. never faltered as to her course, and bade the

driver turn and turn until they came to the sea-shore. Finally, to Mooljee's amazement, they were brought up by the gate of a private estate, with a magnificent rose-garden in front and a fine bungalow with spacious Eastern verandahs in the back-ground. H. P. B. climbed down and told Mooljee to await her there, and not for his life to dare come to the house. So there he waited in a complete puzzle; for such a property he, a lifelong resident of Bombay, had never heard of before. He called one of several gardeners who were hoeing the flowers, but the man would tell him nothing as to his master's name, how long he had lived there, or when the bungalow was built: a most unusual thing among Hindus. H. P. B. had walked straight up to the house, had been received cordially at the door by a tall Hindu of striking and distinguished appearance, clad entirely in white, and had gone inside. After some time the two reappeared, the mysterious stranger bade her farewell, and handed her a great bunch of roses which one of the gardeners brought to his master for the purpose, and H. P. B. rejoined her escort, re-entered the buggy, and ordered the driver to return home. All that Mooljee could draw out of H. P. B. was that the stranger was an Occultist with whom she was in relation and had business to transact with that day. The roses, she said, he had sent by her to myself. The strangest part of this story to us was that, so far as we knew, there was no possibility of H. P. B.'s having learnt anything about this suburb and the way to it, at any rate since our arrival at Bombay, for she had never left the house alone, yet that she had shown the completest

familiarity with both. Whether any such bungalow existed or not, we had no means of knowing save on Mooljee's testimony. He was so amazed with his experience as to go telling it to his friends in the town, which led one, who professed to know the suburb in question perfectly, to lay a wager of 100 rs. that there was no such bungalow by the sea-shore, and that he could not guide anyone to it. When H. P. B. heard this, she offered to bet Mooljee that he would lose the other wager; whereupon he, declaring that he could retrace every foot of the way by which they had gone, closed with the offer, and I had a carriage called at once, and we three entered it. By another Hindu interpreter, I ordered the coachman to strictly follow Mr. M.'s directions as to our route, and off we went. After a long drive by devious ways, we reached the wood, in whose shady depths the mysterious bungalow was supposed to stand. The soil was almost pure sea-sand, bestrewn with a brown mulch of pine-needles, or those of some other conifer, possibly the casuarina. We could see a number of roads running in different directions, and I told Mooljee that he must keep a sharp lookout, or he would assuredly get lost. He, however, was as confident as possible, despite the gibes thrown at him by H. P. B. about his state of mystification and the certain loss of his 100 rs. For an hour we drove on, now to this side, now to the other, now stopping for him to dismount from the box and look about him. At last—and just a minute or so after his declaring himself perfectly sure that we were driving straight for the seaside bungalow—a train rattled by on a

near embankment, and thus showed poor Mooljee that he had guided us in the very opposite direction from the one desired! We offered to give him as much time as he liked to pursue his search, but he felt completely baffled and gave in as beaten. So we drove home. H. P. B. told all of us that Mooljee would have found the mystical bungalow if a glamor had not been brought to bear on his sight, and, moreover, that the bungalow, like all other spots inhabited by Adepts, was always protected from the intrusion of strangers by a circle of illusion formed about it and guarded and kept potent by elemental servitors. This particular bungalow was in the constant keeping of an agent who could be relied upon, and used as an occasional resting and meeting place by Gurus and Chêlâs when travelling. All the buried ancient libraries, and those vast hoards of treasure which must be kept hidden until its Karma requires its restoration to human use, are, she said, protected from discovery by the profane, by illusory pictures of solid rocks, unbroken solid ground, a yawning chasm, or some such obstacle, which turns aside the feet of the wrong men, but which Máya dissolves away when the predestined finder comes to the spot in the fulness of time. This story coincides with all folk-lore tradition, and anyone who has seen even one of an hundred recorded proofs of hypnotic inhibition in modern hospitals and clinics, can readily accept the reasonableness of such a tale of mayâvic engirdlement: the Devil is no longer accepted (outside the Vatican) as sole hypnotiser of mankind, and Charcot, Liébault, de Rochas, and others have shown us the scientific

reasonableness of the old tales of Sorcery and Magic. At any rate, I give this story for what it may be worth, as I do in all cases where I myself was not an eye-witness, when I say my say in all candor, and leave the public to believe or disbelieve as they see fit: it is nothing to me. If my own opinion be asked, I should say that to my mind the story of the bungalow seems probably true, for, as mentioned in a former chapter, we were visited in our Girgaum cottage by more than one Adept in the flesh, and one moonlight night, Damodar and I were with H. P. B. on the road leading towards the hidden house, when one came up to and saluted us at not more than arm's-length distance. But the details need not be mentioned here, as I have other things to first tell.

We now come in chronological order to a momentous country trip whose incidents have been expanded and glorified through some sixty pages in *The Caves and Jungles of Hindustan*. Until comparatively a short time ago, it lingered in my memory as a chapter of the most trustworthy as well as exciting episodes in my relations with H. P. B. As perfect candor is my aim, I shall narrate my facts, with such comments as the present state of my mind permits me to offer.

H. P. B., Mooljee, and I left Bombay by train 4th April 1879, for a trip to Karli Caves. Our servant Babula accompanied us. This was our entire party. We had with us no "Brahman from Poona, Moodelliar from Madras, Sinhalese from Kegalla, Bengali Zemindar, or gigantic Rajput"—visible to me, at any rate. At Narel



station we left the train, and took palanquins up the hill to Materan, the chief sanitarium of Bombay. I was given to understand that we had been invited to Karli by a certain Adept with whom I had had close relations in America during the writing of *Isis*; and that the sundry provisions for our comfort *en route* had been ordered by him. I was not in the least surprised, then, to find at Narel station a Hindu servant of the better class, *i. e.*, not a house menial, who came forward, and, after saluting, gave a message in Marathi, which Mooljee interpreted to be the compliments of his master, and a request that we should graciously choose whether we would have palanquins or ponies for the ascent, as both were ready. H. P. B. and I chose palanquins, and Mooljee and Babula ponies. Then away we went in the day-bright moonshine, twelve bearers to each "palkee" — fair-sized, strong, muscular, dark-brown fellows, of the Thakoor clan, who trotted along in broken step (so as not to jar the person in the palkee), keeping time by a sweet-voiced, measured cadence that, in its novelty, was extremely pleasant to hear, but which grew monotonously tiresome after awhile. I had never before made such a poetical journey as this through that tropic night, with the sky ablaze with vividly bright stars before the moon had risen, myriad insects chirping to each other, the night birds crying to their mates, the great bats silently sailing in tortuous gyrations in quest of food, the palm fronds crackling and jungle leaves rustling, the smell of the earth, mingling now and again with that of spicy buds in a warmer air-current through which we passed, and with

all the chant of the panting palkee-wallahs as they nimbly swung along. As for the escort of numberless chattering monkeys, the "thundering roars of tigers," and the "Portuguese inn, woven like an eagle's nest out of bamboos," the less said the better in a sober historical narrative. We certainly reached the Alexandra Hotel in due course, supped at 11, went to bed quietly, rose early the next morning and enjoyed the splendid view from the verandah. Mooljee was out when I awoke, but returned an hour later with the story that he had been aroused before daybreak by the man who had met us at Narel, and shown a completely furnished bungalow which, he said, was at our disposal free of rent, for such time as we chose to occupy it. But by breakfast time, H. P. B. had become nauseated with what she called "the aura of Anglo-Indian civilisation," and refused to stop over a single day. So, despite the landlord's warning against the fierce heat of the sun, away we started and rode to Narel again, in a temperature like that of the stoke-room on a steamer. By good luck neither of us were sunstruck, and in due course got the train and went on to Khandalla, a delightful place in the hills. Our same universal provider met us here also, with a spacious bullock-carriage in which he took us to the Government rest-house (dâk bungalow), where we spent the next day and night. The evening of our arrival, Mooljee strolled down to the railway station for a chat with the station-master, an old acquaintance, and got a surprise. A train came in from Bombay and stopped at the platform, when he heard his name loudly called. Looking from

carriage to carriage he saw a Hindu beckoning and went to his window. The unknown proved to be the personage whom H. P. B. had visited! He handed him a fresh bouquet of what seemed to be the same kinds of roses as he had seen in the mysterious garden of the taciturn gardeners, and which were the most beautiful he had ever seen. "These," said the gentleman, as the train moved on, "are for Colonel Olcott; give him them, please." So Mooljee brought them to me and told his story. An hour later I told H. P. B. that I should like to thank the Adept for his courtesies to our party, and if she could get it delivered, should write him. She assented, so the note was written and given her. She handed it to Mooljee and requested him to go down the public road before us and deliver it. "But," he asked, "to whom, and where: it bears no name nor address on the cover?" "No matter; take it and you will see to whom you must give it." He accordingly moved off down the road, but after ten minutes came running back, breathless and exhibiting every sign of surprise. "It's gone!" he faltered. "What?" "The letter, he took it." "Who took it?" I inquired. "I don't know, Colonel, unless it was a pisácha: he came up out of the ground, or so it seemed to me. I was walking slowly along, looking to right and left, and not knowing what I must do to carry out H. B. P.'s orders. There were no trees or bushes for a person to hide in, but just the white, dusty road. Yet suddenly, as if he had come out of the ground, there was a man a few yards off, coming towards me. It was the man of the rose-bungalow, the man who

gave me the flowers for you at Khandalla Station, and whom I had seen carried away in the train towards Poona!" "Nonsense, man," I replied, "you've been dreaming." "No, I was as wide awake as I ever was in my life. The gentleman said, 'You have a letter for me—that one in your hand; have you not?' I could hardly speak, but I said, 'I don't know, Maharaj, it has no address.' 'It is for me, give it.' He took it from me and said, 'Now, go back.' I turned my back for an instant and looked to see if he was there, but he had disappeared: the road was vacant! Frightened, I turned and ran, but had not got away fifty yards when a voice at my very ear said, 'Don't be foolish, man; keep cool; all is right.' This frightened me still more, for no man was in sight. I fled, and here I am." Such was Mooljee's story, which I repeat exactly as he told it to me. If appearances go for anything, he must have spoken truth, for his fright and excitement were too evident to have been simulated by so clumsy an actor as he. At all events, a certain request contained in that letter was answered in a letter from this same Adept, which I got later, at the dāk bungalow in Bhurtpore, Rajputana, more than a thousand miles distant from this place of Mooljee's adventure. And that goes for something.

It was a moonlight night, glorious beyond anything we see in the colder Western lands, and the air sweet, bland and pure, making physical existence a charm. We three sat out on the lawn enjoying it until late, planning our visit to Karli Caves for the next day.

Towards the end of the evening, H. P. B. came out of a state of mental abstraction in which she had been sitting for some minutes, and told me that at 5 P.M., the next day, a Sanyâsi or Sanyâsis would visit us at the Caves. I recorded the forewarning before retiring: the sequel will be seen presently.

At 4 o'clock in the morning Baburao, the Adept's supposed agent, silently entered the room where Mooljee and I slept, wakened me with a touch, thrust into my hand a small, round lacquered box containing a *pan sopâri*, or betel-leaf with spice accompaniments, such as is given to guests, and whispered in my ear the name of the Adept under whose protection we were alleged to be on this trip. The significance of the gift was that in the mystical school with which we have had to do, this is the sign of adoption of the new pupil. We rose, bathed, had coffee, and at 5 left in the bullock-coach (*shigram*) for Karli, which we reached at 10. By this time there was a blazing sunshine, and we had a hard climb of it up the footpath from the foot of the hill to the Caves. H. P. B. became so distressed for breath that finally some coolies brought a chair and carried her the last half of the ascent. It is foreign to my purpose to enter into a description of the awe-inspiring, grandiose rock-temple and its adjacent smaller cave-dormitories, which are given in every guidebook, with all their details of measurements. My narrative is concerned only with the personal adventures of our little party.

We found a festival of Rama in progress in the neigh-

boring village, with a great crowd, and I found it very amusing to observe its novel features. Tired with our hot climb, we went inside the great Cave, and spreading our blankets camped on the rocky floor. By-and-bye we had our lunch, although feeling half-ashamed to be satisfying the vulgar cravings of the stomach in the aisle of a fane where, centuries before our era, thousands of ascetic recluses had worshipped, and with chaunts of sacred slokas and gathas, united in helping each other to dominate the animal self and develop their spiritual power. Our talk, of course, ran upon the noble theme of the rise, progress, and decadence of the Brahma Vidya in India, and our hopes of its recrudescence. On these worthy subjects discoursing, we passed the time away until, looking at my watch, I found that it lacked but six minutes to 5 o'clock; so Mooljee and I left H. P. B. and went to the gate-house which guards the entrance to the Cave, and waited. No ascetic was then in sight, but in about ten minutes, there came one who drove before him a cow, which was deformed by a short fifth leg that grew from its hump. A servant accompanied him. The ascetic's face was gentle and attractive. He had flowing black hair, and a full beard, parted down the chin in the Rajput fashion, with the ends turned over the ears and worked in with the hair of the head. He was robed in the saffron-hued cloths (*bhāgwa*) of his order. Across his intellectual forehead was the smear of grey ashes (*Vibhuti*) which indicates the follower of Shiva. We watched for some sign or look of recogni-

tion, but getting none, at last joined and drew him into conversation. He explained his presence there when by rights he should have been faring on towards Hardwar, by saying that the previous day, while on his road to that noted shrine, his Guru had ordered him to be here at 5 o'clock this day, as there were persons for him to meet. No orders beyond that had been given him. If we were expecting him, then we must have been the persons his Guru had in mind, but he had no message for us, as yet at all events. No, his Guru had not told him in person, but—this we drew from him after much cross-questioning and after an interval of silence, in which he seemed to be listening to some invisible person—by a voice, as if spoken into his ear. That was the way he always received his orders while travelling. Finding that we could get no more out of him, we took temporary leave and returned to H. P. B. Our determination to pass the night on the hill being made known to Baburao, he and Mooljee went in search of a suitable shelter, and on their return we and our luggage were removed to a small cave-dormitory cut into the hill, some distance to the right of the great cave-temple. The ancient sculptors had fashioned a two-pillared small porch at the entrance, and inside ten cubicles, with open doorways, giving on to a central square hall or chamber of assembly. To the left of the porch a basin, cut in the rock, received the waters of a spring of deliciously cool and clear water. H. P. B. told us that from one of the cubicles in one of these small caves, a secret door com-

municated with other caves in the heart of the mountain, where a school of adepts still lived, but whose existence was not even suspected by the general public: and that if I could find the right portion of rock, and handle it in a particular fashion, no hindrance would be made to my entrance—a liberal offer considering the circumstances! However, I tried, and in another little cave some way off I did actually put my hand on a place and was about to try to move it when H. P. B. began calling me back in haste. The Adept writer of the Bhurtpore letter told me that I had actually hit upon the right place and would have prematurely penetrated to his retreat if I had not been called away. However, this is unprovable for the present, so let me proceed. Mooljee and Babula had gone to the village bazaar with Baburao, to buy provisions, and H. P. B. and I were left alone. We sat in the porch smoking and chatting, until she bade me stop where I was for a few minutes and not look around until she told me. She then passed inside the cave, as I thought to go into one of the cubicles for a nap on the rock-hewn block that served as the old monk's bed. I kept on smoking and looking over the wide landscape that lay before me like a great map, when suddenly, from within the cave, I heard a sound like the slamming of a heavy door and a burst of satirical laughter. Naturally I turned my head, but H. P. B. had disappeared. She was in neither of the cells, which I examined in detail, nor could I, with the minutest search over every inch of the rocky surfaces of



their walls, find the least crack or other sign of a door; there was nothing palpable to eye or touch but living rock. I had had so long and varied an experience of H. P. B.'s psychological eccentricities, that I soon ceased to bother myself about the mystery and returned to the porch and my pipe, in placid inclination to wait for what might happen. A half-hour had passed since her disappearance, when I heard a footstep just behind me and was addressed by H. P. B. in person, in a natural tone, as if nothing had happened out of the common. In reply to my question as to where she had been, she simply said she had "had business" with . . . . (mentioning the Adept) and gone to see him in his secret chambers. Curiously enough, she held in her hand a rusty old knife of a strange pattern, which she said she had picked up in one of the masked passages, and purposelessly had brought along. She would not let me keep it, but flung it out into the air with all her force, and I saw it fall in a thicket far down the hillside. I do not explain the above occurrence, leaving each reader to make what he may out of the facts. Yet, to forestall what will unquestionably occur to many minds of a certain bias, I may say that, barring the rusty knife, all is explicable on the theory of hypnotic suggestion. The sound of the slammed rock-door and the shout of laughter, H. P. B.'s seeming disappearance and subsequent sudden reappearance, can all be accounted for as hypnotic *mâyâ* cast on me by her. She may have passed out by the porch at my very side, gone elsewhere, and returned before my

very eyes without my seeing her. This is one explanation, and a very rickety one it will be to anyone who has had to do, in the state of pupilage, with a real Adept of Eastern Magic.

Our people in time returned; we had a warm supper served to us in the cave-porch, and then after admiring the moonlight panorama, and having a last smoke, all rolled ourselves in our blankets and lay down on the rock-floor and slept quietly until morning. Baburao sat at the porch-door and tended a wood-fire that we kept burning as a protection against wild beasts. But—save one wretched little jackal that slunk by in the night—none came to break our rest. The *Caves and Jungles* story about my falling down a precipice and being rescued by the Sanyási and his five-legged cow is all fiction; so are the “far-away roars of the tigers rising from the valley,” the night attack on us by a huge tiger, the casting of it into the abyss by adept will-power, and the weeping of “Miss X.”—a totally unknown quantity. These were the plums and spices that H. P. B. put into her charming Indian wonder-book, to make it interesting to the Russian public, in whose language it was originally written. Equally misleading is her account of a snake-charming performance as occurring at Karli Caves, the truth being that the thing happened in our own house at Girgaum; as will be seen later on, when I come to the case in its due order.

Mooljee and I were up before H. P. B. the next morning, and after a wash at the spring, he went down to the

village while I stood on the path enjoying the early morning view over the plains. After awhile, to my gratification, I saw the cow-owning Sanyāsi coming towards me with the evident intention of speaking. I was at a loss what to do, as neither H. P. B. nor I knew a word of either of the vernaculars. But my doubt as to the issue was soon solved by his coming close up to me, taking my hand, giving our T. S. private tokens of brotherhood, and pronouncing in my ear the Adept's name! Then saluting me most gracefully, he bowed and went his way. We saw him no more.

We passed that day in exploring the caves, and at 4.30 P.M. wended back to the Khandalla rest-house. But while still in the Great Cave H. P. B. passed on to me an order, telepathically received, she said, from the Adept, that we should go to Rajputana, in the Punjab. After supper we sat out again on the moon-glorified lawn of the travellers' bungalow, this time in company with two other travellers—Anglo-Indians, who retired early, leaving us three alone. My two companions strolled about conversing together and disappeared behind the house, but Mooljee speedily returned and, as it seemed, in a daze of confusion, saying that she had disappeared before his very eyes while he stood talking to her in the moonlight. He seemed really about to have a fit of hysterics, so much did he tremble. I bade him sit down and keep quiet, and not make such a fool of himself, as he had merely been made the subject of a glamor, which was a very harmless affair, such as any good mesmeriser

could accomplish on his sensitive subject.\* She soon reappeared and resumed her seat, and our chat went on. Presently two white-robed Hindu men were seen crossing the lawn obliquely past us, some fifty yards off. They stopped when opposite our position and Mooljee was sent by H. P. B. to talk with them. As he stood with them doing this, she repeated to me what she said was their conversation and which Mooljee corroborated a moment later on rejoining us. It was a message to me to the effect that my letter to the Adept had been received and accepted, and that I should get the answer when I reached Rajputana. Before Mooljee could finish this brief report, I saw the two pupil-messengers walk away a short distance, pass behind a small bush not thick or large enough to screen a white-robed man, especially in that vivid moonlight, and disappear: there was open lawn about the bush, but the two had vanished from sight most effectually. Naturally I obeyed my first impulse to run across the lawn and search behind the bush for some signs of a subterranean place of refuge;

\* She herself specifies with full candor, on p. 588 of vol. II. of *Isis*, this illusion-casting power as one of the acquired functions of a thaumaturgist, thus:

“The thaumaturgist, thoroughly skilled in occult science, can cause himself (that is, his physical body) to *seem* to disappear, or to apparently take on any shape that he may choose. He may make his astral form visible, or he may give it a protean appearance. In both cases, these results will be achieved by a mesmeric hallucination of the senses of all witnesses, simultaneously brought on. This hallucination is so perfect that the subject of it would take his life that he saw a reality, when it is but a picture in his own mind, impressed upon his consciousness by the irresistible will of the mesmeriser.”

but I found nothing, the sod was unbroken, the bush had not a twig bent out of its natural place. I had simply been hypnotised.

We left for Bombay the next morning by mail train, but our adventures were not yet finished. Baburao bade us farewell at Khandalla Station after refusing to accept the *douceur* I pressed upon him—a rare stretch of self-denial, as anyone familiar with Hindu serving-men will declare. We three friends had a second-class carriage to ourselves; Babula found room in the third-class. After awhile, Mooljee stretched himself out on one of the benches and fell asleep, while H. P. B. and I sitting side by side on the cross-bench—she next the left-hand window—talked about our occult affairs in general. She finally said, “I do wish that . . . (the Adept) had not made me pass on verbally to you his message about Rajputana!” “Why?” “Because Wimbridge and Miss Bates will think it all humbug, a trick to make you take me on a pleasant journey and leave them moping at home.” “Bosh!” I said; “I don’t need anything more than your word for it.” “But I tell you,” she replied, “they will think hardly of me for it.” “Then,” I said, “it would have been far better if he had given you a note, which he could have done easily. Well, it’s too late to worry about it now. Khandalla is fifteen or twenty miles behind us, and so let it go.” She brooded over the idea a few minutes, and then said: “Well, I shall try, anyhow: it is not too late.” She then wrote something on a page of her pocket-book in two kinds of character, the upper half

Senzar—the language of all her personal writings from the Mahatmas—the lower half English, which she allowed me to read. It ran thus—

*“Ask Goolab Singh to telegraph to Olcott the orders given him through me at the cave yesterday; let it be a test to others as well as to himself.”*

Tearing the leaf out, folding it into a triangular shape, and inscribing on it some peculiar symbolical signs (which, she said, dominated the Elementals), she took it between her thumb and forefinger of the left hand, as if about to throw it out of the window. I, however, caught and held her hand, saying, “You want this to be a test to me? Then let me re-open the billet, and see what you do with it.” She consenting, I looked inside the note, returned it to her, and, at her express bidding, watched it when she flung it from the train. It was touched by the outer edge of the air-rush made by the train, and whirled outwards towards a solitary tree near the track. We were then 3,000 feet high, up among the peaks of the Western Ghâts, with no human habitation in sight at the moment, and but very few trees beside the railway track. Just before I let her fling out the billet, I awoke Mooljee, told him what she was about doing, with him took the time by my watch, and he joined me in signing a certificate in my own note-book, which now lies before me, and from which I have refreshed my memory as to these details. The certificate is dated at “Kurjeet Station, G. I. P. R., 8th April 1879, at 12.45 P.M.,” and signed by Mooljee Thackersey as witness.

At Kurjeet, Mooljee and I wanted to descend and stretch our legs a bit on the platform, but H. P. B. said that neither of us should leave the train until we reached Bombay: she had her orders, and we would understand them in due time. So we remained with her in the carriage. In schedule time we reached home, and I at once went on an errand to the Kalbadevi Road and was gone an hour. On returning I was met by Miss Bates, who handed me a sealed Government telegraph cover, saying that she had received it from the messenger (peon) and receipted for it in my name. It read as follows:—

*"Time 2 P.M. Date 8-4-1879.*

*From Kurjeet To Byculla.*

*From Goolab Singh To H. S. Olcott.*

*Letter received. Answer Rajputana. Start immediately."*

As I said above, until a few months ago, I regarded this as one of the most unmistakably genuine proofs of H. P. B.'s occult relations I had ever received. It so impressed all my friends, among them one in London and one in New York, to whom I forwarded it for examination. The friend at New York, moreover, reported a strange fact, which I am glad to say I recorded in my Diary for the following 1st July, after receipt of the Overland Mail of that day: Mr. John Judge, brother of W. Q. Judge—the friend in question—wrote that the name of the sender of the telegram (Goolab Singh) had entirely faded out, and he had no clue, therefore, to the sender. He enclosed the original despatch in his letter and I found the name had again become *perfectly*

*visible*, as it is to this day. The one weak point in the whole series of phenomena is that—as I learned quite recently—Baburao had been engaged by Mooljee to look after our party at Materan, Khandalla, and Karli Cave! It is for this reason that I have so minutely described the incidents of our pleasant trip, leaving each reader to judge for himself.







## CHAPTER V.

### A JOURNEY TO NORTHERN INDIA.

THE extension of our movement to foreign countries obliged me to devise a plan for its expansion on cosmopolitan lines and make some change in its rules. This was effected at Bombay, and the new draft being approved by several of our wisest Indian colleagues, it was published along with the text of my Framji Cowasji Institute lecture. Other modifications have been since made from time to time as experience suggested, and events of recent occurrence point to the necessity for still further modifications. The ideal which should be ever kept in view is the making of a Federation under which the completest autonomy may be enjoyed by local Sections, while ever keeping a strong sense of the dependence of the whole movement upon the central nucleus and the common interest in its strict preservation and effective management.

On Good Friday—11th April 1879—H. P. B., Mooljee Thackersey, and I, with our servant Babula, left Bombay

for the visit to Rajputana ordered at Karli Caves. The temperature of the air was suffocatingly hot, and, with the dust, made us suffer greatly in the train. Whether on account of my physical discomfort or not, I cannot say, but I went that night in the astral body to visit the resident of the Karli subterraneans, but did not penetrate to his inner retreat. All I can recollect is what is noted in my Diary, viz., that I entered one of the galleries leading to it from the dormitory where our party encamped, with Baburao sitting on guard at the entrance door.

We reached Allahabad on the 13th, and were met at the station by Swami Dyānand's local chief disciple, Pandit Sunderlal, who gave us small encouragement as to the prospects of our work in the North-Western Provinces—a forecast since happily negated by the results of twenty-one years' changes in Indian public opinion. We put up at the Railway Company's Dāk Bungalow which stands within the station compound, and I can well recollect that the heat was so terrific as to make even the Hindu Mooljee catch his breath when we ventured outside the house. A lively Frenchman, Babula's former master, formerly steward of the Byculla Club, Bombay—and not, as so often asserted, a professional conjurer—was in charge of the station refreshment room, and he enlivened our repasts by telling stories of the frequent deaths of Europeans in the trains from heat apoplexy! To stout persons like H. P. B. and myself this was most reassuring. In the cool of the day we went to the bank of the Jumna to pay a visit to a remarkable old ascetic named Babu Surdass, a follower of the Sikh Guru

Nanak, who exemplified in his person to a pre-eminent degree the possibilities of an obstinately fixed purpose. Since the year 1827, that is to say, for fifty-two years, he had sat through all the seasons of heat, of rains, and of cold, on a low brick platform near the Fort, without a shelter over his head : braving all violent extremes of weather and ever meditating upon religious things. There he had sat throughout the Mutiny, paying no attention to the thundering cannon or the fights that raged throughout that district of country : their turbulent rumors could not penetrate within the realm of thought where he passed his existence. On this day of our visit the sun blazed on us like a fierce fire, but his head was bare and yet he did not seem to feel any inconvenience. The whole day long he squats on his place and the whole night as well, save at midnight, when he goes to the confluence of the two sacred streams, Ganges and Jumna, to bathe and worship. The hardships of his protracted penance have made him blind and he has to be led to the riverside, yet his face wears a cheerful look, and his smile is frank and sweet. If New Yorkers will recall the features of the late Mr. George Jones, founder of the *N. Y. Times*, they will have an excellent idea of this Sikh Sanyasi's appearance. Through Mooljee as interpreter, H. P. B. and I conversed with the old man. He told us he was 100 years old, which may be true or not, it doesn't matter, but as to the length of his stay on that brick *gadi*, that is a matter of history. And how curious a commentary is his case upon the ideals of our worldly society ; how impressive the fact of his sitting silent and unmoved, in

religious introspection, throughout a half-century of human passions, raging around him, yet as powerless to affect him for weal or woe as the surges beating about the foot of a cliff are to move it upon its base. His conversation embodied some poetical images, as for instance, when he said that the Wise Ones caught at and appropriated grains of truth as the pearl-oyster catches a raindrop to convert it into a pearl. He was quite unmoved by my telling him the real truth about the making of pearls; Science was wrong, he said, and he held to his comparison. Using the familiar illustration in the Shâstras, he reminded us that only by keeping the mind calm and the soul unperturbed can one perceive truth, as the image of the sun can only be seen in smooth water. And, as regards adversity and troubles: experience of these things brings out the sweetest essence of human knowledge, as the attar is obtained by expressing and distilling the petals of roses. When asked if he could show us phenomena, he turned his sightless orbs towards the speaker, and sadly remarked that the Wise Man never permitted his attention to be drawn aside from the search after spirit by these playthings of the ignorant; which was what they really are. When in the proper mood he has the faculty of seeing forward and backward in time, but he declined to give us any practical proofs of his clairvoyance. Every time that I have revisited Allahabad since that first occasion I have been in the habit of paying my respects to the old Sanyâsi, but on the last occasion I learnt that he was dead. It would be most instructive to learn to what extent his life-long physical self-

restraint has modified his condition in the next sphere of consciousness.

From Allahabad we moved on to Cawnpore, where we met our new friend Ross Scott and his brother, an engineer in Government service. An early morning visit was paid the next day to another Sanyāsi, who had been living on the sandy plain across the Ganges in a state of nudity for about a year. He had a refined, spiritual face, an emaciated body, and an air of perfect indifference to worldly things. I was struck by the collapse of his stomach, which seemed as if its digestive functions were seldom called into action. He, too, refused to show us phenomena, with an expression of apparent disdain: evidently these Hindu seekers after spirit are on a different level from our own Western ones, and would make little account of the best miracles of our most excellent mediums. So it seemed to me, at any rate. He, however, told us about a famous ascetic, named Jungli Shah, who is credited with having done the miracle of the "Loaves and Fishes" more than once, by multiplying the food of a single person to such an extent that he was able to feed hundreds with it and give each a full meal. Since then I have heard several times of the same thing being done by different Sanyāsis. It is considered by the higher proficients in magic a comparatively easy thing to multiply a single thing, like a grain of rice, a fruit, a quantity of water, etc., the main requisite being that there shall be a nucleus around which the adept can collect the matter of space. But I should greatly like to know if these miraculous increments of food and drink are anything better than illusions; and if,

provided they are not, whether those who partake of the wonder-food are nourished by it. I recollect Professor Bernheim's showing me how, by suggestion, he could make a hypnotised patient at one moment feel his stomach full of food, and the next feel it empty and be voraciously hungry. Our young Sanyâsi also ascribed to Lukhi Bâwâ and another ascetic the power of changing water into *ghae* (clarified butter). He also told us that he himself had, twenty years before, seen still another Sanyâsi cause a felled tree to be restored to full vigor of branch and leaf; and, the less wonderful fact—provided it was a mere case of paralysis of the optic nerves—of his own eyesight having been restored to him by a Guru at Muttra, the sacred city of Shri Krishna.

At 3 P.M. we mounted an elephant for a visit to Jajmow an ancient ruined city, four miles from Cawnpore, which is said to have been the capital of the Lunar Race in 5000 B.C. It figures in *Caves and Jungles* in a much travestied form. Our objective there was the *Ashram* of the old Sanyâsi named Lukhi Bâwâ, above mentioned. We found him a man of venerable presence, a philosopher and erudite astrologer. He was as like the late Mr. John W. Mitchell, the New York lawyer, as if he were his twin brother. And I may say here, in parenthesis, that throughout Asia I have been finding everywhere these striking likenesses to Western friends, acquaintances, and public personages. The color of their skins makes the resemblances all the more impressive, and suggests the question whether a parity of evolutionary psychical forces, under the guidance of Karma, produces the same type of features regardless of

racial peculiarities. The likenesses have equally struck my attention whether the local type was Caucasian, Mongolian, Semitic, or Negroid.

Again we were denied our wish for wonders, this third ascetic appealed to within as many days refusing to produce phenomena for us, or help us to find a wonder-worker. So much for the serious part of this excursion, but there is its other and comical side. There was no howdah (cab) on the elephant (whose florid name was Chenchal Peri, the Active Fairy), but only a "pad," or large mattress, which is strapped on by huge girths fastening under the animal's body. It requires some skill and a good balance to keep on this seat when the animal is in motion, and I leave the acquaintances of H. P. B. to imagine what happened when she turned rider along with four other neophytes to share the limited area of cushion. Out of politeness we first helped her up the short ladder, of course expecting that she would play us fair, but not she, indeed: she planted herself square in the middle of the pad and not one inch would she budge to give us a chance. In fact, her expressions were extremely forcible when we asked her to remember that she was not to have the pad all to herself. So, as Chenchal Peri's ears began to flap and she showed other signs of impatience at our wrangling, we four—W. Scott, Mooljee, Babula, and I—scrambled up and stuck on somehow at the corners, as best we could contrive. Scott sat towards the rear, and, letting one leg hang down, the she-elephant benevolently threw her tail over his ankle and held him firmly to his seat. Then we started, H. P. B. smoking, radiant as though she had been

an elephant-rider from her youth upward. But the first quarter of a mile took the conceit out of her. She rolled about unwieldily, getting her fat shaken up and her breath squeezed out of her, until she grew furious and consigned us laughers, together with the elephant and its *mahout*, to perdition. Ross Scott rode in one of the funny country vehicles called *ekkas*, a trap with a flat seat bigger than a postage-stamp, but not so big as a barn-door, to sit upon, with one's legs either folded up under one or dangling over the wheel; a lot of brass discs attached to the axle that rattle, a wobbling canopy of, say, two feet square overhead, and the shafts mounting over the pony's back, and, coming together to a point, resting in a crutch on the saddle. Ross Scott's leg was disabled and he could not ride the elephant with us as he wished. Throughout the four miles—which H. P. B. vowed were twenty—we rode in misery and she in wrath: but when it came to the return, no amount of persuasion could induce H. P. B. to resume her part of the elephant's pad; she made Scott squeeze over to one side of his tiny *ekka* seat and took the other, and as Pepys puts it, so home.

Thence on to Bhurtpore, Rajputana, by way of Agra. We were now on what to my "chum" and myself was classic ground, for it was associated with the history of the splendid Solar Race of Rajputs, to which our own Teacher belongs and which enchains all our sympathies. The Maharajah was not at home, but the Dewan gave us the hospitalities of the State; put us up at the Dāk Bungalow; sent us carriages; held discussions with us on philosophical subjects, and gave us facilities to visit the ancient palace of



Sooraj Mull at Deegh, twenty-three miles away. Here we found ourselves for almost the first time in the ideal Orient, the East of poetry. Nine palaces, each bearing a different name of a god, stand in a quadrangle around a shady garden : the whole called Bhawan. Beginning at the N.E. corner they are called in turn, Kissun, Hardev, Suraj, Samun, Gopal, Bhaduri, Nunda, Keshub, and Ram palaces. The centre of the garden is marked with a domed marble water-kiosk, surrounded by a shallow tank from which rise 175 water jets, met by streams that fall from an equal number of nozzles projecting from the underside of the cornice of the structure, and when in play shroud the occupants from view by a translucent wall of water ; which keeps the air within deliciously cool in the hottest day and sparkles in the sunshine like a silver veil embroidered with gems. From this centre raised walks radiate in every direction and one strolls about under the cool shade of neem, tamarind, mango, babul, banyan, and pipul trees. No less than one hundred grand peacocks were strutting about on the day of our visit, swift parrots darted in emerald flashes through the air, striped squirrels flitted from tree to tree, and flocks of doves softly called to each other in the dense foliage, completing an ideally beautiful picture. The palace architecture is all Indian, the carvings in stone exquisite in design, and the angles as sharp as if but finished yesterday. In the Zenana palace, Sooraj Mull, every room has a tessellated marble floor of a different design from the rest ; the lintels and frames are in pure statuary marble, decorated with patterns of climbing vines in high relief. Yet, alas ! amid all this

beauty moral deformity rankly flourished, and we heard such stories of vulgar debauchery as prevalent in Bhurtpore and other Rajput towns, that we were glad to get away as soon as possible. We returned to town the same evening and passed the night at the Dāk Bungalow, where I had the adventure mentioned in the last chapter. H. P. B. and I were sitting alone in the rear verandah, when an old Hindu, robed in white, came around the corner of the house towards us, salaamed to me, handed me a letter, and retired from view. On opening it I found it to be the promised answer to my letter sent to Goolab Singh at Khandalla, and which, I was told in his Kurjeet telegram, I should receive in Rajputana. It was a beautifully worded and, to me, most important letter, inasmuch as it pointed out the fact that the surest way to seek the Masters was through the channel of faithful work in the Theosophical Society. That way I have persistently travelled, and even though the letter had been a false one, it has proved a blessing and a perpetual comfort in times of trouble.

Our next station was Jeypore, which we reached at 9 P.M. on the 20th April, and put up at the Dāk Bungalow. We were sorry that we did not stay there, for we were beguiled into accepting the invitation of an uncle of the Maharajah to shift to his palace and accept his proffered hospitality. We paid dearly for our wish to know what it was to be the guests of a smooth-talking Rajah. The quarters assigned us was an open shed on the palace roof; a dust-paved brick and plaster terrace, without a bed, chair, table, mattress, bath, or a single comfort. The Rajah left us after promising

to settle us comfortably, and we waited hour after hour with admirable patience, sitting on our luggage, watching over the parapet the picturesque street crowds, and smoking to kill time. Lunch time passed and dinner time also, yet no food made its appearance nor anything to eat it with or upon. At last Babula was sent out to buy food and get wood for a fire to cook it with, and in time we stayed our hunger. No cots or mattresses coming, we opened out an iron chair-bed for H. P. B., and the rest of us spread each his blanket and lay on the hard terrace, passing a wretched night, what with heat, dust, and mosquitoes. The first thing the next morning our brutal cad of a host sent for Mooljee and literally turned us out of doors without a word of explanation. We had reason to believe, however, that it was because we were then suspected of being Russian spies (!) and had a Police officer dogging our footsteps wherever we went. Fancy that! I went straight away to Col. Beynon, S.C., the British Resident, and protested, as a true American naturally would, against this sneaking policy which was so utterly useless, considering that we had nothing to conceal, and that the Government was welcome to read our every paper, examine our every acquaintance, and even, if it chose, have daily reports of what we had for dinner. The Resident was very courteous, expressed regret that we should have been inconvenienced, and offered me a carriage and elephants if we wished to visit the old capital of the Jeypore State, Ambêr. We gladly returned to the Travellers' Bungalow, where we enjoyed once more a comfortable meal and had a good night's rest.

Ambër was deserted for a caprice of the former Maharajah, who built a complete town, the present capital, Jeypore, after his own taste as to architecture, and when it was finished ordered the whole population of Ambër to remove there, bag and baggage! There is no other city in India to compare with it. H. P. B. wittily said it looked "like Paris done in raspberry cream." It is a town of brick and pink stucco, in almost every conceivable style of architectural façade. The streets are wide and at right angles, with boulevards and, at the crossings of streets, playing fountains; there are paved sidewalks—a most unusual thing for India—gas-lighting, a large and well-equipped College, a Public Library, superb public gardens with a fine zoological collection, and many palaces belonging to His Highness and his tributary chieftains of Rajput tribes.

Our guide at Ambër was a stupid fellow, quite ignorant of the things we cared most to know, and full of petty odds and ends of gabble like most *valets de place*. But we did draw out of him one thing that *was* interesting. There is (or then was), it seems, a Mahátma who lives not far from the capital, and occasionally appears to the ruling Prince and one or two others. There are subterraneans of which the Maharajah has the secret, but which he is not permitted to visit or explore save in some desperate contingency, such, for instance, as a rebellion of his subjects or some such dynastic catastrophe. What truth there may be in the story I, of course, have no means of knowing. It is said of this Mahátma that once when the Prince was going on a journey he told him he should bear him company for a

certain distance. But nothing was seen of him at the time of departure, and yet he suddenly appeared to him when at a considerable distance on the way.

We formed a number of very pleasant acquaintances among the Durbar officials at Jeypore, among them a close relative of our tried colleague, Babu Norendronath Sen of Calcutta. Delightful hours were passed by us in their company, and our theme was ever Hindu and Western ideas, ideals, and social aspects. The Rajputs are of a magnificent ethnical type, and a Punjab crowd excels in beauty every public concourse I ever saw. A considerable number of feudatory chieftains were in town at the time of our visit, and the frequent passage of their trains of armed followers on gaily caparisoned horses and elephants to and from the Maharajah's Palace was, to my American eyes, like the calling back out of the world's astral record-book of scenes of the Crusades. The Chief Justice of Bhurtpore had given me letters to several of these Chiefs, and I visited two of them in their camps, but on learning from the British Resident that the handsomest, and seemingly most independent, sincere, and hospitable of them had privately inquired of him whether we were safe acquaintances, I got so disgusted that I left the others to the security of their political sycophancy. The race of Rajput Princes is degenerated under foreign rule and the killing of time by gross indulgences.

From Babu Mohendranath Sen, one of the highest of the Jeypore Durbaris, we heard of a Yogi (at that time at Hardwar on pilgrimage) who is a proficient in the practice of *samadhi*. In the presence and under the supervision of our

informant, he had been entombed twenty-seven days, and then in the presence of hundreds of eye-witnesses had been dis-entombed. The ears, nostrils, and other orifices of his body had been stopped with ghee, and the tongue turned back into the pharynx. At his resuscitation, the refilling of the lungs with air was accompanied with a wheezing sound like the letting of steam into a radiator. The incident can be attested by many living witnesses of credibility. Mohendranath Babu told us of another Yogi—also absent at Hardwar—whose forehead glows with spiritual light (*tejasa*) when he sits in contemplation.





## CHAPTER VI.

NORTHERN WANDERINGS. DYÂNAND SARASWATI.  
SNAKE CHARMING. THE "THEOSOPHIST" STARTED.

**A**GRA was our next station, and here we stopped three days. What can I say of the Taj that has not been better said by many cleverer travellers? The single sentence of Bayard Taylor that it is "a poem in marble" covers it all. Our local guide told us a legend that embodies practically the same idea. The plan, he said, had been seen in a vision by an old fakir, who had given it to Shah Jehan, who had followed it out implicitly. It is the materialised replica of a temple in Mohammed's Paradise! Let us hope that the heavenly original was not built at the cost of such human suffering, nor its stones cemented with such a hecatomb of lives as this peerless sepulchre of the lovely Noor-mahal. Words are absolutely inadequate to express the sensations felt by an æsthetic mind on entering the Taj garden through the splendid red-sandstone portal—itsself a palace. Like a fair white dream it rises against the Indian lapis-lazuli sky of April, suggesting a spiritual world untainted with the dirt of this gross world. But enough: let it stand

a world-wonder for future tourists—indescribable, unique, a marble thought.

The same guide told us of another fakir\* who, to satisfy the incredulity of a Bhurtpore Maharajah, had caused a heap of his gold mohurs (coins) to disappear from before his eyes, and reappear in the form of a shower of pieces on his queens in the Zenana part of his Palace!

While we were at Agra we were visited by the local agent of Swami Dyānand Saraswati, who gave us his views of that great religious chieftain. His explanations are noted in my Diary as having been "so satisfactory that we have decided to go to Saharanpore to meet the Swamiji on his return from Hardwar." We were misled, it seems, at every step as to his teachings.

At Saharanpore the Arya Samajists welcomed us most cordially and brought us gifts of fruits and sweets. The only drawback to our pleasure was the presence of the Police spy and his servant, who watched our movements, intercepted our notes, read our telegrams, and made us feel as if we had stumbled within reach of the Russian Third Section by mistake. The town was crowded with the stream of pilgrims returning from Hardwar, a most interesting sight to us foreigners. The multitude of ascetics (or pretended ascetics, as probably the overwhelming majority of them should be called, being ascetic only in their saffron garments), male and female, particularly impressed us. I

\* For the concerned I repeat that *fakir* and *sanyāsi* are respectively the Mahomedan and Hindu names for the same personage, viz., a wandering religious ascetic and celibate.



noted "one young fellow of most striking appearance—a gentleman in beads and whitewash. Eyes extremely bright and handsome, beard carefully trimmed, teeth white, stature tall ; he looks a king."

The Samaj gave us a formal reception and banquet, Indian fashion, off leaf-plates laid on the floor, from which we ate perforce with our (washed) right hands. The Swamiji arrived the following morning at dawn, and Mooljee and I went to pay our respects. I was immensely impressed with his appearance, manners, harmonious voice, easy gestures, and personal dignity. He had just finished bathing at a well in a leafy grove, and indued his clean cloth, when we met. Equally prepossessed in my favour as I in his, of course our greetings were most cordial. He took me by the hand, led me to an open-air cemented terrace, had an Indian cot (charpoy) brought and made me sit beside him. A few compliments being exchanged we took our leave, and after an hour or so he came to the Dāk Bungalow and made H. P. B.'s acquaintance. In the long conversation which followed he defined his views on Nirvana, Moksha, and God in terms to which we could take no exception. The next morning we discussed the new Rules of the T. S., he accepted a place on the Council, gave me full proxy powers in writing, recommended the expulsion of Hurrychund Chintamon, and fully approved of our scheme of having sections composed of sectarians such as Buddhists, Parsis, Mohammedans, Hindus, etc. My Diary notes having been made at the time there can be no mistake about this, and those who have followed these narratives from the beginning

will appreciate our feelings when, later, his altruistic eclecticism changed into sectarian exclusiveness and his gracious kindness into bitter abuse.

We took train for Meerut in his company the next day, and on the way came to an agreement with him that he should draft and send us the three Masonic degrees we intended to make for classifying our advanced Fellows according to their mental and spiritual capabilities. On arrival we were taken to the house of Babu Sheonarain, a wealthy Government contractor and Samajist, who placed his house and all at our disposal. The next evening at 6.30 we attended a crowded meeting of the Arya Samaj, which was most interesting to our unaccustomed eyes : a gathering picturesque beyond Western conceptions. It was held in an oblong courtyard, open to the sky and surrounded by buildings. At the further end a brick platform of 50 x 100 ft., covered with Eastern carpets and rugs ; a low raised dais for the Swami with a reading-stool and books lying upon it ; the teacher seated on a rug leaning against one of the thick round bolsters or back-pillows of the country. In calm dignity he dominated the assemblage, and in dead silence they listened for what he should say : the twittering of homing birds the only sounds audible. Our party having been conducted to the appointed seats, the Swami sunk his chin upon his breast, became abstracted for a few minutes, and then raising his face towards the sky, his sonorous sweet voice intoned the words " Om ; Om ; Shāntih, Shāntih, Shāntih ! " and as the sounds died away began a discourse on the subject of Prayer. He defined prayer as work ; it was no

idle muttering of words, no lip-vibrations ; no flattering or menacing of God, that had the least efficacy. He had heard once a Brahma Samajist waste two hours in merely repeating the words "Thou God art all mercy and justice !" What good did that do ? Some people talk to God as a man does to his sepoy ; as though they had the right of dictation ! useless folly ; let him who would pray effectively, work, work, work ; all beyond one's reach must be sought after by contemplation and the development of spiritual powers. So he continued, eloquent, moving, as easy in speech as the flow of a running stream. Before he closed, the silvery moonlight touched the stuccoed cornice of the house in front of us while our side was in inky shadow, the sky hung an azure plain above the tree-tops, and a shaft of the lunar radiance spread behind the Swami like a burnished silver screen, throwing his fine figure out in high relief.

Next day it was my turn to lecture, and the event came off under a *shamianah* (a blue-and-white striped canvas canopy, supported by painted poles and steadied by rope stays pegged into the ground) in the compound of Sheonarain's house. The ground was covered with *durries* (Indian cotton carpets) and spread here and there with Persian and Indian rugs. There was a table for me and a few chairs for Europeans ; the rest of the audience, including the Swami, squatting on the ground. Some English officials attended and our Police spy with his moustache shaved—apparently for purposes of disguise—graced the scene. My remarks were devoted to an exposition of the mutual benefits likely to result from a blending of interests and

gifts respectively of the West and the East. Mooljee interpreted.

The Swami told us, the next day, many interesting facts in the jungle experience of himself and other Yogis. He went seven years naked (save the *langouti*—small breechcloth or diaper—as we should call it), sleeping on the ground or a rock, eating what he could pick up in the forest, until his body became quite insensible to heat, cold, cuts and burns. Among wild animals and deadly serpents he went unharmed. Once he met a hungry bear in his path and the animal rose to him, but he waved her off with a gesture of his hand and his path was cleared. An adept he saw at Mount Abu, by name Bhavani Gihir, could drink a whole bottle of poison of which a single drop would kill an ordinary man: he could with ease fast forty days and do many other extraordinary things. That evening there was another large gathering to see us, and a discussion was carried on between the Swami and the Head Master of the local Government School about the proofs of the existence of a God. On Wednesday, the 7th May, we turned our faces homeward (*i.e.*, Bombayward, for the West has never been "Home" to us since we left it for India) and were escorted to the station by the Swami and a large number of his followers, who flung roses after us and shouted their friendly *namastas* as the train moved off.

Days and nights of torrid discomfort carried us at last to Bombay, but before H. P. B. would look after her bags and parcels, she marched off to our adhesive spy, and then and there, on the platform, gave him a piece of her mind. In

sarcasm she complimented him upon the great results he must have reaped from his expensive trip in first-class carriages, and bade him present her best compliments and thanks to the authorities with a demand for his promotion ! The poor man blushed and stammered, and—we walked away leaving him there. Then, instead of going to the house for the bath and breakfast of which we stood in so much need, we drove them to U.S. Consulate and demanded that the Consul should send a vigorous protest to the Chief of Police for his insulting treatment of inoffensive American citizens.

The stream of our existence flowed placidly on, the picturesque features of our daily life impressing themselves deeper and deeper upon our senses as the days grew into weeks and the weeks into months. Daily, the circle of our acquaintance with the Indians widened, but, with the exception of a bare handful, we came into contact with no Europeans. What difference could it make to us whether they liked us or not ; they could teach us nothing we cared to know, and their round of life and occupations had no interest whatever for us. Until the calls upon my time forbade it I wrote weekly letters to a New York paper descriptive of our adventures and observations. I see from my Diary notes, that while they were running, I covered pretty much the same ground that I am now going over. A protest which I addressed to the Bombay Government through Mr. Farnham, the United States Consul, elicited from them a disclaimer of any intentional discourtesy in setting their Police spies to watch our comings and goings. I subsequently learnt at Simla, from the Viceregal authorities, that they were much

vexed that the espionage should have been carried on so clumsily as to attract our attention, and that the watching of us was nothing out of the common; it being the rule in India to watch all strangers who appear to have particular intimacy with the Hindus and to avoid intercourse with the ruling race.

I took full notes at the time of the incidents connected with the visit to our bungalow of a clever snake-charmer, and as a very fanciful version of the story is given in *Caves and Jungles*, I may as well tell the sober truth, which is quite interesting enough. The man's name was Bishunath, a native of Indore, and the thing occurred on the 15th June 1879. His appearance was most picturesque. He had a shock of jet black hair; a full beard parted, Rajput-fashion, down his chin and the ends brought over his ears; his lean brown body was naked to the waist; he wore a *dhoti*, or cloth, swathing him from the hips to the feet; over his shoulder another cloth, folded, hung to the waist; a white turban covered his head, and his regular features and bright eyes were of the pure Aryan type. In a covered, round, flat basket were some cobras, of which he turned one out on the plastered floor of Wimbridge's room. The reptile coiled itself composedly without attempting any hostile demonstration at first, but the effect of his appearance was to make H. P. B. and Miss Bates mount upon two chairs and gather their skirts about them! The charmer, producing a gourd pipe with vents cut in the neck, began playing a soft rhythmic air not at all unpleasant to hear. It seemed to have a surprising effect upon the serpent, which rose on its

coil, outspread its double fan-like hood, darted out its slender tongue, and swayed its head from side to side in time to the measure. Fresh from the reading of the declarations of various authors that these performing snakes have been rendered harmless by the extraction of their fangs, I asked the charmer, through one of the three Parsi gentlemen present, if this had been done in the present instance. He denied it and, clutching the serpent by the neck, forced open its mouth with a stick, and showed us the slender, curved teeth with their poison-sacs, at the corners of the mouth. He offered to give us the best possible demonstration if we would procure a chicken to experiment upon. One was presently brought, and then the charmer, grasping its body behind the wings, thrust it towards the snake after first irritating him by motions of menace. The snake became most nervous and angry, flickering its thread-like tongue, expanding its hood, and hissing with a noise something like a stertorous breathing. At last, the fowl being held near enough, it suddenly drew itself back and instantaneously delivered a swift blow at its victim, withdrew in recoil and struck at it again. But this time it overreached its mark, and instead of hitting the fowl's back struck one of its fangs into the charmer's hand. A tiny drop of blood oozed out of the wound, and we could not repress exclamations of fear. But Bishunath threw the chicken on the ground, opened a small rusty tin box, took from it a bony disc, laid it on the spot of blood, and after keeping his hand quiet for a minute or two used it as freely as the other. The bony disc stuck

to the skin as if it had been attached with the stickiest "stickphast" gum or glue. The poor chicken did not offer to rise, but lay where it fell, gave some kicks, shudders passed through its body, and then it died. Evidently the serpent's fangs had *not* been removed. But we now watched the charmer with painful interest, apprehending that he too might fall a victim to his temerity. He, however, made light of the affair, saying that the "snake stone" would infallibly suck out all the venom. My curiosity being excited by seeing how it stuck to the man's hand, I asked him to let me take hold of it. He consenting, I did so, and found that its adhesion was so strong that the whole skin of the back of the hand rose when I pulled the "stone"; we could all see that plainly enough. After some minutes it dropped off of itself, and the charmer said he was none the worse. He then, in reply to our questions, gave us the following information. The wonderful disc is only a piece of bone—of about the size of a waistcoat button—and grows in the mouth of one cobra in fifty or an hundred, between the skin and bone of the upper jaw. The others do not have it. Its presence makes the snake king among its fellows and gives it the name Cobra Raja. The snake charmers open the mouth of every serpent they catch to see if one of them may not have the precious bit of bone. The same thing is also found in the anaconda, in a species of large, poisonous, yellowish toad, and even in the elephant. Its possessor in each case is king of its species. How curious, if true! And he gave us proof of its possessing some sort of virtue. He first



excited the cobra as before until he set it to striking, hissing, and expanding its spectacles-marked hood. Then, taking the disc between his finger and thumb, he held it towards the reptile, which to our utter surprise shrunk back from it as one would from a hot iron held towards one's face. Swaying to right and left, it seemed to be either in terror of the mysterious object or to be getting under a sort of mesmeric influence. The charmer followed it up closely in its motions, giving it no respite: the serpent ceased hissing, retracted its hood, swayed more and more feebly, and finally settled itself down upon its coils on the floor. The charmer finished his experiment by touching the cobra on the head with the "stone." In thinking out the thing stage by stage, I could see but one alternative—either the "stone" did have the apparent effect on the serpent and thus possess a scientific interest, or the deadly reptile had been trained to go through this performance for the master it knew. To test this theory I took the disc from the charmer and went through the thing myself. My skin being white, I argued, if the snake only acts thus for a brown-skinned hand, it will probably try to bite me instead of relaxing its energies and settling itself down for a nap. I first enraged it as I had seen it done by the charmer, keeping, it may be believed, a very close watch upon its movements and instantly withdrawing my hand when I saw the preliminary motion of its bending itself backward before the stroke. The ladies, from their vantage ground on the chairs, protested against my foolhardiness—as they called it—and H. P. B. was more than usually uncomplimentary. However, for the sake of Science,

I was obdurate. The cobra being in the right state of anger, I thrust the "snake stone" at it, and was pleased to see that it behaved as before; the excitement died away, its motions grew more and more languid, and finally it settled itself all limp and I touched its head with the disc of power. After the amount of chaffering, without which no transaction can be effected in the East, we bought the snake stone for a few rupees, and I used to carry it about in my dispatch box in case any one should be bitten by a cobra and come to me for cure. But the chance to test its efficacy did not recur, and at last I gave it to Dr. Mennell, of London, who had paid much attention to the subject of the operation of poisons of all sorts. Bishunath failed to keep an appointment for the following Sunday, when he was to have come and experimented on a couple of Pariah dogs, thus disappointing a rather distinguished company of Europeans and Indians whom I had invited to be present. Our time was not entirely wasted, however, for a friend brought one Ghulam Goss, a Mahomedan juggler, to show us some of his clever tricks. I have notes of two which are worthy of mention. A perforated ball of wood was made by him to rise slowly and fall again on a vertical string, of which one end was held in the juggler's hand and the other by his great toe. When he ordered it to mount it rose, when the opposite it slowly descended. A strung bow of bamboo, of about the size of that of a double bass, but having only two strings to it, was held by him, the strings upward, with one end pressed against his right side. On the strings three free balls of equal size lay, one before the other. At the

word of command the balls moved as he bade them, now all ascending to the top of the bow, now descending one at a time, or two or three; now one ascending while the others descended to meet it at middle distance. None of us could make it out at all. The juggler kept slowly turning on his feet the while, and of course the idea of the observed effect being attributable to centrifugal force came easily enough; but it would have to be centripetal force, or gravity, which showed itself in the case of the falling balls; and how the turning juggler could make one ball be mounting under centrifugal impulse while the others were falling down the string cradle by virtue of the opposing force puzzled the company.

A queer remedy for jaundice was reported to me by a Hindu friend who had actually been cured by it ten times by his mother. A needle is threaded, the patient's forehead stroked downwards with the point of the needle several times, while the operator repeats a mantram; then the needle is laid in a cup of water; the patient is put on a plain diet for a day or two; the needle and thread turn of a deep yellow color, and the patient recovers! If somebody tries it and succeeds perhaps they will be good enough to tell me. The mantram I cannot give, but I presume any one will do provided that it be repeated with "mesmeric intent," that is, with concentration of thought and belief in the remedy. Still, I may be wrong, for in India there are a great many mantric conjurations for as many different purposes. For one desired result one goddess (elemental) will be invoked by a specific mantram, for another object

another goddess with another formulary. In every case, however, as I understand it, it is an elemental spirit that is besought to help the worshipper to obtain his desire. A very instructive essay might be written on this subject, and I hope it may be done.

Here is an entry for June 23rd, which I do not recollect the meaning of: "At 10.30 P.M. went to H. P. B.'s room and worked with her until 2.30 A.M. on the ideal of an Antetypion, or machine to rescue from Space the pictures and voices of the Past." That is all said about it, and what sort of machine we had in view has quite passed out of my recollection. There are several entries about helping H. P. B. to write "her new book on Theosophy." On 23rd May, it seems, she "broke ground" for it; on the 24th I "gave her, by request, the skeleton outline of a book embodying such crude ideas as suggested themselves to one who did not intend to be the writer of it"; on the 25th I "helped in preparing the Preface"; on 4th June we finished it; and that seed lay in the mummy's hand five or six years before it sprouted as the *Secret Doctrine*, for which the only thing I then did was to invent the title and write the original Prospectus. After coming to Bombay I had quite enough common routine work to do without helping to write another book of cyclopædic bulk.

With the best of intentions our quartette undertook to learn Hindi for the good of the Society, but as one cannot be learning a new language and at the same time be daily receiving crowds of visitors and writing scores of letters, the attempt was soon reluctantly abandoned. Yet, so wide-

spread is the knowledge of English in India among the educated class with whom our work has principally lain, I do not think our cause has materially suffered from our ignorance of the vernaculars.

On the 18th May, I spoke before the Bombay Arya Samaj for the first time. It was an open-air meeting and the attendance was large. It appears that the reverend Editor of the Marathi organ of the Presbyterian Mission was present, and that I challenged him to come forward and make good certain slanderous innuendoes that he had permitted himself to put forth against our characters—and for which our solicitor, Mr. Turner, later made him humbly apologise in his paper. But he only muttered something in an embarrassed way, whereupon the Chairman of the meeting, the venerable Mr. Atmaram Dalvi, lost his temper and called him names. Then H. P. B.—says my Diary—“pitched into him at a lively pace. Row. Laughter. The Missionaries laid out flat!” And so they were.

A few days later, H. P. B., Miss Bates, and I paid a visit by invitation to a Dekkanee Sirdar to meet the (Parsi) Chief Justice of Baroda, and after that gentleman left and we were about retiring, our host excused himself from the room for a moment. He presently returned, leading by the hand a charming child of ten years, whom we supposed might be his grand-daughter. She was richly dressed in the Hindu fashion with a costly silk *saree* (petticoat cloth) and jacket, and her ebon hair, smoothed like polished jet on her head, was almost hidden by gold ornaments. Heavy jewels were in her ears, around her neck, wrists and ankles, and—to our

surprise—in one nostril she wore the jewelled ring which, in Bombay, betokens marriage. H. P. B.'s face relaxed into a sweet smile as the child approached, but when the grey-bearded, white-haired noble, holding forward the girl's hand toward hers, said, "Madame, allow me to present to you my little wife," the smile gave place to a frown, and in tones of inexpressible disgust she shouted, "Your WIFE? You old beast! You ought to be ashamed of yourself!" We left the host trying to smile.

Our acquaintance with the Editor of the famous opposition journal of Calcutta, the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, began with a letter that we received from him on the 13th May. He had read a report of my Framji Cowasji Hall lecture and asked our friendship. He has had it ever since, for he is a fervent patriot and a devotee of his religion—two most excellent qualities in any man. The correspondence eventuated in his coming over from Calcutta to see us, and stopping a fortnight in a bungalow next door to ours which we had hired for the library. As he was so sincerely interested in our interpretations and defence of his sacred books, H. P. B. did some few phenomena for him; for instance, pulled some black hair from her own head, rang the astral bells and—(8th September) my Diary records—"duplicated in his presence and at his request a magic mirror with a black frame and handle, that she had received to-day from a Master." I was present and thus was it done. He was to leave in two days, and begged her to show him the phenomenon of duplication, so that he might fully comprehend her teaching as to the nature of matter and force, and

their potential relations to the power of a trained will. She persistently refused for some time, but finally, when he caught up the mirror in question and asked her to duplicate that, she said she would if he would promise not to bother with any more such requests. He promising, she took the mirror in her hand, rose from her chair, turned her back upon us, and in another moment threw on the seat *two* identical glasses. Then, exhausted, she dropped into her seat and sat silent for some minutes to recover herself. Shishir Babu is, happily, still living, and will be able to set me right if I have made any mistake in telling the story.

By what to Americans may seem an interesting coincidence, the conversation which decided us to found the *Theosophist* occurred on the 4th of July of that year, Independence Day. As elsewhere explained, we were driven to it by the necessity of meeting the growing interest in Theosophy by some better means than epistolary correspondence. It was simply impossible for us to bear the strain of such constant drudgery. Entries in my Diary show that I sometimes worked from 6 A.M. to 9 P.M., and night after night until 2 and 3 A.M., yet in vain. And then the same questions would be repeated by the majority of our correspondents, and to be forever traversing the same ground was a tiresome work. We discussed the question in all its bearings, calculated the *pros* and *cons*, and finally decided upon the venture. But the difficulties were grave, one of them being that the Society did not possess a penny of capital nor an iota of mercantile credit to borrow upon. I made the stipulation imperative that we should issue the Magazine

on the terms of the best American and English periodicals, viz., payment in advance and no book debts. I was willing to bring out a year's numbers punctually even although we did not book a single subscriber; but be bothered out of our lives by trying to collect arrears of book debts, and be so harassed as to be unfit for the serious work of thinking, learning, and writing, I would not. Our Indian friends strenuously opposed this innovation, as they regarded it, Babu S. K. Ghose, of the *A. B. Patrika*, particularly so; they prophesied that it would never succeed. But it did not shake my determination. So we provided for meeting the cost of the first twelve monthly numbers, and on the 6th July I wrote the Prospectus and sent it to press. We asked Sumangala, Megittuwatte, and other Ceylon priests; Swami Dyānand; Babu Prāmada Dāsa Mitra, of Benares; Shankar Pandurang Pandit; Kashinath T. Telang, and many others to send us articles; and got the news spread widely of our intention. This kept us busy all that season. Our active members bestirred themselves to secure subscribers, one—Mr. Seervai, our then devoted Secretary—getting nearly two hundred himself. Not before 20th September did we get the first form of type to correct; on the 22nd we sent the second form to press, on the 27th the last, and on the evening of the last day of that month the first 400 copies of the new Magazine were delivered to us and made the occasion of much jubilation among us. My entry in the Diary concludes with the salutation: "Welcome, stranger!" That on the 1st October, the day of publication, is "*Sit Lux: Fiat Lux!*" That, reader, was one hundred and ninety-two months ago, and since that time the *Theosophist* has never failed to appear, never met with a disaster, never caused its



projectors to incur a shilling of debt. Since the fourth month it has paid a profit, small, it is true, yet in the aggregate enough to enable us to contribute a good many thousand rupees towards the Society's expenses, besides giving our personal services gratis. Which is saying much for a periodical like ours.



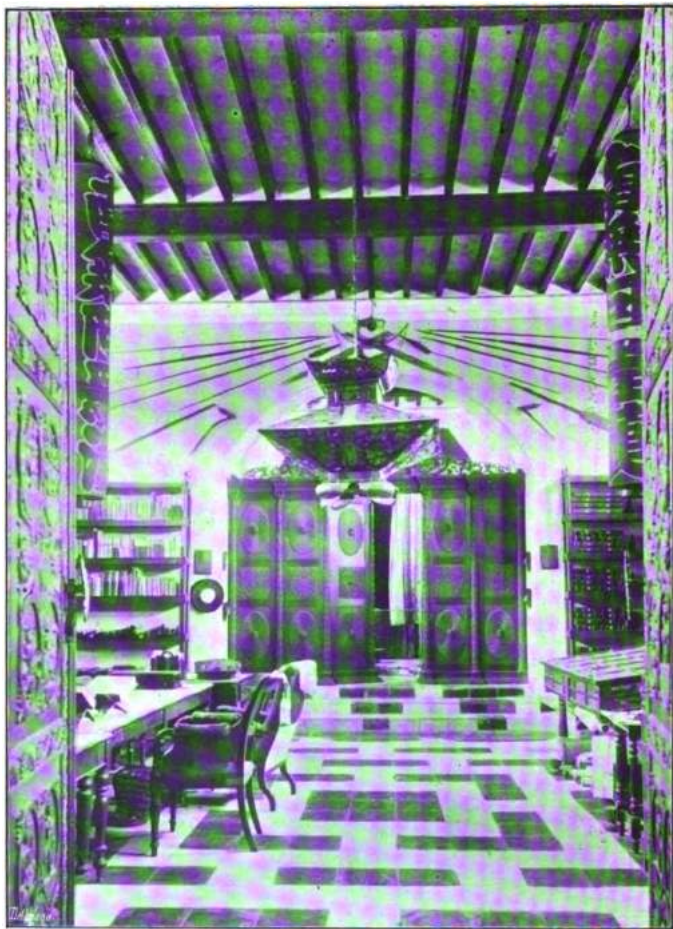


## CHAPTER VII.

### THE FUTURE WORKERS BEGIN TO ARRIVE.

**T**O turn over the leaves of my Diary for 1879, and see how and when our long-trying and often famous colleagues came into the current of our lives, is really like watching the entrances and exits of actors in a play; and most instructive is it to trace back to the causes which brought them into the Society, and the others which in many cases threw them out of it. I am afraid I shall have to say that the latter were of a personal nature such as disappointment at not getting to know Mahâtmas or at H. P. B.'s breaking her promises, disgust because of attacks upon her character or the discrediting of her phenomena, the failure to acquire desired psychical powers by the French-before-breakfast system, or some such thing. I mentioned above when and how Mr. Sinnett came to know us, and now, on the page for 3rd August, I see the fact recorded that on that day I took Damodar K. Mavalankar into membership. It was the rainy season and the dear boy used to come to see us of evenings, clad in a white rubber waterproof and leg-





INTERIOR OF ORIENTAL SECTION LIBRARY, ADYAR.

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gings, a cap with flaps to match, a lantern in his hand, and the water streaming from the end of his long nose. He was as thin as Sarah Bernhardt, with lantern jaws, and legs—as H. P. B. used to say—like two lead pencils. So far as appearances went, he seemed as little likely as any man in the Society to become a Mahâtmâ or get within a thousand miles of a real *âshrama*. But appearances were as false in this case as they have been in those of other members who seemed infinitely his spiritual superiors, but proved otherwise.

Three days after Damodar's admission, I received the applications of Lt.-Col. (now Maj.-Gen.) W. Gordon, B.S.C., and Mrs. Gordon, of whom the latter may be ranked among the truest friends and most unwavering backers that H. P. B. ever had. And a little earlier came one K. P. Cama, a young Parsi who made a vivid impression upon us, by reason of his familiarity with and admiring enthusiasm for Indian Philosophy. Some of his essays were published by us in the earlier numbers of the *Theosophist*. If there ever was a Hindu soul born into Parsi body it was his: and he felt it to be so.

The first step upon our scene of that malevolent person, Madame Coulomb, was in the form of a letter which H. P. B. received 11th August 1879. The news of our arrival at Bombay had been copied into the Ceylon papers, and she, writing from Galle, told her old Egyptian acquaintance that a great excitement prevailed in the Island about us, large subscriptions were being made for the expenses of our welcome, and that "the Buddhists were running mad to see us." She sent H. P. B. a copy of one of the

Colombo Anglo-Indian papers, to which she had addressed a letter defending her reputation against an ill-natured attack, and saying that, having known her well at Cairo, she could testify that she was a lady of high character! I believe she forgot to include this historical document in her pamphlet of 1884 attacking H. P. B.'s character in the choicest phrases to which her Missionary allies could help her. So I think I will place it on record here :—

“I am not acquainted with any of the members of the said Society, except with Madame Blavatsky. I have known this lady for these last eight years, and I must say the truth, that there is nothing against her character. We lived in the same town, and on the contrary she was considered one of the cleverest ladies of the age. Madame B. is a musician, a painter, a linguist, an author, and I may say that very few ladies and indeed few gentlemen have a knowledge of things in general as Madame Blavatsky.” (From the *Ceylon Times*, 5th June 1879.)

She wrote H. P. B. a doleful tale about the straits to which she and her husband had been reduced, and appealed for help: she wished, she said, to come to Bombay if they could manage to get a passage, and would like to find some sort of situation. H. P. B. told me her version of the story of her connection with the Coulobms at Cairo, how Mme. C. had been kind to her when she was there after her catastrophe on board the steamer which blew up in the Piræus, and nearly all on board were killed. So I gave her my opinion that in common gratitude she ought to help the

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couple, now that they were hungry and naked, so to say. She concurred and wrote the woman some letters in which, if I am not mistaken, she actually hinted that Mme. Coulomb might one day be her successor in the T. S. ! I won't be positive, but that is my impression. Nothing would be more likely, since that was a common thing with her, and if the successorship letters were collected they would form an amusing compendium.

On the 4th October our party attended a durbar held for us in Bombay by Santi Saga Acharya, the most learned of the Jain priests and the Chief *jutti* (yogi) by rank. We found ourselves in a large, square, second-storey room, with plastered floor and a few square wooden posts to support the storey above. Against the wall to the left on entering hung a square figured satin drapery, the ground of a yellow color (that of the Jain and Buddhist *bhikkhus*) and a border of red. Overhead was a small canopy of figured Indian silk. Under it a narrow platform, or *daïs*, covered with a striped carpet (*durrie*) spread over a thin Indian mattress of cotton; a back-cushion to lean against, two small cushions for the knees of a man sitting cross-legged to rest upon, and a low footstool to mount by—completed the preparations for the Acharya's comfort and dignity at the approaching interview.

Four chairs were placed for us at one side of the platform, and there were about 300 Jains there to welcome us. Presently the whole assembly rose, a way was opened from the door, and a venerable priest enters, saluting right and left. He salutes me—as the chief of our party, I suppose

—but takes no notice of the two ladies, as, being a celibate monk of austere habits, was to have been expected. All the same, in my then state of ignorance of these Eastern monastic notions, I thought it ill-bred. He seated himself, cross-legged, in his place and all the company did likewise, each on the floor where he was standing. While they were settling down I had the chance to get a good look at the monk. He had a large, capacious head with plenty of room in it for the large brain that one could see at a glance he must possess. His hair is either very closely cut or is growing between two monthly head-shavings, as the hair of Buddhist monks does. His beard is shaven smooth; he wears the Hindu *dhoti* and has a thin Dacca muslin scarf—of the kind that, because of its wonderfully fine texture, has been called “woven dew”—hanging over his shoulder. He wears no caste marks nor the smallest piece of jewelry. He begins the interview by cross-questioning me about my knowledge of Jain doctrine, the dialogue being carried on through two Hindu interpreters, Messrs. Pandurang and Krishna Row. I explained the state of religion at the West, and pointed out the several influences that had tended towards despiritualising the Western nations. I affirmed the necessity for the spread of Eastern religious ideas in those countries. To learned men like himself, I pointed out, there was a loud call to take part in this great work. They had no excuse for indolent indifference; having the wisdom for which Western people had most urgent need, it was a positive sin for them to abstain from its circulation. He followed and challenged me from point to point, and



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made a variety of excuses for his not taking up this new and great field of work, but I indulged in plain speaking throughout. The point that finally won his sympathies—or, at least, his expression of them—was this. “You Jains,” I said, “have the tenderest compassion for the brute creation; you feed them when hungry, bury them when dead, protect them from cruel treatment, and have even opened the Pinjrapole—an animal hospital, where all sick and suffering brutes are tenderly cared for. If any Jain gentleman here present should see a famishing dog at his door, would he not share his own meal with him, rather than see him die of hunger?” An affirmative murmur ran through the room, and as I looked around every head bowed an assent. “Well, then,” I said, “the bread of religious truth is far more necessary for man’s salvation than a plate of food is to the nourishment of a dog’s body; you Eastern people have that truth, the nations of the world are, according to your religious tenets, all your brothers; how dare you say you will not trouble yourselves to send that bread of spiritual truth to those starving Western nations, whose spiritual ideals and hopes and perceptions are being destroyed by irreligious scientific materialism?” The old Acharya straightened himself up, and he told me through the interpreters that he should be glad to help us and would write for the new magazine we had just started as a channel for such teachings. But he never did. Yet, at the same time, it must be confessed that the Jains were most ably represented at the Chicago Parliament of Religions of 1893, by Mr. Virchand Gandhi,

who presented their views so clearly and eloquently as to win general respect and sympathy. I closed the discussion by describing some of the ways in which so-called enlightened Western nations prove their loving-kindness for the lower animals. As I described the horrors of bull-fighting, bear-baiting, fox, deer, and hare hunting, dog, rat, and cock fighting, it was curious to watch the expression of their faces. These 300 Jains looked at each other in a sort of terror of consternation, they caught their breath, devoured me with their eyes as if to search to the bottom of my heart and see if I spoke the truth, and at last the tension became so strong that I saw they could bear no more, and stopped amid a dead silence. I then asked leave to depart, all rose to salute us, the usual garlands were hung about our necks, and we departed: many following us into the street and some even running after our carriage and shouting blessings after us. Thus began our pleasant relations with the Jain community.

A few days later I addressed a packed audience invited by the "Daya Vashistha Mandlik" to hear me discourse upon the killing of animals. I see by my notes that I described the true Universal Brotherhood to be a common kinship between all sentient beings that had the divine spark manifested in them in whatsoever degree, the ant and the elephant had it as well as man, and all men of every race and kindred had it in common, only in various degrees of manifestation; it behoved us to be kind to our fellow-men and, for the same reason, to be tender to the animals in the proportion of their helplessness; the vivisector who

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tortured an animal, which was strapped in helplessness to a dissecting table or shut up in a hot-chamber of iron from which he could not escape, however great his physical agony during the experiments of science, was no whit less cruel, savage, and devilishly callous to suffering, than the Inquisitor who bound his human victim to the instrument of torture, and in the name of Christian religion, smashed his limbs, tore his muscles from their attachments, and killed the "sceptic" by the most ingenious methods of slow torture. Of course, there was much sympathy shown when the address was translated into the Guzerati language. But I never spoke under so great an apprehension of possible calamity as then. The lecture-room was in the third storey, with an almost vertical stairway, the steps of which were barely wide enough for one to rest upon his heel in descending, and a loose-hanging rope was the only substitute for a baluster. The floor of the vestibule of the room was completely filled with some hundreds of shoes, left outside according to Eastern custom; and the hall was lighted by a number of kerosene wall-lamps placed barely high enough to clear the turban of a man of ordinary stature. If an accident had happened to one of those lamps and a man's flimsy costume had caught fire, there would have been an instant panic, the fleeing audience would have stumbled over the shoes, fallen in masses over each other down the perpendicular stairway, and there would have been a holocaust of victims. It is no exaggeration to say that I was infinitely relieved to find myself in the street once more.

Mr. Keshava Narasinha Mavalankar, the father of Damodar, was admitted by me to membership on the 19th October 1879, in the presence of his son and his brother, Mr. Krishna Row, by whom all Damodar's family trouble was subsequently brought about.

Our friend Gadgil made us a visit in November, which I only mention because of an entry in the Diary to the effect that he showed us two roots which are said to possess wonderful properties. One is a cure for snake poison, the other for that of the scorpion. The former is to be macerated in water and the water drunk, which is a very commonplace affair, but the other is quite another matter. When the bitten person comes to you, you simply stroke the limb with it, using downward passes, as in mesmeric treatment, which extend from above the extreme point to which the pain has extended, along the nerves to the extremity of the limb. It is the magnetic (or magical, perhaps) property of the root that draws the pain backward to its source, the scorpion puncture. By then holding it a few minutes over the wound without contact, the pain is entirely drawn out and the patient is cured. This is very interesting and may be quite true, for surely we do not yet know a thousandth part of what medical science should know about the curative agents in nature: but there is a cure for scorpion-sting even simpler than this. Old readers of the *Theosophist* will recollect articles on the curative properties of the five-pointed star. (*Vide* Vols. II. and III.) The writers affirmed that they had cured many cases of this kind by merely drawing with

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pen and ink a five-pointed star on the patient's flesh, at the extreme point of extension of the pain, and then, as the thrill of anguish receded, following it up with fresh inscriptions of the figure until it had returned to the place of puncture, where the figure was written for the last time and the pain went away. The first writer's assertions were speedily corroborated by other correspondents, who reported that they had repeated the experiment with entire success. Among these was Prince Harisinhji Rupsinhji, of the Bhavnagar Royal Family, who has, first and last, cured many scores of cases, and, I believe, has given relief to hundreds from neuralgic ailments of all sorts. This creates the dilemma that we must either ascribe the cure to hypnotic suggestion or to some magical property inherent in the stellar symbol. Of these hypotheses, the Materialist will prefer the former, the Magician the latter. The important fact is that the cures happen. The only way out of the difficulty seems to be to try the signature on animals, children, or imbeciles, in short upon patients whose imagination will not be affected by the sight of the drawing or the conversation that is held concerning it and its alleged powers.

The festival of Diwali (for Dipāvali) is a time of general illumination and rejoicing because of Bhima's killing of the demon Narakarāsūram. Visits are paid, flowers and lights brighten up the whole house, presents are given to relatives and friends, new clothing to servants, and the whole family renews its wardrobe. We went that time with Hindu friends to see the illuminations in the Native quarters, and

to make a few calls. On leaving one house we heard an amusing story. The party was a rich banker, the local agent and partner of a millionaire capitalist living in the interior. At intervals of two or three years, the time being never previously notified, he turns up at Bombay, and calls on his agent to show his books of account. Item by item they are gone through, the columns added up, the totals and balances verified, and all found correct to a cowrie. Then the bland-looking, childishly simple old capitalist takes his faultlessly accurate book-keeping agent by the arm to a strong room, and locks him up, after telling him that he knows he has stolen so many lakhs, but that on payment of such a proportion, he will be released from durance vile, and the books signed as "audited and found correct." Until that is done he is to have only bread and water! Useless to protest or beg off. The old chief has had his own sure way of knowing what has been going on, and stays firm until his partner perforce yields, pays the ransom, and they embrace and part the best of friends. How comical!

I went with my friend Panachand Ananji one day to pay my respects to an old Muslim fakir, very well known in Bombay at that time, named Jungli Bâwâ (literally, the Forest Ascetic). We found an old man with a sharp, inquisitive expression of face, a *mortier* cap on his head, a much-wrinkled face, and a beard closely clipped and, around his mouth and chin, shaven. He wore a dhôti with gilt thread woven into the border, and a band of gold, an inch wide, crossing the end. He was a Vedântist and had two

*gusains* (beggar pupils) to serve him. He received us on the ground floor of a large square house with an air-well in the centre. He was squatted on a straw mat with his small brass mortar and pestle for preparing pân (betel-nut paste) beside him, together with some other small brass vessels. A blue striped cotton carpet was spread for visitors, but out of regard for my European stiff knee-joints, he had a chair placed for my use. Each visitor on entering would prostrate himself on the floor and touch the holy man's feet with his forehead, this being the most deferential form of Eastern salutation. Our long discussion covered the whole ground of the two Yogas, the Hatha and Râja. The eighty-four postures of the former were described in even too much detail. The old man questioned me closely as to what phenomena I had seen, but I declined to satisfy his curiosity, as such experiences, I had been taught in India, were regarded as sacred, and certainly they were not to be lightly discussed in a mixed assemblage like the present. The Bâwâ smiled and said I was perfectly right, for such occurrences, being outside the common experience, should not be made the subject of trivial jest and sceptical denial. Alas! if we had but followed out that rule from the beginning, what a world of sorrow and pain all of us would have been spared. He said that if I would come alone to see him we would exchange confidences, and he might show me some phenomena. The interview highly interested me, as the man was undoubtedly a genuine ascetic, and both his mind and body seemed perfectly healthy, despite his fastings and other ascetic practices.

I went again to see the fakir with the same friend on the following evening. This time he received us in the verandah; he occupying my chair of the previous evening, and Panachand and I a low settle. A handsome standing lamp of European manufacture was placed on the floor near him, and lighted up his strong face and made the gold threads of his turban sparkle and shine. One after another Hindu visitors came, made prostration to the fakir, and then retired into the shadow at the back of the verandah, where in *chiaro oscuro* they squatted, silent and motionless, like a company of ghosts in their white *puggaris* and *dhôtis*. An Indian moonlight was shining outside, silvering the smooth surfaces of the cocoa-palm fronds, and plating with silver the polished top of our brougham. The Bâwâ continued the talk about the two Yogas. He said that he had cultivated the faculty of *laghimâ* (extreme lightness), so that he could sit suspended in the air, and walk over water as if it were dry ground. He had taught his pupils the same. But he considered all these things child's play in reality: he cared only for philosophy, the sacred and infallible guide to the path of Wisdom and Happiness. He had learnt both Yogas. Speaking of the relation of chela to guru, he said there was three kinds of service recognized for the former: he might give money, teach the Master something new, or serve him in menial offices. He told me a long fable about a Deva and a Daitya. The former wished to become the pupil of the latter for the sake of leaving a secret of occult science. The latter has the power of restoring life to the dead. The Deva-pupil was



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cut into pieces (with his consent) and boiled, and the Teacher eats some of the horrid mess. But the pupil thus becomes incorporated into the body and essence of the Guru. Meanwhile his daughter loses her life, but the probationary test having been passed by the father—the Deva—he restores her to life when he separates himself once more from the Teacher's body, his mutilated frame is readjusted, and his life flows again in full stream through his veins and nerves. Which of the three modes of service would I choose? I told him. He thereupon postponed the exhibition of his alleged spiritual powers, and I never saw him again.





## CHAPTER VIII.

### VISITS TO ALLAHABAD AND BENARES.

THE first cloud — not counting the Hurrychund incident—rose on our Indian horizon at about this time; the cause which was to ultimately break up our quartette of exiles, began to shape itself towards the latter end of November. It was a queer and unnatural alliance at best, a fad of H. P. B.'s which was foredoomed to breed trouble. She and I — as I have said before — were absolutely of one mind as to the Masters, our connection with them, and our readiness for service. Whatever friction there was between us, by reason of our different personalities and ways of looking at things, we were entirely harmonious as regards the excellence of our cause and the necessity for the strict performance of duty. It was quite different with our colleagues, Mr. Wimbridge and Miss Bates, who were insular English at the core and Asiatic only in a thin superficial varnish that had been laid over them by the brush of H. P. B.'s fascinating enthusiasm. He was a designer and architect, she a school-teacher or

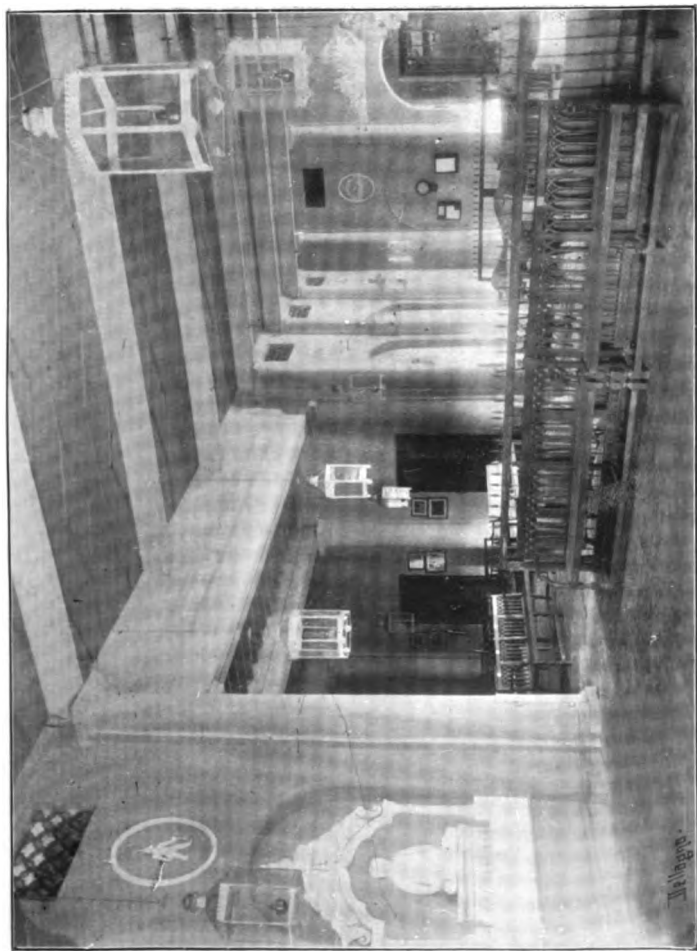
governess, of about thirty-five years of age. Both had lived some years in America, and had been introduced to H. P. B. by mutual acquaintances. Fortune was smiling on neither of them then, and both fell in with H. P. B.'s project that they should come with us to India and practise their respective professions, with such help as we could get them through our influence with respectable Hindus. I had nothing against Wimbridge, but felt an instinctive foreboding as to the lady. I begged H. P. B. not to bring her with us. Her invariable answer was that the two, being patriotic English in feeling, would afford by their company the best possible guarantee to the Anglo-Indian authorities of our innocence of any political designs. And said she would take upon herself all the consequences, for she knew naught but good would come out of the connection. In this, as in an hundred other instances, I yielded to her presumably superior occult foresight; and we four sailed and, at Bombay, settled together. Worse luck for us! She began by fomenting a misunderstanding between H. P. B. and a nice young lady Theosophist of New York; which drew Wimbridge in after awhile, and broke up the harmony of our household. I had nothing whatever to do with the quarrel, but ultimately had to assume the disagreeable task of forcing Miss Bates out of the Society. This was always my lot; H. P. B. made the rows and I had to take the kicks and clear out the intruders! This fact is known to all our acquaintance. My colleague was always talking about her "occult nose," yet it very seldom helped her to smell a traitor or a predestined enemy who came under the

guise of seeming friendliness. Without going farther, the cases of Madame Coulomb and Solovioff, the self-accused cruel traitor and spy, are quite enough to prove the fact.

On the 23rd November, a meeting was convened at our Hall to organize the Aryan Temperance Society. I thought it a shame that the leading Hindus and Parsis should rest passive and indifferent to the shocking spread of intemperance throughout India, and suffer the Missionaries to carry out alone a counter-movement. The late Rao Bahadur Gopal Rao Hari Deshmuk, a very influential Mahratta Brahmin gentleman, took the chair at our meeting, the Society was agreed upon, and we secured seventy-seven signatures to the programme of organization. We then adjourned, to meet at the call of the Chair. One more meeting was held, and we got forty more signatures, but the movement proved abortive, for nobody save myself seemed much interested in it, and I was too busy with my official duties to devote to it the time it required.

On the 29th November, an event of much importance occurred: we celebrated with great *éclat* the fourth anniversary of the formation of the Theosophical Society. It was also our first public function of the kind, the only previous notice taken of the anniversary, that of the first completed year, having been confined to a private meeting of members at Mott Memorial Hall, New York, and an address by myself. The shifting of our headquarters to India and our enormously increased publicity seemed to demand a change of policy and a fresh start in this respect.

Mr. Wimbridge designed and lithographed an artistic



CONVENTION HALL, AT ADYAR.



invitation card, inviting our friends to "attend at the Headquarters, 108 Girgaum Back Road, Bombay, at 8.30 P.M., on the 29th November 1879, a meeting commemorative of the Society's Fourth Anniversary, the founding of the *Theosophist*, and the opening of the Library. There will be addresses and a display of machinery made by native artisans." Signed by myself, as President, and H. P. Blavatsky, as Corresponding Secretary. The grounds and the lane leading to them from the public road were brilliantly illuminated; arches of flame and pyramids of Indian colored lamps were placed at the mouth of the lane and the entrance to the compound; Chinese lanterns were hung on wires stretched between the palm-trees; an arch of gas-jets, spelling the word "Welcome," lighted up the Library façade; the whole ground was spread with striped Indian carpets; 400 chairs were placed for guests; a band of twenty musicians played Indian and foreign airs—among the latter, the American National hymn—and the scene was altogether beautiful. Far above the palms, the azure, tropical, star-studded sky looked down on us. Inside the Library building, tables and walls were covered with exhibits of indigenous work in brass, ivory, sandalwood, steel; the marble mosaics of Agra, the lovely shawls and soft woollen stuffs of Kashmir, hand-woven muslins from Dacca and elsewhere, cutlery from Pandharpur, and work from the Baroda School of Arts. The Dewan of Cutch, the enlightened Mr. Manibhai Jasbhai, sent a complete collection of arms and some of the famous silver work of that State. About 500 invited guests—the best

known and most respectable in Bombay—were present. Addresses were made by Messrs. Gopal Rao Hari Deshmuk (as Chairman); Naoroji Furdonji, a beloved Parsi statesman; Kashinath Trimbak Telang, subsequently a Justice of the Bombay High Court; Shantaram Narayan, a most respected Mahratta lawyer; Nurshunkar Lalshunkar, the "Guzerati Poet," and myself. Altogether, it was a most appropriate and encouraging help to our Indian career. The Europeans present expressed themselves charmed with the industrial display, and gave deserved praise to Vishram Jehta's mechanical exhibits.

Two days later H. P. B., a European gentleman friend, and I dined, by invitation, in the Hindu fashion, at the house of Gopalrao Vinayak Joshi, F. T. S., the husband of poor Anandabhai, who went to America for her medical degree, took it with honors, and died soon after her return to India; leaving her self-sacrificing husband with a blasted life and a broken heart. The incidents of the dinner—at which several Brahmins ate, seated in a line opposite us—have been comically described by H. P. B. with her usual exaggeration, so I need not repeat them. A circumstance that provoked much laughter was my borrowing H. P. B.'s long gold chain and wearing it in the fashion of the Brahmin's thread, to complete my resemblance to them; my clothing, like theirs, consisting merely of the dhôti from the waist downward, the torso being left bare. Our European friend was similarly attired, but H. P. B. respectfully declined our mock invitation to do likewise!

On the 2nd December, she and I, with Damodar and



Babula, left by train for Allahabad to visit the Sinnetts whose personal acquaintance we had not yet made.

The second subsequent morning, early, we reached Allahabad and were met by Mr. Sinnett at the Station with his barouche and pair, coachman and two footmen (*syces*) in handsome liveries. Mrs. Sinnett's reception of us at the house was most charming, and before she had spoken a dozen sentences we knew that we had won a friend beyond price. A Judge of the High Court and the Director of Public Instruction were among the callers that day, Mr. A. O. Hume and Mrs. Hume called the next morning, dear Mrs. Gordon made her appearance on the 7th, having travelled a long distance to see H. P. B., and little by little we got to know most of the Anglo-Indians of the Station who were worth knowing by reason of their intelligence and breadth of mind. Some of them were very prepossessing, but to none were we so attracted as to the Sinnetts and Mrs. Gordon, then in the prime of her beauty and sparkling with intelligence. I thought it was worth the voyage to India just to get to know those three. And think so still.

It is strict etiquette in Anglo-India for the new-comer to call on the residents, but as H. P. B. would call on nobody, those who cared to know her had to ignore custom and visit her as often as they liked.

Our time was pretty well filled with visitors and dinner-parties, the mention of which latter recalls an interesting fact to my mind. The Sinnetts, H. P. B. and I were driving out to dinner one evening, and had to pass through a part of the town which we had not seen before. At a point where

two roads intersected, H. P. B. suddenly shuddered and said: "Dear me, what a horrible feeling I have! It seems as if some awful crime had been committed here and human blood spilt." Sinnett said, "Do you not know where we are?" "Haven't the slightest idea," answered she. "How could I, when this is the first time I have been out of your house?" Sinnett then pointed to a large building to our right, and told her that that was the very Mess-house in which the officers of such-and-such a regiment had been murdered at dinner by their sepoy, during the Mutiny. This served as the text for a most instructive little discourse by H. P. B. on the permanency of registers of human deeds in the Astral Light. The Sinnetts, the High Court Judge, and his family and other guests, to whom the Sinnetts told the story immediately on our arrival at the house, are living in London and can corroborate my narrative. And, in fact, this will be an appropriate place for me to say that, barring the comparatively few instances where H. P. B. and I were alone and which I have noted as I went along, her phenomena happened in the presence of many witnesses, most of whom, I presume, are still alive, and have the full opportunity to correct any mis-statements or exaggerations into which, after this long lapse of years, I may unwittingly have fallen. At the same time, it is satisfactory to know that, although my "Old Diary Leaves" have been appearing in the *Theosophist* since March 1892, and have found readers and provoked correspondence and editorial comment all over the world, not a single denial of my facts has been made, and but one modification suggested, that by Mr. Massey as

to some particulars of the butterfly-elemental story, in one of my earliest chapters. The conviction of my gullibility has undeniably become fixed in many minds by my narratives, but these criticules, being ignorant of the facts, and possibly in most cases of all psychical science as well, their opinion is not worth much. "Truth is stranger than fiction" always, and when every possible discredit has been cast on H. P. B., the residuum to her credit is overpoweringly great.

Forty-six years of modern mediumistic phenomena have not yet taught Western scientists the principles of the law of spirit intercourse, nor those of psycho-physiological abnormalism. The self-complacent way in which they discuss H. P. B.'s gifts from the point of view of her personal moral nature, is a saddening proof of their ignorance of the lessons taught by Charcot and Liébault. Their time would not be wasted if they should spend some months also in the real study of Eastern literature. As a sample of the prejudiced disbelief of Western scientists, I give the following: We had to dine with us one evening a Professor of Physical Science in the local University, a man of wide renown and a charming companion. He discussed with H. P. B. her theory of the "raps" and finally asked her to produce some. She did so in various parts of the room, on the floor, the walls, the glasses of the hanging pictures, on a newspaper held out to her by Mr. Sinnett or the Professor—I forget which—and on the Professor's hand; she, sometimes not even touching the surface to be rapped upon, but, as it

were, throwing a current of psychic force against it from a distance. Sinnett then placed a large glass clock-shade on the rug before the fire and she rapped on that. Finally, to give the best possible proof that his theory (or rather, Faraday's, Tyndall's, and Carpenter's) that the raps were mechanical vibrations made by the intended, or unintentional, pushing of the medium's finger on the spot, I suggested a test which was accepted. I got H. P. B. to place her finger-tips against one of the glasses in a door that gave upon the verandah, took the lamp outside with the Professor, and held it so that the flesh of her fingers was highly illuminated, and she then caused as many raps as he successively called for. The fingers did not change place a hair's breadth nor her muscles contract, but we could see the nerves quivering before each rap, as though some fine current of nerve-force were thrilling through them. The Professor had nothing to say, save that it was all very strange. It seemed to us, her friends, as if a more conclusive proof of her good faith could not have been demanded. But the Professor subsequently declared her a trickster. Poor thing! that was all she got for trying to give a scientific man the facts on which to begin the serious study of psychology. I think the bitter experience so disgusted her as to make her even less willing than previously to take the least trouble to convince that class of observers.

On the following day I lectured to a very crowded audience on "Theosophy and its relations to India." The chair was occupied by Mr. A. O. Hume, since known

as the "Father of the Congress," who made an eloquent and altogether excellent address; far better than my own, for H. P. B. was in a bad temper that day and nagged me, even up to the moment when we mounted the platform, to that degree that my brain was all confused. Sinnett tells in his *Incidents, etc.*, how she raged in the carriage on the way home. He writes (p. 229):

"No sooner were we clear of the Hall compound on our drive back than she opened fire on him with exceeding bitterness. To hear her talk on this subject at intervals during the evening, one might have thought the aspirations of her life compromised. . . . Colonel Olcott bore all these tantrums with wonderful fortitude."

Of course: I loved her lovable qualities and out of gratitude for showing me the Path, and bore her savage temper because the good she was doing outweighed all sense of personal suffering.

But there was a decided "method in her madness"—I noticed throughout our relationship: she abused only her staunchest friends, those whom she felt were so attached to her and devoted to the Society as to be ready to put up with everything from her: to others like Wimbridge and some others I might name, whom she knew would not bear with such treatment, she never raised her voice, nor cast an epithet at them. She seemed to fear losing them.

On the 15th December, we left with the Sinnetts and Mrs. Gordon for Benares, reaching there at 4 P.M. in

due course. At the station we were met by Damodar and Babula, and the Munshi of the Maharaja of Vizianagram, who invited us on behalf of his Master to occupy one of his residences and be his guest. Accepting, we drove to the Ananda Bagh, a small palace standing in a high-walled garden planted with flowers and trees, in geometrical beds, and found ourselves pleasantly lodged. Swami Dyānand Saraswati was awaiting us with warm greeting, and we found that he had kindly seen that every provision had been made for our comfort. He was looking very thin and emaciated after an attack of cholera, but this had notably refined and spiritualized his face. He was lodged in a small apartment near the gate. The main building comprised a number of small rooms around a large central hall, which had a high ceiling and attic windows giving on the flat, terraced roof. Heavy curtains hung between light masonry pillars between arches at the front side, and passing these one emerged on a platform and a broad flight of steps, all in masonry. Some sofas, a writing table, and a dozen chairs comprised the furniture of the hall. As evening fell the air was sweet with the perfume of roses, borne in from the garden, and the moon shone in lovely radiance on a grassy-banked tank, with two flights of steps descending to the water at opposite sides. His Highness's agent, the learned Dr. Lazarus, had furnished the house for us, supplied servants, and put two carriages at our disposal.

A hot discussion sprang up in the evening between Mr. Sinnett and H. P. B. on the subject of phenomena, he

insisting, with apparent reason, that if she could afford to expend only a given amount of psychic force she ought to use it exclusively for doing phenomena for men of science, under convincing test conditions; she angrily refusing. Although I took sides with Sinnett, she would not yield the point, but consigned the whole Royal Society to perdition, declaring that her experience at Allahabad had been quite enough. They parted under constraint, and Sinnett declared he should return home the next day. Morning brought peace, however, and we drove to see the Maharajah's principal palace and the Durga Mandi, or celebrated Monkey Temple, where innumerable mischievous simians were fed and petted. That evening, as we and two visitors were sitting in the high-roofed hall, two roses phenomenally dropped in our midst and all were happy again. After an early *Chota hasri* (tea and toast) the next morning we all drove to the retreat of Majji,\* a very well-known female ascetic, learned in Vedānta, who occupied a *guhā* (excavated cave) with buildings above ground, on the bank of the Ganges, a mile or two below the city of Benares. She inherited this *āshrama* from her father, together with a house in town and an extensive and valuable Sanskrit library. It is a delightful spot in the fresh early morning, an ideal place for calm meditation and study. Situated on the edge of a bank forty or fifty feet above the river, and sheltered by some large trees, we found it charming to sit on the platform and engage in discourse with this remarkable woman: one out of many

\* Since deceased.

Indian experiences for which life in Western countries could never prepare one. At that time Majji appeared about forty years of age, fair-skinned, with a calm dignity and grace of gesture that commanded respect. Her voice was tender in tone, face and body plump, eyes full of intelligence and fire. She refused to show us phenomena (always, it will be recollected, our first request on such occasions), which H. P. B. and I would have been glad to see on account of the previous evening's friction, but her reasons for declining were admitted by all to be sufficient, and the visit was serviceable in its effect on our good friends. I do not know whether she could have produced them or not, but being a true Vedântin, she spoke very strongly as to the folly of people's hankering after such comparatively childish distractions, instead of enjoying the calm delight of reposing the mind with the realisation of the ideals which Shânkarâchârya's incomparable philosophy depicts. Go where one will throughout India, it will ever be the same experience, the most honored ascetics are those who decline to exhibit such powers as they may possess save under very exceptional circumstances. The wonder-workers are regarded as of a much lower degree, principally as black-magicians, and as such appeal to the lower classes for patronage and notoriety.

The Sinnetts left for home at 2 P.M. That evening I initiated Mrs. Gordon into the Society with our simple ritual, in Swami Dyânand's presence, and he gave her instructions for developing the Yogic powers.

The next morning Mrs. Gordon and I, accompanied by



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the Swami, drove to the Maharajah of Vizianagram's Girls' School, and were shown about by Dr. Lazarus. We found a large number of bright, intelligent Hindu girls receiving instruction, and their examination by the Swami was very interesting. We particularly admired their Devanâgarî writing, which is done on board slates with a pointed bit of wood dipped in a creamy solution of chalk.

In the evening the Swami, Damodar and I went over the ritual together and made sundry improvements; but in practice I doubt if I have ever employed the same formula twice in the hundreds of cases of admissions into the Society that I have made. The ritual is, in point of fact, little else than a serious explanation to the candidate of the nature of the Society, its principles and aims, its duties to the members, and theirs to it and to each other. It has always seemed to me that the putting of a man's foot into the unworldly path of the search after the nobler self and worthier ideals of life is the most important step that one could take, and the occasion has always impressed me with its solemnity. I have admitted members in almost all parts of the world, and have never failed to make a very clear and frank explanation of the nature of the undertaking upon which they were entering.

Two Muslim jugglers, infinitely inferior to the miracle-working (and never-existing) Govindaswamy described by Jacolliot, were brought to show us their skill. Along with the commonplace tricks we all have seen many times, they did some that were novel and striking. Among these were the stopping by command of wooden balls moving on a

tightly-stretched perpendicular string, and the causing of them to ascend or descend without visible cause; the throwing of sand into a basin of water, pouring off the water and reproducing the sand perfectly dry; and the resuscitation of a cobra after it had been fearfully mangled and apparently killed by a mongoose, by touching it with a bit of dried root.

The same afternoon I lectured at the Town Hall to a crowded audience, Babu Prāmada Dāsa Mitra, one of the most respected and highly-educated Vedāntin gentlemen of Benares, occupying the chair and benefiting the assemblage by a luminous discourse at the close of my remarks. My topic was the material and spiritual needs of India, and I illustrated the former by exhibiting a collection of the engraved brassware for which the Holy City is renowned, and pointing out the slovenly workmanship as evidence of the industrial decadence that has set in, and that the dearest interests of the country require to be stopped. In fact, scarcely one of the pretty vases or covered jars would stand square on the polished table before me, the covers of the jars were badly fitted, the feet were badly soldered on, and the two handles of a vase were riveted at unequal heights. Since then the establishment by Government of Schools of Art has done something to better the condition of things, but there is such a rage for cheap things and so little willingness to pay for the finish which we in the West consider indispensable, that there is immense room for improvement. My kind interpreter on this occasion was Munshi Bakhtāwar Singh, of Shajahanpur. A return visit

paid by Majji to H. P. B. the next morning caused surprise, as, we were told, it was a most unusual thing for her to call upon anybody save her Guru, and upon a European never. I was under a sort of glamor about this woman from the tales that had been told me respecting her, and, in fact, I have visited her every time I have been in Benares; the latest, with Mrs. Besant and the Countess Wachtmeister. I believe I have been the means of getting her some staunch supporters, who have done innumerable acts of kindness and reverence to her, among them, the late beloved Nobin K. Bannerji, of Berhampur, and his associates in our splendid local Branch at that place. I held to my first belief that she was an adept for many years. At that time of her call she was, remember, a complete stranger to us, and, so far as we knew, nobody had explained to her what we were, save we ourselves when we called at her *ashrama*. Yet she freely told Mrs. Gordon, Damodar, and myself, in H. P. B.'s absence, a marvellous tale about her. She said that H. P. B.'s body was occupied by a Yogi, who was working it so far as he could for the spread of Eastern philosophy. It was the third body he had so used, and his total age in the three bodies was about 150 years. She made the mistake of saying that he had been inside H. P. B.'s body sixty-two years, her age being then only forty-eight in all: a bad shot certainly. Speaking always as a Vedântin, she would allude to herself as "this body"; laying a hand on her knee or on the other arm, she would say "this body's" family, studies, residence, pilgrimages, or what not. I finally asked her why she spoke so and who

she was. She said that the body we saw was entered at its seventh year by a Sanyāsi and had been occupied by him ever since ; he had not completed his study of Yoga and so became re-born. The "she" therefore was, in reality, a "he" overlaid with a female body, a parallel case to H. P. B.'s. What is certain is, that the occupant of her body had a most recalcitrant one to manage.

The same evening I lectured at the Bengali School House to another overflowing audience, and the experiences of the following day were so interesting that they must be accorded a chapter to themselves.





## CHAPTER IX.

### PHENOMENA AND PANDITS.

**T**HIS being our first year in India, every scene and experience had the charm of novelty, and we enjoyed them like children. It was something, after all, to be suddenly transferred from prosaic America and its atmosphere of mad haste and bitter commercial competition, to the calm and mental peace of hoary India, where the sage had first place in public estimation and the saint was exalted above all princes. Scarcely any head would have been unaffected by the intoxication of the popular love and seeming reverence that we received, the delightful discussions of philosophy and spiritual ideals, the contact with high-thinkers and noted scholars, the ever-changing, picturesque daily incidents of our wanderings. I, who had passed through the social hurricane called the War of the Rebellion, and the tumult of a long public service, was moved to a degree I can now, with my present knowledge of Pandits and their ways, hardly realise, by a meeting of the Literary Society of Benares Pandits, convened on the 21st December

in my honor. The President was Pandit Ram Misra Shastri, Professor of Sankya in Benares College, and the other officers his colleagues. It was a typical Oriental assemblage, every one present, except myself, being dressed in Indian garb, and every face representing the highest Aryan ethnical type. On arrival I was received with every mark of courtesy and conducted to the seat of honor by the learned President. Coming in from the glare of sunshine, it took a little time for my eyes to get accustomed to the dim light of the brick-paved, cool room, in which a fine scent of sandalwood and tuberose blooms hung in the air. Amid a perfect silence, broken only by muffled sounds of rumbling vehicles and the jangling brass discs of *akkas*, that came from the distant street, addresses of welcome were read to me in English, Sanskrit, and Hindi, expressive of the pleasure the Pandits of Benares had felt on hearing of the interest taken by our Society in Sanskrit Literature and Indian Philosophy; bidding me heartily welcome, and promising their lasting sympathy and good will. In my reply, I took the opportunity of pointing out what an immense service the Benares Pandits could, with the help of English-knowing graduates, do to the cause of Aryan learning by inventing Sanskrit equivalents for the numberless terms derived from the Greek and Latin, which were employed in scientific writing. For example, they might make Sanskrit synonyms for Oxygen, Hydrogen, Nitrogen, Carbon, Electricity, Magnetism, Attraction of Cohesion, Gravity; the names of chemical elements and compounds; those of Biology, Botany, Geology, etc., etc., etc. Practically, I had

already discovered when being interpreted into an Indian vernacular, that, in my remarks upon Modern Science and its relations with Ancient Science, my interpreters had to merely pronounce the technical words without translation, and hence without conveying to, say, an orthodox Pandit who had never read a Western scientific book, the least idea of what was meant. Sanskrit was abundantly rich in terms denoting every object, substance, physical or mental condition, law, principle, ideal, etc., connected with philosophy, psychology, and metaphysics, and the West would be forced to either coin new equivalents for them or take them over into its various tongues as, in the course of time, the Theosophical Society and other popularizing agencies spread Eastern views throughout the world. But the need of the hour in India was to make it possible for every undergraduate and graduate to see for himself how much the Aryan thought was in harmony with modern scientific discovery, how his ancestors had traversed the whole field of knowledge, and how proud and glad he ought to be that he was of their blood, the heir of their wisdom. Some discussion ensued between the Pandits and myself, in which I cited many instances of the necessity for a new nomenclature, with the result that the Society voted unanimously for the appointment of a Philological Committee. I was also honored by election as an Honorary Member of the Society, and after the usual garlanding, rosewater-sprinkling, and distribution of betel and *paan*, the meeting broke up. In turning over the leaves of the 1st volume of the *Theosophist*, I find an essay by Pandit Ram Misra Shastri upon "The

Vedanta Darsána," from which, to give an idea of the fondness of the Eastern mind for hyperbole, I venture to quote the following :—

"Here in the land of Benares, fragrant as it were with the stores of knowledge, arrived Colonel Olcott, with a mind earnestly desirous of acquiring the knowledge of the manners, customs, mechanical and other arts and sciences of the ancient Aryas, and having formed friendship with the members of the Brahmamritavarshini Association, showed at a meeting of that assembly a very great liking for the Indian Philosophies (the Darsanas Shâstras).

"Methinks that although he is born in a foreign land, yet he is assuredly a native of India, inasmuch as in him the effect of the original antecedent relationship has shown life afresh, and he has made not infrequent efforts towards the good of India. Nevertheless, enough with such series of conjectures. The fact, however, still remains that he longs to know the philosophy (the Darsanas) of our country and, being desirous of spreading in foreign countries the knowledge of the Vedant Darsana, invited earnestly and not infrequently Vedantic contributions to their famous journal which, as it were, acts the part of the moon in expanding the lotus of Indian Wisdom."

From this meeting I went to pay my respects to Prof. G. Thibaut, Ph.D., Principal of Benares College, and an old pupil and protégé of Prof. Max Müller. I found him a most agreeable man, deeply versed in Sanskrit, yet without pretence or pomposity: in short, a real specimen of the



German litterateur. From thence to see Mr. Wall, the local Magistrate and Collector; a title meaning nothing to Western people, but here in India designating the official who rules almost despotically over more or less millions of Hindus in a given district, to whom he is at once the Providence, the Jupiter Tonans, and all the gods and goddesses "rolled into one."

That evening there was a glorious moon, shining day-bright out of a sky without a cloud. Doctor Thibaut, the College Sanskrit Pandits, Babu Pramádá Dásá Mitra, Swami Dyánand, Mr. Ram Rao, one of Swami's disciples, Damodar, Mrs. Gordon, H. P. B., myself, and others, whose names are not recorded, sat on chairs and a large Indian carpet, on the platform at the head of the steps, with the moon turning our white bungalow into an ivory palace and silvering the water of the lotos tank before us, and discoursed on Aryan themes. The Swamiji was, of course, heterodox in that he denied that idol worship was authorised by the Vedas, the primal source of all inspired religion, the foundation of Brahmanism in particular. Babu Pramádá Dásá and the College Pandits were intensely orthodox, *i.e.*, idolaters; so the reader may fancy the warmth and volubility of the debate, to which Dr. Thibaut and we others, Europeans, gave impartial attention. Every now and then H. P. B. would get translated to her something that had been said and thereupon "take a hand in," to our great amusement; for she was so deliciously witty and unreservedly outspoken as to be irresistible. What made us laugh the more was, that her most comical outbursts would be received with

unruffled solemnity by the Hindu professors, who had probably a congenital incapacity for joking, and could not form to themselves the least idea of what this prodigious woman was driving at. Then she, seeing this, would turn to us with obstreperous energy and curse the others for a pack of bigoted fools !

At last, some of the Pandits took leave, and the rest of us went within and continued the conversation. There were H. P. B., Mrs. Gordon, Dr. Thibaut, the Swami, Pramâdâ Babu, Ram Rao, Damodar and myself present. The talk was upon the subject of Yoga. "Matam Plavatsky," said Dr. Thibaut, in his strong German accent, "dese Pandits tell me dat, ~~unt~~outedly, in te ancient times dere vere Yogis who hat actually teveloped the Siddhis tescribed in the Shâstras ; tat dey coul't too vonterful tings ; for instance, tey coul't make fall in a room like dis, a shower of roses ; put now nobody can do dat." I ask my friend's pardon for transcribing his then accent and words, but the scene comes back to me so vividly that I can almost hear him'speaking. He can get his revenge the first time he hears me speak German ! I see him now ; as he sat on a sofa to H. P. B.'s right, with his frock-coat buttoned to his chin, his intellectual, pale face as solemn as though he were pronouncing a funeral oration, and his hair cut as short as it could be, and standing up like spikes all over his head. He had no sooner pronounced the last word than H. P. B. started up in her chair, looked scornfully at him, and burst out : "Oh, they say that, do they ? They say no one can do it now ? Well, I'll show them ; and you may tell them from me that

if the modern Hindus were less sycophantic to their Western masters, less in love with their vices, and more like their ancestors in many ways, they would not have to make such a humiliating confession, nor get an old Western hippopotamus of a woman to prove the truth of their Shastras!" Then, setting her lips together and muttering something, she swept her right hand through the air with an imperious gesture, and bang! on the heads of the company fell about a dozen roses. As soon as the momentary shock of surprise was over, there was a scramble for the roses, but Thibaut sat as straight as a post and seemed to be casting it up, pro and con, in his mind. Then the discussion proceeded with renewed vivacity. The Sankya was the topic and Thibaut put many searching questions to H. P. B., which she answered so satisfactorily that the Doctor said that neither Max Müller nor any other Orientalist had made so clear to him the *real* meaning of the Sankya philosophy as she had, and he thanked her very much. Towards the end of the evening, in a pause in the conversation, he turned to H. P. B. and—always keeping his eyes fixed towards the floor according to his habit—said that, as he had not been so fortunate as to get one of the roses that had so unexpectedly fallen, might he be favoured with one "as a souvenir of this very delightful evening"? Those were his very words. His secret thought probably was, that if the first floral rain had been a trick she would not be ready for a second, if taken unawares! "Oh yes, certainly," she said, "as many as you like." And, making another of her sweeping gestures, down fell another shower of flowers; one

rose actually hitting the Doctor on the top of his head and bounding into his lap as he sat bolt upright. I happened to be looking at him at that moment and saw the whole incident. Its effect was so funny as to set me off into a fit of laughter. He gave a little, very slight start, opened and shut his eyes twice, and then taking a rose and looking down at it, said with imperturbable solemnity, "*De veight mooltiplied py te felosity, proves dat it moost haf come from a creat distance.*" There spoke the hard savant, the unimaginative scholar, who reduces all life to an equation, and expresses all emotions by algebraical signs! The story of the discomfiture of the larking Paris students, who had dressed up one of their number in a bull's hide, rubbed phosphorus over the eyes and lips, lay in wait for the learned Cuvier in the College Campus one dark night, and with bellowings sprang out before him in the hope of giving him a start, came to my mind. As everybody knows, the legend is that the great naturalist merely paused a moment, looked at the silly apparition, said "Humph! hoofs; horns; herbivorous"—and walked quietly on, leaving the ambushed students crestfallen enough. Let that be as apocryphal as one pleases, this Benares incident is the simple truth, as every one present will attest.

But we had not done with the evening's surprises. Dr. Thibaut finally took leave and I conducted him to the entrance, where I lifted the purdah (curtain) to give him egress. Damodar followed after me with the light—a student reading-lamp with shade, vertical rod for the body of the lamp to slide upon, and a ring at top to carry

it by. H. P. B. also left her seat and was approaching us. The Doctor and I exchanged a remark on the beauty of the night, shook hands, and he turned to go. I was just dropping the curtain when I saw on H. P. B.'s face that strange look of power which almost always preceded a phenomenon. I called back our guest and pointed to H. P. B., who spoke never a word until she took the lamp from Damodar's hand, held it by her left forefinger, looked fixedly at it, pointed at it with her right forefinger and in an imperious tone said, "Go up!" The flame rose and rose until it came to the top of the chimney. "Go down!" said she: it slowly descended until it burnt bluish at the wick. "Go up!" she exclaimed, "up: I command you." The obedient flame once more mounted to the top of the chimney. "Down!" she cried; and once more it sank to the point, almost of extinction; whereupon she returned the lamp to Damodar, nodded to the Doctor and went into her bedroom. This, again, is a plain unexaggerated tale of what really happened in our presence. If the sceptic would explain away the rose-shower incidents by the theory of confederacy,\* at least here was one instance of a genuine phenomenon to which the theory of fraud does not apply. She said it was very simple: a Mahâtma was there, invisible to all but herself, and he had just turned the lamp up and down while she spoke the words. This was one of two explanations given by her at different times, the other being

\* I should have mentioned that when the two roses dropped in Mr. Sinnett's presence (see Chap. VIII), he and I at once hurried to the staircase leading to the roof-terrace, ran up, and searched about for any possibly concealed confederate. We found no one.

that she had power over the elementals of Fire, and they obeyed her commands. I think this is the more probable of the two. As for the facts, they are indisputable, and everybody is free to attach his own theory to them. To me, the incident was one more in a long series going to prove her possession of real and extraordinary psychical powers; facts upon which I could fall back whenever her good faith might be challenged by her critics or impugned by her own indiscretions of language and of actions. Her intimate friends believed in her in spite of her often feverish outbursts of temper, when she would declare herself ready to shout from the housetops that there were no Mahâtmas, no psychical powers, and that she had simply deceived us from first to last. Talk of ordeals and trials of faith! I doubt if any neophytes, postulants, or disciples ever had to undergo fiercer ones than we. It seemed her delight to drive us frantic with her vagaries and self-accusations, she knowing all the while that to us doubt was impossible in view of our experience with her. That is why I hesitate to place the least value on her so-called "Confession" to M. Aksakof of her having had a turbulent and disreputable past. In fact, I had for years in my possession a bundle of old letters which proved her innocence of a certain grave fault that she has been charged with, and her having deliberately sacrificed her own reputation to save the honor of a young lady who had met with a misfortune. But let me not be drawn into further digression. Time will vindicate the memory of this most unhappy victim of social injustice, and meanwhile her books and her teachings stand

as her imperishable monument. My souvenirs of those long years of our common work, their struggles, sorrows, and successes, will help to show her in her true character, and, while written with the candor of the historian, they will, I hope, reflect also the spirit of loving friendship which animates their author.

After all our visitors had departed the Swami sat along with us, explaining to Mrs. Gordon the philosophy of such phenomena as we had had shown us. A note in my Diary reminds me of the intense interest with which he had watched H. P. B. while they were in progress, and, whatever he may have said later, when he chose to break with us, there is not the slightest doubt as to his having been perfectly satisfied of their genuineness at the time.

Mrs. Gordon left for her home the following morning. Dr. Thibaut came and stopped until it was our time to go to the train, and we reached Allahabad in time for dinner, and spent a quiet evening with our kind friends, the Sinnetts. The next day H. P. B. and I were given a reception in town by leading Hindu gentlemen, at the Allahabad Institute, and I made an address upon "Ancient Aryavarta and Modern India," which drew out several fervid responses at the close, and a vote of thanks, with the obligatory garlands and scented-water sprinklings. H. P. B. was also coaxed into making a brief discourse, and acquitted herself admirably.

Callers, discussions, dinner parties, and evening gatherings at the house filled up our few remaining days at "Prayâg," the holy city—as Allahabad used to be called.

On the 26th December I received Mr. and Mrs. Sinnett into membership, the ceremony being made unusually interesting by a voice replying "Yes, we do" to my question whether the Masters heard the pledges of the candidates and approved of their admission into the Society. Truly, events have amply proved the value of their accession to our then small membership. On the 30th, at 8 P.M., we left for Bombay after this most delightful visit, passed two nights in the train, and reached home on New Year's Day 1880. On the same day of the previous year, we were tossing on the stormy Atlantic, and yearning for Bombay. Our Indian life began in clouds, treachery, and disappointment; the year closed in bright promise for the future! Friends gained, obstacles surmounted, enemies baffled, our Magazine founded, the ties becoming stronger that were to bind us for life to India and Ceylon. On the 31st December I wrote: "This day we have 621 subscribers to the *Theosophist*," and, however paltry that may sound to Western people, accustomed to the wonderful statistics of their journals, it was a very respectable circulation for India, where the leading daily papers of Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras have only 1500 to 2000 names on their mailing registers!

The first formal meeting of the Theosophical Society, as a body, in India, was held 4th January 1880, in the library.

The growing business of the *Theosophist* made a deal of work for us, for, being too poor to hire helpers, we had to do the packing, addressing, and pasting, as well as the editorial duty. In addition to which was the ever-growing



correspondence to look after ; so that I seldom got to bed before a late hour. This month the Magazine began to pay its way.

To keep up the interest of our members I undertook a course of weekly lectures at the Library on Mesmerism, Psychometry, Crystal-reading and allied subjects, with experimental illustrations. I treated them all from the point of view of their evidential value in the problem of the superior consciousness of man. A number of our members proved excellent sensitives, and the attendance was always large at the meetings.

We received, 15th January, from Russia the news that H. P. B.'s first Indian letter on the *Caves and Jungles of Hindustan* had made a great stir ; everybody was talking about it. On the 1st February we all witnessed a special performance by students of Elphinstone College, of a play called "Harischândrâ," which deeply interested us. This was not only on account of its novelty and picturesqueness to us Westerns, but also because we saw unfolded in this drama the undoubted prototype of the Biblical story of Job. So few beyond the Red Sea know the Purânic story of Harischandra that I am tempted to reproduce from Ward's *History of the Hindus* the following brief summary : with an important prefix, however. The story, as told in *Harischandropâkhyâna*, recites that a sort of wager was made by the two great Rishis, Vashistha and Visvamitrâ, on the subject of King Harischândrâ's inflexible virtue : the one declaring him to be the most perfect among mortals, the other replying that he had never been properly tested.

If he had had to suffer the miseries of common men, his virtue would have collapsed. The dispute ended in an agreement that Vishvamitrâ should be free to plague the king until he was satisfied as to his pre-eminent merit. The story taken by Rev. Missionary Ward is from the *Markhândeya Purâna*. His omission to note the resemblance to the almost identical story of the temptations and victory of Job is rather amusing. Here is his version :—

Harishchândrâ's Kingdom extended over the whole earth ; he was so famed for liberality that Visvamitrâ, the sage, desirous of seeing the extent of it, went to him and asked a gift. The king promised to grant him whatever he would ask. The sage demanded his kingdom and it was granted. He then asked for the fee which accompanies a gift, which the king promised to give in a month. But where should the king reside, since he had surrendered the earth to Visvamitrâ ? The latter ordered him to go to Benares, which was not reckoned a part of the earth. Visvamitrâ, tearing a piece of cloth into three pieces, divided it amongst the king, the queen, and their son, and the family departed : the king attempted to take with him a gold drinking-cup, but Visvamitrâ prevented him. They were nearly a month in walking to Benares, where they had no sooner arrived than Visvamitrâ came and demanded the fee. The king asking from whence he should procure this, seeing he had surrendered his all, the sage directed him to sell his wife. A covetous Brahmin bought her, who allowed her food only once a day. Visvamitrâ now complained that the sum

raised by the sale of the queen was too little, and refused to accept it. The king was then led round the market, with a blade of grass in his hair, to signify that he was for sale, when a man of the lowest caste bought him and made him a swineherd and superintendent of the place where the dead are burnt. With the money thus raised the fee was paid and Visvamitrâ returned home.

Harishchandrâ's son remained at the house of the Brahmin with his mother; but the Brahmin resolving that he should not live idle, sent him daily to gather flowers in a forest, near a hermit's hut of leaves, where they broke down the trees and did much mischief; upon which the hermit forbade them once, twice, thrice, but they still continued obstinate. At last he denounced a curse on the next boy who should dare to transgress, and Harishchandrâ's son was soon bitten by a snake and died. The distressed mother entreated the Brahmin, her master, that, as they were of the Kshatriya caste, the dead body might not be thrown into the river. The Brahmin promised to send wood to burn the body, when the mother, carrying her child to the landing place, where they burn the dead, laid it down and began to weep aloud and bitterly. Harishchandrâ was aroused by her cries and, going to the spot, saw a female who had brought a dead body to be burnt. He demanded the usual fee for liberty to burn the corpse. She in vain pleaded that she was a poor widow, and could give nothing; he demanded that she should tear the cloth in two which she wore and give him the half of it, and was proceeding to beat her with the iron crow in his hand, when she wept and began to

tell him her miserable tale ; her descent ; that she was the wife of King Harishchândrâ, and that this dead child was her son. All the feelings of horror, sorrow, and love started up in his bosom at once, and he confessed to the poor broken-hearted mother that he was her husband, the father of the dead child—that he was Harishchândrâ. The woman was unable to believe him, but he related some secrets that had passed betwixt them when king and queen, from which she knew he must be Harishchândrâ. She then put his dead son into his arms, and they both sat down and wept bitterly. At last, resolving to burn themselves with the dead child, they prepared the fire, and were about to throw themselves into it, when Yama and Indra arrived, and assured Harishchândrâ that they had assumed these forms and carried him through these scenes to try his piety, with which they were now completely satisfied. They raised the dead child to life and sent the king and queen to take possession of their kingdom.

The plot of the play that we saw represented followed the lines of the *Harishchandropâkhyâna*, the curtain rising in the Prologue upon a scene in Indra's Heaven, with the two Rishis in debate together, and falling on the exit of Vishwamitrâ to put Harishchândrâ to the test. Every one to his taste, but it seems to me a much better beginning of the story than that given in Job i. 6 to 12 ; for here are two equals, advanced human adepts—wagering together, while in the other case the Devil with impunity intrudes into the presence of God, sneers to His face about the sham virtue of His devout servant, and instead of being blasted where he

stood, actually provoking the "Lord" into giving a most deserving, pious, and innocent man into the power of the "Adversary" to morally vivisect!

The anniversary of the landing of our quartette at Bombay—15th February—was celebrated by our working all day, save when receiving visitors; by Mr. William Scott, D.P.W., dining with us; and by my sticking to my desk until 2 A.M.

About this time I proposed the institution of a Medal of Honor. From the *Theosophist* for March 1880, the following excerpt shows the object in view:—

"The said medal to be of pure silver and made from Indian coins melted down for the purpose: and it shall be suitably engraved, stamped, carved, or embossed with a device expressive of its high character as a Medal of Honor. It shall be annually awarded by a committee of Native scholars, designated by the President, to the Native author of the best original essay upon any subject connected with the ancient religions, philosophies, or sciences; preference being given, other things being equal, to the occult or mystical branch of science as known and practised by the ancients."

An admirable committee was selected, and the offer published from time to time, but neither of the essays sent in was thought worthy of such a distinction. Babu S. K. Ghose and other friends sent me some very ancient Indian coins for the purpose, and they are still in my custody.

The object was, however, substantially realised by the foundation of the T. Subbarow Medal at the Convention of 1883, which has been awarded to Judge P. Sreenevasa Row, Mme. H. P. Blavatsky, Mr. G. R. S. Mead, and Mrs. Annie Besant, for specially meritorious Theosophical publications.

On the 4th March, a European lady of Northern India, wife of a high military officer, was admitted into the Society, and I mention the fact merely to recall a circumstance which shows the utter lack of social relations between the two races. After the ceremony of admission of the candidate was concluded, I called on several of our cleverest Parsi and Hindu members to express any sentiments of good will and fellowship that they would wish the new lady member to convey to our colleagues in London. Short speeches were made by Messrs. Seervai, Deshmukh, Mooljee, Patwardhan, and others, their views being given in excellent taste and perfect English. Mrs. M. was "astonished and delighted"—she said—to find so much intelligence among the Natives. In her eighteen years of residence in India she had never even spoken to any Hindu but her servants! And she, the wife of a high officer. A very much more important acquisition to our membership was that of Khan Bahadur N. D. Khandalvāla, one of the ablest men on our rolls, who was admitted at a special meeting of the Society on the 9th March. The application for membership of Baron J. Spedalieri, of Marseilles, one of the most erudite Kabalists of Europe and chief pupil of the late Eliphas Levi, reached us on the 19th of the same month. The

same month brought us a Collector and Magistrate of the Punjab, a C.S., as a candidate. On the evening of the 25th, H. P. B., Damodar, and I had an experience of a most delightful character, which I have related elsewhere from memory, but which must now be repeated in its proper place from my notes of the same evening written in my Diary.

We three had driven out in the open phaeton that Damodar had presented to H. P. B., to the farther end of the causeway known as Warli Bridge, to enjoy the cool sea-breeze. A magnificent electric storm was raging, unaccompanied with rain, the flashes being so vivid as to light up the neighbourhood almost like day. H. P. B. and I smoked and we all chatted about this and that, when we heard the sound of many voices coming from the sea-shore to our right, from a bungalow situate on a transverse road not far from the corner where we sat. Presently a party of well-dressed Hindus, laughing and talking together, came in sight, passed us and entered their carriages, which were drawn up in line on the Warli Road, and drove off to town. To see them, Damodar, who was sitting with his back to the driver, stood up and looked over the box. As the last party of convivial friends were coming abreast of our carriage, he silently touched my shoulder and motioned with his head that I was to look at something in that direction. I stood up and saw behind the last group a single human figure approaching. He, like the others, was dressed in white, but the whiteness of his costume positively made theirs look grey, as the electric light makes the brightest gaslight appear dull and yellow. The figure was

a head taller than the group which preceded him, and his walk was the very ideal of graceful dignity. As he came about as far as our horse's head, he deflected from the road in our direction, and we two, to say nothing of H. P. B., saw that it was a Mahatma. His white turban, and dress, mass of dark hair dropping to his shoulders, and full beard, made us think it was "the Sahib," but when he came to the carriage-side and stood not more than a yard from our faces, and laid his hand on H. P. B.'s left arm as it lay on the carriage body, and looked us in the eyes and responded to our reverential salutations, we then saw it was not he, but another, whose portrait H. P. B. wore, later, in a large gold locket, and which many have seen. He spoke no word, but quietly moved towards the causeway, taking no notice of, nor, seemingly, exciting any from the Hindu guests as they rolled away in their carriages towards the town. The recurrent blazes of electric light lit him up as he stood by us; and as his tall form showed against the horizon and the dark earth of the causeway, I noticed, too, that a lamp of the last of the carriages threw him up in high relief when he was some fifty feet away from us and on the causeway. There was no tree or bush to screen him from us, and, it may be believed, we watched him with intense concentration. One instant we saw him, the next he was gone; disappeared, like one of the lightning flashes. Under the strain of excitement I jumped out of the carriage, ran to the spot where he was last seen, but no one was there. I saw nothing but the empty road and the back of the carriage that had just passed.





## CHAPTER X.

### FIRST TOUR IN CEYLON.

LET it be observed that the incident described at the end of the last chapter occurred on the evening of the 25th June 1880. On the 28th, *three days later*, the Coulombs arrived in Bombay from Ceylon, and, on our invitation, took up their temporary residence with us. The French Consul at Galle and other charitable persons had subscribed for their passages, and they had landed almost penniless. He had a box of tools and each of them a few rags of clothing. It was settled that they should stop with us until an employment could be found for him, after which they were to go to housekeeping for themselves. Under this agreement I set our friends to work to find him a situation, and after awhile succeeded in getting him a machinist's berth in a cotton mill. But he did not stop there long, for he fell out with the owner and threw up the situation. I found him a man very quick-tempered and hard to please in the matter of employers, and, as no other opening occurred, he and his wife just

drifted along with us, without any definite plans as to the future. He was a clever mechanic and she a practical, hard-working woman, and as both tried to make themselves useful, and I could get on with them by treating them kindly, they were taken into the family. From neither of them did I hear a bad word about H. P. B.'s behaviour at Cairo; quite the contrary, they seemed to have the greatest respect and affection for her. As for their being concerned in any underhand trickery in the way of phenomena, they never breathed a word or gave a hint to me or to any one about us. So, as for her subsequent assertions, in the pamphlet compiled for her by the Madras Missionaries (she could not write grammatically a sentence of English), that she and he were doing tricks for H. P. B., among others, in producing bogus apparitions of Mahatmas with an arrangement of bladders and muslin, I have not a particle of evidence that would make me credit it. It may be otherwise, but I believe the stories to be downright falsehoods, told by her for some pitiful woman's spite.

If the Mahatmas we saw at Bombay after the Coulombs came were only M. Coulomb masquerading with wigs and a false head, what was the man whom we saw at Warli Bridge, three days before their arrival, as described in the last chapter? Certainly not M. Coulomb. Then, if the figure was a real Mahatma, who could vanish out of sight, and whose features we could distinguish as he stood within a yard of us, in the glare of the vivid sheet lightning, why might not the figures we saw in and about the house,

later on, have also been Mahatmas? At all events, H. P. B., even though she had been an ordinary woman, unendowed with psychical powers, is entitled to the benefit of the doubt. Such benefit I shall always accord to her, and so will her other intimates. Let it stand at that.

First and last, all our noted members will come upon the scene of my historical drama. The entry of April 9th (1880) says, "An interesting man called to-day, with an introductory letter from Mr. Martin Wood, editor of the *Bombay Review*. His name is Tookaram Tatya. Is a cotton commission merchant; speaks English well; is very intelligent; says he is deeply interested in Yoga." So began my acquaintance with a gentleman whose name is now known throughout the world among us as one of the most indefatigable workers in Society. He had held aloof and watched us, being sceptical as to our having come to India in good faith. His knowledge of Europeans had not led him to believe that persons of our calibre could give up their home interests merely for the sake of learning Eastern philosophy; there must be some humbug at the bottom of the affair. A year passed and the first quarter of the second, and yet nobody had discovered anything bad about us. So, as he was most deeply interested in the subjects that we were engaged in, he determined to come and see for himself what sort of folk we really were. I shall never forget that private interview, which made us two know each other as though we had been friends for years, and which ended by his paying me his respects in the true Eastern fashion.

The tone of our members in the mass, at that time, will be inferred from an entry of one of those April days:—

“A meeting of the T. S. was held, and I got everyone present to express his views as to the best way to increase the interest in the Society. The calling of a general meeting was resolved upon. But it will amount to nothing; for, of all the members, whether here, or in Europe or America, there are only a corporal's guard of real Theosophists: the rest are but miracle-hunters.”

That can hardly be said now, in view of the enormous amount of unselfish work that is being done in Great Britain, Sweden, Spain, the United States, and Ceylon, not to speak of India, Australia, and elsewhere. Yet, at the same time, it cannot be denied that a great deal of hard work has also been done, throughout all these years, under the spur of the hope of closer intercourse with the Mahatmas, and, perhaps, the attainment to some degree of powers similar to H. P. B.'s. I think that this yearning has made hundreds of most worthy people fall easy victims to such transparent humbugs as the “H. B. of L.,” and a number of conscious and unconscious spiritual pretenders. Such devotion is dearly purchased by the Society when it can be extinguished upon discovering the illusion under which blind, exaggerated faith in appearances and promises has made the victims fall. For from ardent friends they usually change into virulent opponents.

About this time we were passing through the disagreeable phase of our relations with Swami Dyānand. Without the

least cause, his attitude towards us became hostile; he wrote us exasperating letters, then modified them, again changed his tone, and so kept us perpetually on the strain. The fact is, our Magazine was not in the least an exclusively Arya Samaj organ, nor would we consent to hold aloof from the Buddhists or Parsis, as he almost insisted that we should. He evidently wanted to force us to choose between the continuance of his patronage and fidelity to our declared eclecticism. And we chose; for our principles we would *not* surrender for any equivalent whatever.

A visit of our party to Ceylon, long urgently requested by the leading priests and laity of the Buddhist community, had been determined upon, and the preparations occupied us throughout the whole of this month. We had to get ready in advance the matter for two or three numbers of the *Theosophist*, and my Diary records the night work we had to do. To save expense it was arranged that H. P. B., Wimbridge, and I should go, and Miss Bates and the Coulombs remain behind to look after the Headquarters. As Miss Bates was a spinster and Mme. Coulomb an experienced housewife, the unlucky idea occurred to me to transfer the housekeeping duty to the latter from the former. Fifteen years of householding had not taught me the folly of giving a new-comer the opportunity of "bossing it" over the other woman! I know it now.

Among other things, there were badges to get made for our delegation, H. P. B. being fond of such things. It was for this trip that the silver badge with gold centre,

now worn by Mrs. Besant, was made for H. P. B.'s use; mine was a more gorgeous affair and those of the rest of the party much plainer. Another, and much more serious matter, was the organization of the Bombay T. S., on the evening of 25th April: the pioneer of all our Indian, in fact, of our Oriental Branches, and the third on the list of the whole Society; not counting New York, which was still *the* Society. The two branches older than that of Bombay are the British, now the London Lodge, and the Ionian, of Corfu. The first officers of the Bombay Branch were Mr. Keshow N. Mavalankar, *President*; Messrs. Gopalrao Hari Deshmukh and K. N. Seervai, *Vice-Presidents*; Framroz R. Joshi, *Secretary*; Krishnarao N. Mavalankar, *Treasurer*; Edward Wimbridge, Mooljee Thackersey, and Messrs. Patwardhan, Warden and Jabouli, *Councillors*. Mr. Tookaram Tatya having overcome all his distrust, was duly accepted into membership at the meeting of 2nd May.

Everything being ready, we embarked on the 7th May in a British India coasting steamer for Ceylon. The party consisted of the two Founders, Mr. Wimbridge, Damodar K. Mavalankar, Purshotam and Panachand Anandji (Hindus), Sorabji J. Padshah and Ferozshah D. Shroff (Parsis): all but the first three being Delegates from the Branch to the Sinhalese Buddhists and bearers of brotherly salutations expressive of the broad tolerance of our Society in religious matters. The wife of Mr. Purshotam, a delicate, fragile little lady, accompanied her husband, and Babula attended us as servant.

We were, I believe, the only passengers on board, and the ship being clean, the officers agreeable, the weather fine, and the daily calls at the ports along the West Coast full of interest, we enjoyed the voyage as if it were on a large private yacht. H. P. B. was in high spirits, and kept everybody in a good humor. A passionate card-player, she spent hours daily playing Nap with the ship's officers, barring Captain Wickes, whom the code of naval etiquette forbade to play with his subordinates. The chief engineer, a Mr. Elliott, soon became a great favourite of H. P. B.'s, and on the last day of the voyage, she did for him the phenomenal substitution of his name for her own in embroidery on her handkerchief. I was present and saw it. They had finished a game of Nap and fell to chatting about these alleged psychical powers, and Elliott was especially incredulous about the possibility of this phenomenon of changing an embroidered name on a handkerchief for another in embroidery. This *à propos* of what H. P. B. had done for Ross Scott the day of our arrival at Bombay, about which he had been told. He coaxed her again and again to do it for him, and she finally consented, and then and there did it as we all sat on deck, under the shelter of an awning. But when Elliott opened his hand in which he had held the handkerchief during the experiment, he found that H. P. B. had mis-spelt his name, making it Eliot instead of Elliott. Now, in Mme. Coulomb's veracious pamphlet, it is averred that H. P. B. got her to embroider names of third parties on some of her handkerchiefs after picking out her own. The implication would be that she had thus pre-

pared the 'Eliot' handkerchief, and that H. P. B. had simply changed her own for it. But until we met him on board the "Ellora" we did not know there was such a person in existence. How, then, could Madame Coulomb have embroidered his name for future trickery? The explanation, it will be seen, is simply nonsensical.

The old Captain was a fat, good-natured person without the glimmering of a belief in things spiritual or psychical. He used to joke H. P. B. on our notions with such a delicious ignorance of the whole subject that it only made us laugh. One day she was playing her favourite, solitary game of *Patience*, when the Captain broke in upon her meditations with a challenge that she should tell his fortune with the cards. She at first refused, but at last consented, and, making him cut, laid out the cards on the table. She said, "This is very strange: it can't be so!" "What?" asked the Captain. "What the cards say. Cut again." He did so, and with the same result, apparently, for H. P. B. said the cards prophesied such a nonsensical thing that she didn't like to tell him. He insisted; whereupon she said that the cards foretold that he would not be much longer at sea; he would receive an offer to live ashore, and would throw up his profession. The big Captain roared at the idea, and told her that it was just as he had anticipated. As for his quitting the sea, nothing would please him more, but there was no such good luck in store for him. The thing passed off without further remark beyond the Captain's repeating the prophecy to the Chief Officer, through whom it became the laugh of the ship. But there was a sequel.



A month or two after our return to Bombay H. P. B. received a letter from Captain Wickes, in which he said he owed her an apology for his behaviour about the card prophecy, and must honestly confess that it had been literally fulfilled. After dropping us at Ceylon, he continued his voyage to Calcutta. On arrival, he had the offer of the appointment of Harbour Master (Port Officer) at Karwar (I think it was, or if not, then Mangalore), had accepted it, and had actually returned as passenger in his own ship! This is a specimen of a great many card prophecies H. P. B. made. I do not suppose the cards had anything to do with it save that they may have acted as a link between her clairvoyant brain and the Captain's personal aura, thus enabling her clairvoyant faculty of prescience to come into play. Yet, psychically endowed as she was, I scarcely remember her having foreseen any one of the many painful events that happened to her through treacherous friends and malicious enemies. If she did, she never told me or anybody else so far as I ever heard. A thief stole something she valued once, at Bombay, but she could not find out the culprit, nor help the police whom she called in.

At Karwar and Mangalore our resident colleagues came off to the ship with presents of fruits and fresh milk, and stopped as long as they could to talk on Theosophy. At Calicut some of us went ashore for a run through the town, and looked in at a ginger-packing house, where we saw the roots trimmed, dried, bleached, and ground in mortars by women who were *dicollettes* to a degree that one sees sometimes distantly approached at Western society functions.

It is the fashion here for respectable women to go uncovered to the waist: old or young, pretty or hideous, it is all the same; a Hindu woman of that locality who covers herself above the waist is at once known as of bad character. So, at Bombay, respectable Maratha ladies invariably go bare-foot, disreputable ones shod. On the other hand, the virtuous Parsi lady would not dream of going unshod, nor the well-bred Parsi gentleman with his head uncovered.

*Tot homines, quot sententia.*

Speaking of prophecy, I think I was a bit of a seer in writing in my Diary on the day before reaching Colombo, "New and great responsibilities are to be faced: momentous issues hang on the result of this visit." Nothing could have been truer than that.

We dropped anchor in Colombo harbour on the morning of 16th May, and after awhile a large boat came alongside bringing Mohattiwatte Gunananda, the Buddhist orator-priest, John Robert de Silva, and some junior priests of Megittuwatte's pãnsala (monastery). De Silva was our first lay F.T.S. in Ceylon, having joined by letter before we left New York. I made the very natural mistake of supposing, from his Portuguese name, that he was a Roman Catholic, and that his sympathetic letter to me and application for admission into membership were but Missionary traps. So, while I replied in friendly terms and sent the Diploma asked for, I sent them *under cover to Megittuwatte*, with request that he would not deliver them if the addressee was not the Buddhist he said he was. It was all right, and de Silva has ever been one of the best, most efficient, intelli-

gent, and sincere Buddhists I have ever met. But that the Sinhalese should keep the Portuguese and Dutch Christian surnames, which they took from motives of policy during the successive periods of Portuguese and Dutch supremacy, when their own Sanskrit names are infinitely prettier and more appropriate, is surprising and, it must be confessed, dishonoring to the nation. We found the famed Megittuwatte (Mohattiwatte) a middle-aged, shaven monk, of full medium stature, with a very intellectual head, a bright eye, very large mouth, and an air of perfect self-confidence and alertness. Some of the more meditative monks habitually drop their eyes when conversing with one, but he looked you square in the face, as befitted the most brilliant polemic orator of the island, the terror of the Missionaries. One could see at a glance that he was more wrangler than ascetic, more Hilary than Hilarion. He is dead now, but for many years he was the boldest, most brilliant, and powerful champion of Sinhalese Buddhism, the leader (originator) of the present revival. H. P. B. had sent him from New York a presentation copy of *Isis Unveiled*, and he had translated portions where she describes some of the phenomena she had personally witnessed in the course of her travels. His greeting to us was especially cordial. He requested us to proceed with the steamer to Galle, where arrangements had been made for our reception: he himself would go that evening by train. As a parting souvenir H. P. B. that evening rapped on the Captain's head, or rather made the raps sound inside it, and rang her fairy-bells for some of the officers.

Before dawn on the 17th we were off Galle light, and getting our pilot, anchored about 500 yards from shore. The monsoon burst, and there was tremendous wind and rain, but the view was so lovely that we stopped on deck to enjoy it. A beautiful bay; a verdant promontory to the north, against which the surf dashed and in foamy jets ran high up against the rocky shore; a long, curved sandy beach bordered with tile-roofed bungalows almost hidden in an ocean of green palms; the old fort, custom house, light-house, jetty, and coaling sheds to the south, and to the east the tossing sea with a line of rocks and reefs walling it out from the harbour. Far away inland rose Adam's Peak and his sister mountains.

After breakfast, in a lull of the storm, we embarked in a large boat decorated with plantain trees and lines of bright-colored flowers, on which were the leading Buddhists of the place. We passed through a lane of fishing boats tricked out with gaudy cloths and streamers, their prows pointing inward. On the jetty and along the beach a huge crowd awaited us and rent the air with the united shout of "Sadhoo! Sadhoo!" A white cloth was spread for us from the jetty steps to the road where carriages were ready, and a thousand flags were frantically waved in welcome. The multitude hemmed in our carriages, and the procession set out for our appointed residence, the house of Mrs. Wijeratne, the wealthy widow of a late P. and O. contractor. The roads were blocked with people the whole distance, and our progress was very slow. At the house three Chief Priests received and blessed us at the threshold, reciting

appropriate Pali verses. Then we had a levee and innumerable introductions; the common people crowding every approach, filling every door and gazing through every window. This went on all day, to our great annoyance, for we could not get a breath of fresh air, but it was all so strong a proof of friendliness that we put up with it as best we could. Our hostess and her son, the Deputy Coroner of Galle, lavished every hospitality upon us, loading the table with delicacies and delicious fruits, such as we had never seen equalled, and dressing it in the charming Sinhalese manner, with flowers and pretty leaves; and the walls were beautified with them in artistic devices. Every now and then a new procession of yellow-robed monks, arranged in order of seniority of ordination and each carrying his palm-leaf fan, came to visit and bless us. It was an intoxicating experience altogether, a splendid augury of our future relations with the nation.

The monks, who had read Megittuwatte's excerpts from H. P. B.'s book, pressed her to exhibit her powers, and young Wijeratne, on hearing about the handkerchief phenomenon on board ship, asked her to repeat it for him. So she did, and again for a Mr. Dias; each time obliterating her own embroidered name and causing theirs to replace it. She got Wijeratne's name right, because she asked him to write it for her on a bit of paper, but she spelt Dias's "Dies," which, if Mme. Coulomb had embroidered the handkerchiefs beforehand at Bombay, would not very likely have happened, since there would have been plenty of time to think what an absurd thing it was to spell the Portuguese

name in that unheard-of way. The excitement, of course, rose to fever heat, and culminated when she made some fairy bells ring out sharp in the air, near the ceiling and out on the verandah. I had to satisfy the crowd with two impromptu addresses during the day, and at 11 P.M. we retired to rest, thoroughly fagged out.

Wimbridge and I went for a dip in the harbour very early the next morning, but we were followed and watched by crowds, so that it was very uncomfortable to move about. Our rooms were packed with visitors all day. There were no end of metaphysical discussions with the aged High Priest Bulatgama Sumanatissa, and other sharp logicians. This old man let me into a nice embarrassment. He begged me to call on a list of Europeans and to write to twenty Burghers (half-race descendants of the Dutch) inviting them to join with the Buddhists in forming a Branch T.S. In my innocence I did so, and the next morning could have bitten off my finger for shame, for they sent me insulting replies, saying that they were Christians and wanted to have nothing to do with Theosophy or Buddhism. I stormed at the old monk for his heedlessness in making me uselessly compromise the dignity of the Society, but he only smiled and made some weak excuse. It was a lesson for me, and during the many years that have elapsed since then, I never repeated the mistake. The people of all the country round crowded into town to have a look at us, and there was general rejoicing among them. A dozen invitations were received from towns and villages to visit them. Our rooms were never free of priest visitors. One of their

customs made us laugh. If the hostess had not spread cloths over the chair seats, they would spread their own handkerchiefs over them, turn and calmly sit down, performing the business with as much solemnity as though it were part of a temple ceremony. It is a survival of one of the precautions of Yoga, viz., the laying of durba grass, or a tiger or deer skin, or a straw mat, on the ground before beginning the āsanās, or postures of Yoga. Only its novelty made it a little funny to us.

Old Bulātgama was a particularly persistent disputant, very voluble and very kind. Among other topics of discussion was that of the psychical powers, and H. P. B., who thoroughly liked him, rang bells in the air (one a booming explosion like the striking of a large steel-bar), made "spirit" raps, caused the great dining-table to tremble and move, etc., to the amazement of her select audience.

The next evening we were treated to a devil-dancing performance by professional sorcerers, who take part in religious processions, and are called in cases of desperate illness, to drive away the evil spirits which are supposed to possess the patient. They invoke certain elementals by recitations of mantrams, and prepare themselves for their functions by a certain amount of abstinence at certain periods of the moon. Their dance is a real witch-festival. It leaves behind it a confused recollection of leaping and whirling figures tricked out with hideous masks and streaming ribbons of young cocoa-nut leaves; of brandished and whirling firebrands; of black masses of oil-smoke; of postures suddenly taken, which are enough to send a

nervous person into hysterics. One part of the ceremony consists in burning certain herbs and gums on hot coals and inhaling the vapors with gasping sounds, until they shiver as though stricken with an ague, and then fall senseless. In the coma, they have visions of the obsessing devils and give directions what to do. They are brought to by sprinkling them with water while a charm is muttered. An educated native gentleman told me that this dance is considered efficacious for the cure of several diseases, especially those to which pregnant women are liable. They are then said to have fallen under the influence of the "Black Prince." If the devil-dancers get the better of the disturbing evil spirit and it obeys their command to release its victim, it gives a sign of its departure by breaking off a designated branch of some tree near the house. This happened, he told me, in the case of his own step-mother.

As it had been arranged that I should give a public lecture on Theosophy on the 22nd, I made desperate efforts to think over my subject and prepare some notes. For I was then quite inexperienced in this business and was afraid to trust myself to extemporaneous discourse. But I might as well have tried to compose an aria in a machine shop where fifty blacksmiths were hammering on anvils, fifty turning lathes were whirling, and fifty people were gathered about to criticize my personal appearance, my pen, and my handwriting! Our house was a Babel, our rooms occupied by a friendly mob from morning till night. I would have done far better to have just gone to the platform



without preparation, and trusted to the inspiration of the moment, as I soon learnt to do. I think my first lecture in Ceylon is worth a paragraph. It was delivered in a large room in the Military Barracks, imperfectly lighted, and packed to suffocation. A temporary platform had been erected at one end and a figured canopy suspended over it. Besides our delegation there were upon it Sumāngala, Maha Thero, the Chief Priest Bulātgama, Chief Priest Dhammalankāra, of the Amarapoora Sect, who had come twenty-eight miles to meet us, and a number more. The whole European colony (forty-five persons) were present, and, inside and outside, a mob of some 2000 Sinhalese. I was not at all satisfied with my discourse, because, owing to the interruptions above noted, my notes were fragmentary, and the light was so bad that I could not read them. However, I managed to get through somehow, although a good deal surprised that not even the taking passages elicited applause: from the unsympathetic Europeans that was to have been expected, but from the Buddhists! As soon as a passage could be cleared our party passed out, H. P. B. and I arm-in-arm and holding each other tight so as not to be separated by the jostling crowd. "Was it a very bad speech?" I asked her. "No, rather good," she said. "Then," I continued, "why was there no applause; why did they receive it in such a dead silence? It must have been very bad." "What? what? what are you saying?" broke in a voice from the Sinhalese gentleman who had hold of H. P. B.'s other arm. "Who said it was a bad speech? Why, we never heard so good a one in Ceylon before!"

“But that can't be,” I replied; “there was not a hand-clap, nor a cry of satisfaction.” “Well, I should just have liked to hear one: we would have put a knife into the fellow who dared interrupt you!” He then explained that the custom was to never interrupt a religious speaker, but to listen in respectful silence and, after leaving, to think over what he had said. And he very proudly pointed out the high compliment that had been paid me in the packed audience hearing me without making a sound: I could not see it in that light, and still think my lecture was so bad as to be not worth applauding: unless, perhaps, the Galle public had by common consent agreed to obey the injunction of Thomson:—

“Come then, *expressive silence, muse his praise.*”





## CHAPTER XI.

### THE POPULAR ENTHUSIASM.

**T**HIS was the Prologue to such a drama of excitement as we had not dreamt we should ever pass through. In a land of flowers and ideal tropical vegetation, under smiling skies, along roads shaded by clustering palm-trees and made gay with miles upon miles of small arches of ribbon-like fringes of tender leaves, and surrounded by a glad nation, whose joy would have led them into the extravagance of actually worshipping us, if permitted, we passed from triumph to triumph, daily stimulated by the magnetism of popular love. The people could not do enough for us, nothing seemed to them good enough for us: we were the first white champions of their religion, speaking of its excellence and its blessed comfort from the platform, in the face of the Missionaries, its enemies and slanderers. It was that which thrilled their nerves and filled their affectionate hearts to bursting. I may seem to use strong language, but in reality it falls far short of the facts. If anybody seeks for proof, let him go through

the lovely Island now, after fifteen years, and ask what they have to say about this tour of the two Founders and their party.

At 3 P.M. we were driven to a *wallawa*, or country-seat of a Sinhalese noble, where I addressed\* an audience of 3000 from a high balcony overlooking a sort of natural amphitheatre. The multitude filled the plain and the hill-slopes adjacent to it. The considerable body of monks present "gave *pānsil*," i.e., intoned the Five Precepts and Three Refuges, in the Pāli language, and the people, as with one mighty wave of sound, repeated them after them. It made a great impression upon us, for, after all, nothing in the way of sound is more impressive than the vibration of thousands of human voices combining into one rhythmic diapason.

As this visit of ours was the beginning of the second and permanent stage of the Buddhist revival begun by Megittuwatte, a movement destined to gather the whole juvenile Sinhalese population into Buddhist schools under our general supervision, even its details acquire a certain importance. The following hand-bill, officially issued by Damodar, indicates the first steps taken by us towards forming Branches of the Theosophical Society in the Island:—

*"To whom it may concern.*

"Notice is hereby given that on Monday evening next

\* I pray to be excused for so often speaking of myself throughout this narrative, but the fact was that, as P. T. S. and the official spokesman of the Delegation, I had to be always to the fore.

a meeting will be held at the residence at Minuvangoda, at 8 o'clock P.M.; on which occasion Col. Olcott will briefly state the aims and objects of the Theosophical Society. After which, gentlemen desirous of joining the Society can register their names in the book provided for that purpose.

“(By order) DAMODAR K. MAVALANKAR,  
Assistant Recording Secretary.

“GALLE, 22nd May 1880.”

The venerable Bulâtgama presided at the meeting, and Megittuwatte addressed it in a spirit-stirring discourse.

We were taken the next day to the coffee and cinnamon estate of Mr. Simon Perera Abeyawardene, a wealthy Buddhist gentleman of Galle, and were much interested in watching the processes of peeling, drying, and packing the cinnamon bark. It was not our host's fault that we got back home alive, for he spread for us a Gargantuan “luncheon,” at which *fifty-seven* kinds of curry were served with rice, and there were as many sweet dishes of sorts. We were actually importuned “just to taste” each one of these confections, and had much trouble in making it understood that our storage room was not elastic enough to permit us to comply.

On the 25th May, H. P. B. and I “took *pânsil*” from the venerable Bulâtgama, at a temple of the Râmanya Nikâya, whose name at the moment escapes me, and were formally acknowledged as Buddhists. A great arch of greenery, bearing the words, “Welcome to the members

of the Theosophical Society," had been erected within the compound of the Vihâra. We had previously declared ourselves Buddhists long before, in America, both privately and publicly, so that this was but a formal confirmation of our previous professions. H. P. B. knelt before the huge statue of the Buddha, and I kept her company. We had a good deal of trouble in catching the Pâli words that we were to repeat after the old monk, and I don't know how we should have got on if a friend had not taken his place just behind us and whispered them *seriatim*. A great crowd was present and made the responses just after us, a dead silence being preserved while we were struggling through the unfamiliar sentences. When we had finished the last of the *Silas*, and offered flowers in the customary way, there came a mighty shout to make one's nerves tingle, and the people could not settle themselves down to silence for some minutes, to hear the brief discourse which, at the Chief Priest's request, I delivered. I believe that attempts have been made by some of my leading colleagues of Europe and America to suppress this incident as much as possible, and cover up the fact that H. P. B. was as completely accepted a Buddhist as any Sinhalese in the Island. This mystification is both dishonest and useless, for, not only did several thousand persons, including many *bhikkhus*, see and hear her taking the *pânsil*, but she herself boldly proclaimed it in all quarters. But to be a regular Buddhist is one thing, and to be a debased modern Buddhist sectarian quite another. Speaking for her as well as for myself, I can say that if Buddhism contained a single

dogma that we were compelled to accept, we would not have taken the *pānsi* nor remained Buddhists ten minutes. Our Buddhism was that of the master-adept Gautama Buddha, which was identically the Wisdom Religion of the Aryan Upānishads, and the soul of all the ancient world-faiths. Our Buddhism was, in a word, a philosophy, not a creed.

We lunched with a Buddhist gentleman in town, and in the evening took into membership the first eleven candidates, and with them formed the Galle Theosophical Society. *President*, S. P. DB. De Silva; *Secretary*, P. C. Wijeratne. The first 100 rs. towards a Buddhist Publication Fund was given me that day and at once passed over to the Branch Treasurer. At 9 we sat down to dinner, and at 1 A.M. were but too glad to go to bed after a hard day's work.

The next morning we began our journey Northward in carriages supplied by the fishermen of Galle, a large, poor, but hard-working caste. From this class St. Francis Xavier, the "Apostle of the Indies," recruited the greater number of his converts. Their calling, involving the taking of life, is abhorred among Buddhists, and their social status ranks very low. Yet it seems that their hearts warmed towards us as much as those of their more respectable co-religionists, and, while they shrank from approaching us themselves, in the midst of the high-caste crowd that hemmed us in, they sent me an "humble petition" that I would be graciously pleased to let my "humble petitioners," etc., etc., supply our party with carriages to Colombo. Their

spokesman was an English educated young man of, I believe, another caste. The sincerity of the poor people touched me, and I sent them a message that I wished to see them, or a Committee of their elders, to thank them personally for their kind offer. Accordingly I met a deputation, and, wishing to decline putting them to any expense, was met with such an instant protest and appeal that it ended in my accepting their offer with thanks.

Almost the entire Buddhist population of Galle massed together to see us leave town, and rent the air with friendly shouts. Our first stage was to Dodānduwa, five miles, the seat of the grand *vihāra* and *pānsala* of our friend Piyarātana Tissa Terunnanse, a monk of erudition, energy, and high character. At every favorable point along the road crowds had gathered to look at us, we were invited to stop and refresh ourselves with cocoanuts, milk, tea and cakes, and at several points, so large was the concourse, I had to get out of the carriage and make addresses. At Dodānduwa we were greeted with such a downpour of monsoon rain as had not been seen in years. During a lull we were conducted to an immense shed that Piyarātana had had erected, and I gave the expected address to 2000 people. After that we visited his temple, which we found scrupulously tidy and well kept—an unusual circumstance in the Island. We saw a huge standing image of the Buddha, more than a century old. We passed the night in a bungalow provided for us by Mr. Weerisooriya and friends.

On again the next morning, in the two stage-coaches



supplied by our friends, the Galle fishermen. I had to make four speeches this day—the first from the steps of the coach, before starting; the second from the steps of the bungalow at Ambalangoda; the third at Piyāgale, where we breakfasted at 3 P.M. (!) and were so besieged that we could scarcely breathe; the fourth at the temple at Piyāgale, where an audience of 3000 to 4000 had collected. We were taken there in a fine rain, in procession, with banners, and tom-toms making a hideous racket; each beater trying to outvie the others and working the crowd up into a sort of frenzy of jubilation. The temple is situate on top of a steep, rocky hill, up which we were helped or, rather, dragged; giving poor H. P. B. agony with her lame leg, which had never fully recovered from the blow she got on board the "Speke Hall" in the storm, when she was pitched against the corner of the dining-table. The drizzling rain blurred my glasses so that I could not properly see where I was walking and, to make things worse, my *pince-nez* dropped from my nose and smashed on the rock over which I was passing; thus leaving me, with my myopia, in an uncomfortable plight. The gathered monks presented us an address through their Mahā Terunnanse, to which, of course, I replied at some length. Continuing on, we at last reached Kalutara at 9 P.M., but our troubles were not yet ended, as there was another bevy of monks to encounter, another address to listen to and briefly answer, and then, after a needed meal, to bed, worn out. We were amused by an incident which happened *en route*, after dark. A man came rushing out of a wayside house with a bright light in his

hand, stopped our coaches, and excitedly asked for each of us in turn. We thought he had something of importance to communicate, perhaps the octroi, perhaps even to warn us against a plot of the Christian party to do us injury.\* But he said nothing except to repeat each of our names with a sigh of satisfaction, and then turned away. Our interpreter called after him to know what it was all about. "Oh, nothing," said he, "I only wanted to look at them."

There was no time for lying abed on this tour, so the next morning we were up at dawn when the birds began to greet each other in the palm groves, and we men had a surf bath. Under very disadvantageous circumstances, truly, with a sharp coral bottom to stand upon that was like standing on a floor covered with inverted carpet tacks, the certainty of sharks, and the presence of a critical audience, watching us as though they were a class in Delsarte or calisthenics! Still it was a bath, and that means much in the Tropics. We made a charming acquaintance to-day—a graduate of Christ College, Cambridge; one of the most intellectual and polished men we have met in Asia. Mr. Arunâchalam is a nephew of the late Sir M. Coomâraswamy, the well-known Orientalist, and at the time of our visit was Police Magistrate of Kalutara. His eldest brother is the Hon. P. Râmanâthan, who is a warm friend of mine, and the official representative in the Legislative Council of the Tamil community. We breakfasted at Mr. Arunâchalam's house, and his courtesy drew out H. P. B.'s most charming

\* That came later : they tried to murder me once.

traits, so that the visit was in every way a pleasant episode. As a dessert, or rather *pousse-café*, my colleague abused the Missionaries in her best style.

The same afternoon we had a taste of the other style of official, the Government Agent—a most satrapy grade of public servant—having forbidden the use of any public building, even the verandah or steps of the school-house, for my lecture. The poor creature acted as though he supposed the Buddhists could be overawed into deserting their religion, or into believing Christianity a more lovable one, by excluding them from the buildings that had been erected with their tax-money and that would be lent to any preacher against Buddhism. But the fields and the sky were left us, the one for lecture-hall, the other for roof, and the meeting was held in a cocoanut grove. Some bright cloths, laid over cords stretched between trees, made our canopy and sounding-board, and a chair placed on a big table my rostrum. The audience numbered two or three thousand. It may be imagined that the occasion was improved to point out the malicious spirit which actuated the Christian party, and their dread of the Sinhalese being made to see the merits of Buddhism.

Our gravity was sorely tried the next morning. Wimbridge, Pânachand, Ferozshah, and I were made to mount a sort of bedizened triumphal car and, under an escort of a company in comical uniform, carrying wooden guns and sticks, their dark brown faces whitened with flour or chalk (to give them a quasi-European complexion), and with much music and many banners, were taken to the

village of Wehra, three miles off, for a reception ceremony. I spoke to a large audience, in a very fine preaching-house (*Dharmśāla*), with two rows of white columns, stained glass windows, hanging lustres, and a large preaching pulpit. In the Oriental fashion, I sat while speaking. After that we went to pay our respects to Waskaduwe Subhuti, Terunnanse, a monk better known among Western Orientalists than any other save Sumāngala, who, of course, is *the* representative and embodiment of Pāli scholarship. After lunch at Mr. Arunāchalam's, we visited another famous priest, Potuwila Indajōti, Terunnanse, who enjoys a great renown as a *Vederāle*, or Native Physician. He is sent for from all the Buddhist parts of the island, and has made numberless cures. We found his conversation very interesting, his views as to the survival of the ego in Nirvāna being those of his late Guru, the Polhwatti priest, and opposed to those of the Sumāngala school. He applied for admission into our membership and was accepted.

At that time the railway ended at Kalutara, and we here took train for our next station, Pānadure (pronounced vulgarly Pantura), the locality where Megittuwatte debated against the Missionaries the respective merits of Buddhism and Christianity: and got the better of them, it is said. We were lodged in a new *pānsala* adjoining a *Vihāra*, which had just been erected by a picturesque-looking old man, named Andris Perera, at his own cost. He was tall, thin, dark, had a spacious forehead, wore his hair brushed back and twisted into a long switch, which was put up like a woman's hair, with an immense and costly tortoiseshell

comb; and a circular comb—a Sinhalese fashion—arched over his fine head. He wore the country dhôti and a single-breasted, last-century coat of blue cloth, with long skirts, turnover cuffs, twenty large gold buttons down one side of the front and as many loops and lacings of gold lace opposite them, and the same ornamentation on the collar and cuffs. A gold-laced scarlet baldric, passed over one shoulder and under the opposite arm, supported a short sword with a gold scabbard; a huge gold medallion-plaque, as large as a dessert plate, was suspended diagonally in the contrary direction by a golden chain; a heavy and richly embossed gold girdle was buckled about him. His feet were bare and he wore leather sandals! The figure was so striking, so unlike any other we saw, that I noted the above details in my Diary. He had advanced some little distance from the house to receive us, and behind him stood his six tall, striking-looking sons and three handsome daughters. The group struck us as being very picturesque. I bethought me of Torquil of the Oak and his stalwart sons, though I cannot say that I thought the Sinhalese family would have withstood the *Gow Chrom* as well as the champions of the Clan Quhele. Without delay, the old "Mudaliyar" (the title of a Headman's office) led the way to a large permanent preaching-shed, and I addressed some 4000 people. The Missionaries had been doing what little they could since our landing to try and weaken our influence with the Buddhists, so I paid my compliments to them and their questionable policy. This produced a sequel which will be mentioned later on. In truth, these Protestant

Missionaries are a pestilent lot. With the Catholics we have never had a hard word.

The primeval habitat of the mosquito has never been fixed, I believe, but if it was not the Perera *pānsala* at Panadure, assuredly that is a most congenial place for their development: they simply swarmed. The building was an oblong, comprising small bedrooms opening on a verandah which extended on all sides, and one small hall through the middle. There were no bathrooms, the place being intended for *dhikkus* only, who bathe outdoors. The windows were furnished only with wooden shutters, and when they were shut in the daytime, the rooms were dark. H. P. B. had one of the rooms in the south end. She wanted to bathe, and, as there was no other place, I arranged for a tub in her own room. As she would be in pitch darkness if the shutters were closed, I tied a large soft mat across the end of the shutters, left standing open, and she began her toilet. The rest of us were sitting around the corner, on the other verandah, chatting, when I heard my name shouted, and ran around to see what was the matter. At that moment three Sinhalese women were in the act of creeping out beneath the edge of the mat, and the old lady was abusing them in grand style. On hearing my voice, she said that these impertinent creatures, to gratify their curiosity, had actually crept under the mat and, when she happened to turn her head, she saw them standing close against the window sill, calmly watching her ablutions. Her indignation was so tragic that, while hustling the intruders away, I could not help laughing heartily. Poor things! they meant no

harm : it was simply the custom of the country to peer into everybody's business and ignore any rights of privacy. This is a specimen of what we had to undergo throughout the entire visit to Ceylon.

At 2 P.M. I addressed another huge audience on the very spot where the famous "Pantura Controversy" had been held. After me, H. P. B. spoke, and Ferozshah (Parsi) and Pānachand (Hindu) made some remarks as representatives in our Society of their respective races ; testifying to the eclectic spirit which animated us and pleading for wide religious tolerance. Megittuwatte presided and made two eloquent speeches. The next day I initiated as members Megittuwatte, Sri Weligama, the Pali, Sanskrit, and Elu scholar, and Waskaduwe Subhuti. Mr. J. R. De Silva interpreted for me : the Mudāliyar Andres Perera, his son-in-law, and other laymen joined the next day, and at 4 P.M. we left by rail for Colombo ; reaching the capital in a downpour of rain. We were driven to a very spacious bungalow called "Radcliffe House," in the Slave Island ward, across the pretty artificial lake. A large gathering awaited us, among them Sumāngala and fifty other monks. After dinner we received a Pali address from the High Priest ; then followed discussions and desultory talk, and then bed.

The besieging of us by crowds was even worse here than it had been elsewhere, we had not a free moment nor the least privacy : the papers were full of stories about us, and the Christians raged. To prepare my lecture for the next evening I had to retire to Sumāngala's College, and write in the library with locked doors. The next morning a serious

conference was held between Sumāngala, Subhuti, Megittuwatte, and myself at the College. I finished my lecture on "Theosophy and Buddhism,"\* and at 8 P.M. delivered it at our own residence, the hall of which had been converted into a lecture room with accommodation for 500 people. Besides Sinhalese notables, the European Inspector-General of Police, the Colonial Secretary, Editors of papers, etc., were present.

On the 5th June, I lectured at Megittuwatte's own temple at Kotahēna, the one which is visited by most of the steamer passengers touching at the port. He and I spoke standing on a large table, placed in the middle of the preaching-hall, so as to be better heard by the throng. The hall and compound were packed with people like herrings in a barrel, and the heat was most oppressive. The place was gaily decorated with flags and colored cloths; a handsome arch of split palm leaves, worked into all sorts of pretty designs over a framing of areca palm timbers, towered outside; and on the wall above the regular pulpit was suspended a monster replica in gilt paper of our Society's seal. Ten candidates acquired membership the same evening. The next day there were two lectures. The first was at Kotta, a village six miles from town, the ancient seat of a powerful king, where there were triumphal arches, and no end of flags and greenery bordering the roads; and where Mr. Tepannis Perera gave us a fine repast on a broad, cool verandah. The other was at Widyodaya College (Sumāngala's), on the subjects of "Nirvāna, Merit, and the Education of Buddhist

\* *Vide Theosophy, Religion, and Occult Science.*



Children." I had begun my appeals in this latter direction at Galle, and throughout the whole tour used my best endeavors to make the people realise the risk they ran in leaving their children to be prejudiced against their ancestral religion by its professed enemies, who were in the country for no other object than this. It is a source of great satisfaction to know that the admonitions were not in vain, and that the present comprehensive and successful movement for promoting the foundation of Buddhist schools dates from this important tour.

A visit to Kelanie temple, one of the most revered shrines in the island, where the great stūpa (brick cone) rests over genuine relics of the Buddha himself—and the inevitable lecture and multitudinous audience, occupied the next day; and on the following one—8th June—we organized the Colombo T. S. with twenty-seven members as a beginning. I submitted to the Branch my plan for the creation of a Buddhist Section, to be composed of two sub-divisions, one exclusively laymen and lay branches, and another, not itself subdivided, exclusively of priests. This was to meet the difficulty that the ordination rules of the Vināya forbid a monk to be associated on equal terms with laymen in worldly affairs. The scheme was approved of by all and carried out in due course; Sumāngala being made Chairman of the priests' association, as well as one of the Honorary Vice-Presidents of the Society.

We left for Kandy by train on the 9th, and after the run of four-and-a-half hours through one of the most picturesque tracts of country in the world, arrived at about 7 P.M.

Along with the usual crowd, a deputation of Kandyan Chiefs—whose feudal rank a good deal resembled in former times that of Highland Chiefs of clans—received us at the station and accompanied us to our quarters in a great procession, bright with torches and ear-splitting with tom-toms and native trumpets. Two addresses were made us, by the Chiefs' Committee and by a society of Buddhists somehow connected with the Temple of the Sacred Tooth of Buddha, the Dâlada Maligâwa. Sumângala came, and it was arranged that I should speak at this temple the next day.

The next morning we received ceremonial visits from the Chief Priests of Asgiriya and Malwatte Temples, the ranking *bhikkus* of the island, a sort of Archbishops of Canterbury. Under the Kandyan sovereigns, these officers were the royal functionaries, joint guardians of the Tooth Temple, and had precedence in all royal religious processions. Sumângala is their junior in rank, but immensely their superior in the public estimation, as in ability. We went to the Temple at 2 P.M. for my lecture, but such a crowd had wedged itself inside that it was only with the greatest difficulty that I could reach my table. And even then, the rustling of restless feet upon the stone pavement created such a confused echo at the stone ceiling that I could not make one word audible. After some minutes of vain attempts to get silence, we adjourned to the fine lawn outside. Our party mounted a broad wall to the right, along with Sumângala, and, chairs being placed for him and H. P. B., I spoke from under the overhanging branches of a bread-fruit tree, which answered very well for a sounding-board. The great multi-

tude stood and sat on the lawn in a huge hemispherical area, and I was able to make myself heard pretty well. The Missionaries, in anticipation of our arrival, had been spreading all sorts of calumnies against us, and on the preceding evening had been preaching bitterly against Buddhism in the streets of Kandy. Being white men, the timid Sinhalese had not dared to confront them, but brought their complaints to us. So, before going far into my discourse, I mentioned the foregoing facts, and, drawing out my watch, said I would give any Bishop, Archdeacon, Priest, or Deacon of any church, five minutes to come forward and prove their assertions that Buddhism was a false religion: if they did not do so, the Sinhalese would be at perfect liberty to treat them and their falsehoods as they deserved. I had had five Missionaries pointed out to me in the audience, but, although I stood there, watch in hand, until the five minutes had elapsed, not a man of them lifted his voice. The Panadure sequel, above mentioned, is also connected with this episode.

A lecture at the Town Hall on "The Life of Buddha and its Lessons" having been arranged for the next evening, I worked desperately to get it written under the most discouraging disadvantages. H. P. B. nearly drove me mad by calling me downstairs a dozen times, either to see people that were of no consequence to me, or to sit in a group for the pertinacious photographer. However, I managed somehow, and gave the lecture in due course to a crowd that packed the hall and its approaches. Most of the influential Government officials were present, and the applause was

constant enough to make us think it a success. Eighteen applicants for membership were admitted that evening.

On the 12th, I met a council of Kandyan Chiefs and Chief Priests, to discuss the state of the Church, and the plans which I submitted were all adopted after much debate. At 3 P.M. I spoke again outside the Dalada Maligāwa to some 5000 people. The next day we went to Gompola on invitation of an enthusiastic Buddhist, the Mohāndiram (Headman) of the place, an elderly man. The crowd at the railway station took the horses from the carriage in which H. P. B. and I rode, and, attaching ropes, dragged it to the house prepared for us; a long procession with music and banners accompanying us, and making the transit lively with their incessant shouts of joy. Returning to Kandy, we organized that evening the Kandy T. S. with seventeen members, and the day was finished up with a cold collation provided by the Galle delegates accompanying us and one of H. P. B.'s most enthusiastic admirers, Mr. S. Perera Dharmagunavardene, Aratchi (Headman) of Colombo. At 9 the next morning, the unusual honor was conferred upon us of admitting us to a special exhibition of the Buddha Tooth Relic. This is kept in a separate tower, protected by a thick door of entrance studded with iron and fastened with four great locks, of which the keys are kept under the custody of the High Priests of Asgiriya and Malwatte, the Government Agent, and the Devanilami, a special official whose office survives the downfall of the Kandyan dynasty which created it. The relic is of the size of an alligator tooth, is supported by a gold wire stem rising from a lotus

flower of the same metal, and is much discolored by age. If genuine it would, of course, be twenty-five centuries old. When not exhibited it is wrapped in pure sheet gold, placed in a golden case, just large enough to contain it, and covered externally with emeralds, diamonds, and rubies. This again is placed in a small golden *karandua*, or dome, encrusted with precious stones; this in a large one of the same precious metal, similarly enriched; this in a third; this in a fourth dome of like value; finally, this one rests in a still larger one of thick silver plates, five feet four and a half inches high and nine feet ten inches in circumference. When exposed, the relic and its several sumptuous covers rest on a platform three feet six inches high, together with rock-crystal and golden statuettes of the Buddha and other precious objects; from the ceiling hang gems and jewels, among the latter a bird hanging by a golden chain, and formed entirely of diamonds, rubies, blue sapphires, emeralds, and cats'-eyes set in gold, but so thickly crowded as to conceal the metallic base. The depository is a small room in the second storey of the tower, without a window or loophole for a ray of light; the air is heavy with perfumes of flowers and spices; and by lamplight all sparkling with gems. The door-frame is of ebony inlaid with ivory, the panels of brass. In front of the platform a plain, square table stands for the deposit of gifts of value and offerings of flowers.\* Needless to say, we were almost crushed by the crowd of notables who

\* For a full account of the relic and its marvellous history, as well as of the Temple and contents, see Dr. Gerson Da Cunha's *Memoir of the Tooth Relic of Ceylon*. London, Thacker & Co., 1870.

pushed in along with our party, and were glad to get out into the fresh air as speedily as possible. I believe that the relic had not been previously exposed since the visit of the Prince of Wales; so that this was regarded as the highest honor that could possibly have been shown us. On our return to our lodgings, the educated Sinhalese about us were eager to know H. P. B.'s opinion as to the genuineness of the relic, whether it is or is not a real tooth of the Buddha. This was a nice, not to say ticklish, question. Now, if we may believe the Portuguese historians Ribeiro and Rodrigues de Sá e Menezes, the real tooth, after passing through the most romantic vicissitudes, fell into the possession of the bigoted Inquisitors of Goa, who forbade the Viceroy D. Constantia de Braganca to accept a fabulously great sum—no less than 400,000 cruzados—a coin worth 2s. 9d.—offered by the King of Pegu as its ransom. They ordered it to be destroyed. So the Archbishop, in their presence and that of the high officers of State, pulverized it in a mortar, threw the powder into a lighted brazier kept ready, and then the ashes and charcoal together were scattered into the running river, in sight of a multitude “who were crowding the verandahs and windows which looked upon the water.” Dr. Da Canha—himself a Portuguese Catholic—is very sarcastic in his reflections upon this act of mean vandalism. He says :

“One can easily imagine the effect this imposing assembly of the viceroy, prelates, and the notables of the old city of Goa, met for the purpose of pounding a piece of bone to dust, would have on the minds of the populace thronging

the streets, the dismay of the wretched Peguan Embassy at the sight of the destruction of their saint's relic, and the grim exultation of the stern inquisitors over the dissolution of the *dalava* in the sacred waters of the Gomati, and the consequent promotion of the glory of God, the honor and prestige of Christianity, and the salvation of souls. If there ever was a point where two extremes met it is this. The burning of a tooth for the glory of the Almighty was the point of contact between the sublime and the ridiculous."

I said that the Kandyan relic is of about the size of an alligator's tooth, but it bears no resemblance to any tooth at all, whether animal or human. It is slightly curved, about two inches in length and nearly one in breadth at the base, and rounded at the extremity. This is accounted for by some Buddhists, by a story that in the days of the Buddha "human beings were giants, and their teeth kept pace, so to speak, with their larger stature." Which, of course, is all nonsense; the Aryan histories giving no support to the idea. It is asserted that the present object of adoration was made out of a piece of deer's horn by King Vikrama Bahu, in 1566, to replace the original, burnt by the Portuguese in 1560. Then, again, others believe that this is really a substitute only, that the real tooth is concealed in a sure place, and that a substitute was what fell into the hands of the sacrilegious Portuguese. In fact, the legends about the *Dalada* are numberless, and I must refer the curious to Dr. Da Cunha's pamphlet, and to Sir M. Coomâraswamy's, from which it was largely compiled, to the *Transactions* of the

Royal Asiatic Society, to Tennent's work on Ceylon, and other sources. Among the poetic legends to which the Tooth Relic has given birth, is one to the effect that when the tooth was cast into a burning pit by an unbelieving Indian Emperor, "a lotus flower of the size of a chariot wheel arose above the flames, and the sacred tooth, emitting rays which ascended through the skies and illumined the universe, alighted on the top." This is supposed by some to explain the esoteric meaning of the Tibetan formula, "*Om Mani padme Hum.*" For further stories, see the *Dhātuvansa*, an ancient Sinhalese work on the history of the Tooth. The Padre Francisco de Souza in his *Oriente Conquistado* repeats the popular story that "the moment the Archbishop placed the tooth in the mortar and was about to pulverize it, it made its way through the bottom and went straight to alight on a lotus flower in Kandy." Though we may not go to such length, we cannot deny that it is a comfort to the whole Sinhalese nation to regard the Tooth of Kandy as a genuine relic of the sublimest of men, and we may profit ourselves by remembering that

"In Faith and Hope the world will disagree,  
But all mankind's concern is charity."

Perhaps it was that reflection that prompted H. P. B.'s jovial answer to her interrogators: "Of course, it is his tooth: one he had when he was born as a tiger?"

After our visit to the Dalada Māligāwa, we held a final meeting of the new local branch T. S. and at 2 P.M. took train for Colombo.





## CHAPTER XII.

### THE TOUR CONCLUDED.

**A** LECTURE on "The Occult Sciences" being appointed for the next afternoon, I spent the morning in writing it, and at 5.30 it was given in a huge circus tent to a huger audience. It was an impressive sight—that multitude of Orientals filling every inch of available room in the canvas oval. Our party sat on an advanced staging, which gave us and the people a fine chance to see each other.

As the incessant hard work of the tour had somewhat done me up, a conference was held in my bedroom with Sumangala, Megittuwatte, Bulâtgama and other Chief Priests, on Buddhist affairs; in the evening, the permanent organization of the Colombo T. S. was effected, and the members subscribed the sum of rs. 1050 towards the expenses of the Branch.

The next day was a busy one: at 8.30, the insatiable photographer; at 9.30, breakfasted out; at 1.30, a meeting at Widyodaya College for admission of priests, Sumangala

Bulâtgama, and others entering the Society at that time ; at 4, a lecture at a temple, which got for the T. S. ten new members ; then another capture by photographers, Suman-gala, Bulâtgama, Megittuwatte, Hyeyentadûwe—Assistant Principal of the College—Amaramoli, a well-educated, amiable and excellent monk—and myself being taken in a group. Of the party, three are already deceased—Megittuwatte, Bulâtgama, and Amaramoli—so that the picture is historical and interesting to the Sinhalese people. At 7.30 P.M. (without having had a moment for meals) I held a meeting at our quarters and admitted twelve new members. Finally, at 9, still without dinner, we organized the Lanka T. S., a non-Buddhist Branch, composed of Freethinkers and amateurs of occult research. The closing act of the day was the listening and reply to an Address from the Colombo Buddhist community. After all, dinner and bed !

We left Colombo by train the next morning for Morotuwa, many friends seeing us off. H. P. B. received from a Buddhist lady, Mrs. Andrew Perera, an enamelled gold locket, and Damodar and I something better, in the form of a blessing from the High Priest and several other monks ; they reciting *Pirit*—benedictory verses—and laying their hands on our breasts. H. P. B. being (ostensibly) a woman, the celibates could not touch her. She was very jolly about this all throughout the trip ; at Galle, after her admission into Buddhism, she used to tease the venerable Bulâtgama—whom she nicknamed her Father in God—to smoke, and, rolling a cigarette, would

pass it to him *on a fan*, so that he need not be contaminated by touching her, laughing all the while, and making the old monk share in her merriment!

Within the twenty-four hours of our last day at Colombo, we received eleven invitations for visits to various places: in fact, the whole island would have had us visit them if time had served. At Morotuwa the Reception Committee took us in carriages from the station to Horitadduwa, where we breakfasted, and at 3 the crowd had gathered for the lecture. But I was so ill with a return of an old army dysentery, as to be unable to do more than say a few words, and Wimbridge was forced into being my substitute. To give an idea of the mental distress a novice has to pass through, in these Eastern countries, when being interpreted into a vernacular, and when knowing that the people are not getting any proper conception of what one is saying, I recall an incident of this occasion. Wimbridge, to illustrate some point he had made, said "Now let us take a case." We discovered, later, that his interpreter had rendered it "Now let us take a box!" In Japan, once, after lecturing at the Imperial University, Tokio, I was pained beyond expression on learning from two Japanese-knowing English friends present that my interpreter had converted my innocent discourse on Education into a quasi-political one, embodying views that might offend the Government! Fortunately, both of these gentlemen had enough personal influence to set things right, by reporting to the Minister for Education my actual words. Many such experiences have at last made me measurably callous, and now I do not trouble myself at all

as to the travesty worked on my public discourses. Always, even when I am addressing the masses who do not know English, some few of my audience will have understood what I really said.

After the lecture we drove to Panaduré, and resumed our mosquito-haunted quarters at the hospitable old Mudaliyar's *Panasāla*. A delightful bath in the early morning freshened us up for the lecture at 2 P.M., in the Mudaliyar's circular *dharmaśāla*. A few hours later, I received a challenge from the Headmaster of the S. P. G. Mission School, on behalf of the Christian party, to debate the Christian religion! The note referred to my Five Minutes' challenge at Kandy and was rather insulting in tone. Now, of course, we were following out a fixed programme in which every hour of our time was apportioned, and we were compelled to be at Galle on a fixed day to meet our steamer. This was publicly known, and, of course, the challenge was a trick; the Christian party believing that it would be refused, and they thus be left free to misrepresent our motive after we were gone. I wanted to ignore it, but H. P. B. opposed the idea, and said we must accept for the above reason. Wimbridge concurring, I sent an acceptance on certain conditions. First, that the debate should be held within three days; second, that my opponent should be an ordained priest of some orthodox sect, some one whose standing was good among local Christians, and who would be acknowledged as a respectable representative of their faith. I at once telegraphed to cancel one of the fixed engagements of the tour, so that we might be free to

stop at Panaduré until this business was settled. My reason for the other condition was that, at Colombo, we had met one of those pestiferous religious parrots, whose wits are turned and whose garrulity makes intercourse with them intolerable: breeders of fads, social torments—and I suspected that he was to be my opponent. From a contest with such a person no profit or honor could be gained for Buddhism: if he were silenced, the Christian party would repudiate responsibility for his views; if he defeated me, the Buddhists would be shamed by the overthrow of their champion by one whom neither party respected, who was not an ordained priest, and whose religious opinions were most heterodox. At Colombo, this man had bored us to death with a clattering exposition of his views. He had founded—on paper—a society called Christo-Brahmo Samaj, and had presented me with a broadsheet in which the principles of the new society were explained. They were heterodox and fantastical; of which, for proof, I need only mention that he declared that the Holy Ghost must be a female, as, otherwise, Heaven would be like a cold Bachelors' Hall, with Father, Son, but no Wife!

An active exchange of notes followed the delivery and acceptance of the challenge, we trying to put the matter on a fair and honorable footing, our opponents resorting to trick and subterfuge to put us in the false position by which they hoped to profit. Our friends kept us fully advised of every step taken, including the secret discussions (overheard by listeners of both parties, the open construction of houses in Ceylon making this very easy) between the schoolmaster

and the leading local Christians. Every respectable Protestant clergyman, from the Lord Bishop downwards, had been asked but refused to confront me, and the clever Christian advocates of the High Court had followed suite. In fact, the schoolmaster—I was told—had been the reverse of complimented for putting them into such a fix. Finally, as we had suspected, it was secretly arranged with the individual above-mentioned for him to stand as my antagonist. Getting this from a trustworthy source, I consulted Sumangala and the other six Chief Priests who, with him, represented the whole body of Ceylon *bhikkus*, and who were all present to give me countenance, and arranged what I should do. On the day before that fixed for the discussion H. P. B. and Wimbridge went as a Committee bearing my ultimatum—so annoyingly shifty had our opponents been and so determined not to put our understanding in writing. I simply refused to have anything further to do or say with them unless a definite agreement were entered into.

The actual meeting was an exciting episode. It was held at 2 P.M. in the S. P. G. schoolhouse; a nice, airy, oblong, tile-paved structure having a lofty, well-ventilated roof and two doors opposite each other in the centre of the building. The right half had been apportioned to the Christian party, the left half to the Buddhists. Two plain, square tables were placed for my opponent and myself. At one side sat my Christo-Brahmo Samaj worthy, with a huge Bible before him. The building was densely packed and the compound outside as well. As H. P. B. and I entered

with our party there was a dead silence. I bowed to both parties, and, without even glancing at my opponent, sat down. Seeing that the initiative was left to me, I rose and said that on all such occasions it was the custom among us Western people to choose a Chairman, who should have full authority to restrain the speakers as to time and utterances, and take the sense of the meeting at the close. The Buddhist party desiring nothing more than fair-play, were perfectly willing that the Chairman should be nominated by the Christian party: the only proviso being that he should be one known for his intelligence, good character, and fair-mindedness. I therefore called on them to name a suitable person. Their leaders conferred together for a long time and at last nominated—the most bigoted and prejudiced man in the island, one particularly obnoxious to the Buddhists. We rejected him and asked them to try again: the same result. Another trial resulted in the same way. I then said that, as they manifestly did not intend to comply with their agreements in nominating a suitable Chairman, I should name, on behalf of the Buddhists, a gentleman who was not even a Buddhist but a Christian, yet one upon whose fairness we felt we could rely. I proposed a well-known Inspector of Schools. But that was not the sort of man *they* wanted, so they rejected him and re-nominated their first nominee. So this farce went on until an hour and a half had been wasted, and I then, with Sumangala's concurrence, gave notice that unless the Christians should within the next ten minutes agree upon a proper presiding officer, we should leave the build-

ing. This did no good ; so, when the time of grace expired, I rose and read a paper which, in anticipation of some such possible result, I had prepared. After reciting the sequence of facts, including the conditions on which the challenge had been accepted, I pointed out the obstacles thrown in our way, and the deliberate insult of putting forward as my opponent a man who was not ordained, whom they did not recognize as orthodox, whose overthrow would not be looked upon as of any consequence, and whom they had taken as a *pis aller*, after vainly trying to get a better champion. Then—as they evidently did not know their champion's real religious sentiments, his broadsheet being a quite recent publication, I believe—I showed the precious document and read from it the passages relating to the Trinity. The consternation among them seemed great, so much so that a silence fell upon them ; amid which our party rose and left the schoolhouse, preceded by the seven great priests and followed by an enthusiastic multitude. I never saw them so demonstrative before. They would not let us get into our carriages, but we had to walk with such a pack of human flesh about us that might have made one know how it would feel to be present in the centre of a cotton-bale. They shouted ; they fired shot-guns ; they cracked enormous whips—a Ceylon custom imported from India, centuries ago ; they waved flags, cheered, and sang, and—a very pretty custom—tossed highly burnished brass lotahs—water-pots—containing a few pebbles each, into the air and caught them again, the sunshine making them sparkle like flashing lights and the pebbles joining in a



pleasing subdued rattle and clink. So the joyous band took us to our quarters, or rather to the great preaching-shed adjoining, where we had to show ourselves and the Chief Priests and I to make suitable addresses. The warmest congratulations were exchanged between friends, and it seemed the general opinion that the Protestant Christians had dealt themselves the heaviest blow ever received by their cause in the island. As I said in another place, the Catholics did not molest us. In fact, I have just come across a cutting in our Scrap Book, from the *Ceylon Catholic Messenger*, of 20th May 1881, from which the following extract is taken:—

“The Theosophists cannot in any case be worse than the Sectarian Missionaries, and if Colonel Olcott can induce the Buddhists to establish schools of their own, as he is trying to do, he will be doing us a service; because if the Buddhists would have their own denominational schools, as we have ours, they would put a stop to the dishonesty now practised by the Sectarian Missionaries of obtaining Government money for proselytizing purposes under the pretext of grants-in-aid for education. Though it is in the education of our own people that we are chiefly interested, yet it is neither our wish nor our interest as Catholics that education should not be universal.”

For the sake of the amiable neutrality herein foreshadowed, we shall not traverse the concluding affirmation.

As for the luckless “Christian” champion, he was hustled away to the private room of the railway station-

master, and kept shut up there until the arrival of the next train for Colombo, for fear of unpleasant consequences from his pretended co-religionists.

The next morning we proceeded on to Bentota *via* Kalutara. The trip was delightful, both by rail along the sea-beach, where the track skirts almost the wash of the surf, and by road through the continuous groves of palms, which reminded me of the alley through the palm-house at Chatsworth; save that there it was a matter of rods, while here it was one of scores of miles. Our reception at Bentota was princely indeed. There was a procession a mile long; at least ten miles of *olla* (split tender cocoanut leaves hung on lines supported by poles) decorations along the roads and lanes, and fourteen triumphal arches at conspicuous points. I lectured from a large decorated pavilion or platform, from which we had a fine view of the assemblage and the decorations. We passed the night at the Rest-house, or Travellers' Bungalow, a Government affair, the managing contractor of which was a warm Buddhist and put himself out to make us comfortable. We were all agreed that we had never seen so delightful a house in the Tropics. The lofty ceilings, the floors of red tiles, the walls of laterite, thick and cool, a wide verandah at the back just over the rocky shore of the sea, the rooms at least thirty feet square, the sea-breeze sweeping through them night and day, a bathing-place on the beach, abundance of flowers, a good table and a sympathetic landlord—we had nothing left to desire. H. P. B. declared she should like to pass a whole year there.

Twenty-three names of applicants were handed in that day, and in the evening we formed the Bentota T. S.: which, by-the-way, has scarcely done anything since and up to the present time. Certainly nothing by way of Theosophy, although some help has been given to the cause of Education. This has not been for lack of good feeling, but only from their semi-illiteracy. Seven priests, sent to me by Potuwila for the purpose, were accepted as members.

After an early sea-bath we left, in a special mail-coach chartered for us by the committee, for Galle, which we reached at 5 P.M. after a most pleasant drive. Ferozshah and I were laid up the next two days, and I could make no public appearance. On the evening of 25th June, at a meeting of the Galle T. S., Mr. Simon Perera was elected President. On the 26th we drove to Mâtara, our southernmost point, and got there at 2 P.M. Four miles from the town we were met by a procession, estimated to be a mile long, under the lead of a local Headman, who took us in charge. The quaintest and most striking features of an ancient Sinhalese *perehéra* (procession) were included in the function, and for us it had all the attraction of picturesqueness and novelty. There were costumed sword-dancers, devil-dancers, *nautchnis* with ochred faces, a revolving temple on a float—a van of marionettes—for it must be remembered that the *fantoccini* are of Eastern origin, and one sees them at nearly all festive gatherings in India, Ceylon, and Burmah; and numberless flags and swallow-tail pennons were carried and waved by men and

boys. Music played, tom-toms beat, songs composed in our honor were sung, and, as at Bentota, some ten miles of *olla* decorations fringed the roads. One may imagine what sized audience such demonstrations caused to gather at the lecturing-place, where I spoke. It was in a palm-grove by the seaside, I standing on a house-verandah, the people sitting in the open. I had a trying interpreter that day, and no mistake. First of all, he asked me to speak very slowly as he "did not understand English very well"; then he planted himself right before me, looking into my mouth, as if he had read Homer, and watched to see what words should "escape through the fence of my teeth." He stood in a crouching position, and with his hands clasping his knees. I spoke extemporaneously, without notes, commanding my gravity with difficulty as I was forced to see the intense anxiety depicted on his countenance. If he did not catch a sentence he would say, "Just repeat that, if you please!" In short, I found it oratory under difficulties. However, we managed it after a fashion, and the people were very patient and good-natured.

Our quarters were in a spacious two-storey house, which had been profusely decorated with flags, bunches of green cocoanuts, palm branches and flowers, making a gay appearance. We breakfasted the next morning with Mrs. Cecilia Dias Illangakoon, a wealthy Buddhist lady of saintly piety, whose kindness towards me ceased only with her life, some years later. It was she who supplied the money for the publication of the first editions, in Sinhalese and English, of my "Buddhist Catechism," and who had

prepared, at a cost of nearly rs. 3000, the splendid set of the Tripitika which adorns the Adyar Library. After breakfast she and her son-in-law, Mr. E. R. Gooneratne, of Galle, the most influential native official of Southern Ceylon and the local representative of Professor Rhys Davids' Pali Text Society, were admitted into the T. S., in the presence of Potuwila, Wimbridge, Padshah, and Damodar.

At 4 P.M. I lectured to 2500 people in the compound of this house, a decorated platform having been built in the doorway for me to stand upon, and the room at my back containing seventy priests of the Siam and Amrapoora sects, the only two in the island; not exactly sects in the strict meaning of the word, for there is no difference of dogma between them: the word only means that one set of them received their ordination (*upasampada*) from Siam, the other from Burmah. Later on, I shall have some explanation to give in this respect; the more needed since H. P. B. did not seem to get it fairly into her head that such was the case, and often wrote of them as if they were quite different theological bodies.

The 28th June was a very busy day. Initiations were going on at intervals, there was a visit from a roomful of priests, headed by the High Priest of the Siam "sect" for Southern Ceylon. Two Pali addresses were read to me, by him and by a young priest of great personal influence in this Province. At 7 the above two and five more monks and nine laymen entered the T. S.; a meeting was held, and the Matara T. S. duly organized, with thirty-two out

of thirty-five local members present. Midnight saw us still at work, but at last, thoroughly fagged out, we got to bed.

We went to Welligama the following morning and passed through similar experiences as before, of processions, music, village decorations, *feux de joie*, whip-crackings, flags, bunnings, hymns of welcome, and huzzas. We were put up at the Rest House by the seashore, a place so charming that Prof. Haeckel, a later visitor, left an enthusiastic souvenir of his visit in the Visitors' Register, which I copied and have put away somewhere. Ceylon is really a Paradise of natural beauties for one who can appreciate them, and I do not wonder at the reluctance the Sinhalese have ever shown to venturing to foreign lands, even for profit. After tiffin I lectured from a table placed in a cocoanut grove, after which the crowd surrounded our house so densely that nearly all of us fell sick. H. P. B. and I certainly were poisoned by these emanations. We left the place at 4, and at 6 reached Galle fit only for our bedrooms, which we sought and kept to, despite all importunities. My illness continued all the next day, but on the second morning I went with Mr. S. Perera and his brothers to visit their private temple, that is to say, one that they have built mainly at their own expense, for a priest whose life was more strict and ascetic than that of most of the order. Two or three days of comparative quiet now followed, which I devoted to the preparation of an address to be read before a Convention which I had called of the two sects, with the view of creating a kindlier feeling between

them, and making them equally interested in the new movement we had begun in the interest of Buddhism. The Convention met at 1 P.M. in an airy upstairs building on the harbour beach, belonging to Mr. S. Perera. A necessary preliminary was the giving of a breakfast to the thirty delegates—fifteen from each sect. To avoid all friction, I placed the two parties in adjoining rooms communicating by a wide door. The monks first bathed their feet, washed their faces and hands, and rinsed their mouths. They then took their places on small mats placed for them, the seniors at the far end of the parallel lines, each with his copper begging-bowl before him. The laymen-hosts then brought the huge dishes of well-cooked rice, the curry stuffs, fruits, milk, and other things from the kitchen outside, and put an ample supply of solids in each bowl. On their way from the cook-house to the dining-rooms they allowed the crowd of poor persons, gathered for the purpose, to *touch* the dishes and mutter some word of benediction; the belief being that the toucher thus acquires a share of the merit conferred by the charitable act of feeding the monks. Our party took refreshments in another part of the house. When all was ready I stood in the common doorway and read the call of the meeting and then my Address, which was well interpreted as delivered. I also read my Executive Notice, announcing the creation of the Buddhist Section. Remarks having been made by the seven leading priests of the two sects, a joint committee of five each of the two bodies, with Sumangala as chairman, was chosen to carry out my plan, and the meeting then

adjourned *sine die*. This was quite a new departure, joint action having never before been taken in an administrative affair; nor would it have been now possible, but for our being foreigners who were tied to neither party, nor concerned in one of their social cliques more than in any other. We represented Buddhism and Buddhistic interests as a whole, and neither party dared hold aloof for fear of the popular disfavor, even if they had been so inclined. I am bound to say that I have never, during the subsequent nineteen years, had reason to complain of any change of this good feeling for our work by either sect. On the other hand, they have given a thousand proofs of their willingness to help, so far as their natural inertia of temperament permits them, the great revival movement which is destined to ultimately place Ceylon Buddhism upon the most sure and stable footing, since it is that of the good will of an educated and willing people. It has ever been a cause of deep regret to me, personally, that I could not have devoted my whole time and energies to the Buddhist cause from my early manhood, for I feel sure that by the time of our first visit to the island, 1880, I could have brought about the complete unification in sympathy of the Northern and Southern "Churches"—to use an absurd misnomer—and could have planted a school-house at every cross-road in this lovely land of the palm and the spice grove. However, let that pass as a "might have been": my time has not been wasted.

On the 5th June I held a convention of our newly-formed lay Branches. Kandy was represented by Mr., now



the Honorable, T. B. Pannabokke; Colombo, by Mr. Andrew Perera; Pānadure, by Mr. J. J. Cooray; Bentota, by Mr. Abeyasekara; Galle, by Mr. S. Perera; and Mātara, by Mr. Appuhami.

Our subjects of discussion were the desired secularizing of schools; the rescue of Temple endowment lands from spoliation; the proper way to restore discipline of senior over junior priests—destroyed since the Native Dynasty had been replaced by a Christian Government; the preparation of propagandist literature and its circulation, etc., etc.

Two days of rest, and then a trip to Welitara, where we formed our seventh new Branch T. S. under the auspices of two out of the seven most influential monks above referred to, viz., Wimelasāra Māhā Terunnanse and Dhammalankāra Māhā Terunnanse, two splendid men of high ability and leading two great bodies of the Amarapoorā sect. Eighteen juniors of the latter and twelve of the former accepted membership, and with them, about every priest of any influence in Ceylon had come into our league and pledged their loyal help to the movement. I suppose the fact is that they were borne in on a wave of popular enthusiasm and could not have held back anyhow. My greatest mistake was not to have taken advantage of this feeling to have collected—as I easily might—a fund of two or three lakhs of rupees for the founding of Buddhist schools, the printing of Buddhist books, and for propaganda generally. By delaying this indispensable business until the following year, my work was infinitely harder and the aggregate of

collections infinitely less. A bad year's crop had intervened, the steamers had made Colombo, instead of Galle, their port of call, and that made all the difference in the world.

A final meeting of the Galle T. S., on the 11th July, was called for the permanent election of officers, and in Mr. Proctor G. C. A. Jayasekara as President, the Branch got one of the best possible executives. The 12th was our last day in the island; on the 13th our steamer arrived, and at two we embarked: leaving many weeping friends behind, and taking away with us many recollections of gracious kindnesses, cheerful help, lovely journeys, enthusiastic multitudes, and strange experiences enough to fill the memory with vivid pictures, to recall in future years with delight; as I am doing now with the help of a few lines written in an old Diary.





## CHAPTER XIII.

### A LITTLE DOMESTIC EXPLOSION.

BY way of contrast to the pleasant experiences of the Ceylon tour, we had a terribly rough sea-passage from Galle to Colombo, and all of us were miserably sea-sick. We lay in Colombo harbour all the next day, the ship tossing about and the water so tumultuous that only a very few of our friends felt inclined to come aboard ; but among these few was Megittuwatte. Our fateful number seven asserted itself as usual : our visitors numbering seven, the last boat to come off (bringing us a copy of the latest issue of the *Theosophist*) bearing that number, and our engines being started at 7.7 P.M. Another stormy night followed, and we reached Tuticorin, our first Indian port, several hours late.

It amuses me to find a note in my Diary about our weights, as compared with those we took before starting. H. P. B. had gained 8 lbs., and turned the scale at 237 lbs. (16 st. 13 lbs.); I had lost 15, and weighed 170 lbs. (12 st. 2 lbs.); Wimbridge had neither gained nor lost; Ferozshah had gained 12 lbs. ; and Damodar, the antithesis of H. P. B.,

was found to weigh only 90 lbs. (6 st. 6 lbs.), having dropped 6 lbs. of flesh, which he could ill afford to part with!

It rained cats and dogs on the last day of our return voyage—as it had nearly every day; the decks were wet; the awning dripped from the great bags of water that formed wherever the ropes were at all slack; H. P. B. made absurd efforts to write at a table placed for her by the accommodating Captain on a couple of gratings, in a comparatively dry spot, but used more strong words than ink, her papers were so blown about by the gusts that swept the ship fore and aft. At last we entered Bombay harbour and in due course had the peace of solid ground under our feet. No other, however, for on reaching headquarters we found as pretty a moral storm-centre in action as any household could wish for its dearest neighbours: Miss Bates and Mme. Coulomb were at daggers-drawn, and all sorts of charges and counter-charges were poured into our unwilling ears by those two irate women. Miss Bates charged Mme. Coulomb with having attempted to poison her, and the latter paid her back in kind. I should have liked to sweep them both out with a broom, and it would have been an excellent thing if we had, as things turned out. But instead of that I was called upon to arbitrate their differences, and sat judicially, listening to their absurd contentions for two whole evenings, and finally deciding in Mme. Coulomb's favor as regards the stupid poisoning libel, which had not a single fact to substantiate it. The real, the *teterrima causa belli*, was our having put the housekeeping into Mme.

Coulomb's hands on leaving ; Miss Bates not being satisfied with the responsible duty of sub-editorship, which we gave her. H. P. B. sat near while the arbitration proceeded, smoking rather more cigarettes than usual, and putting in an occasional remark, the tendency of which was rather to augment than allay the excitement. Wimbridge, who stood as Miss B.'s next friend, finally joined me in forcing the belligerents to consent to an "armed neutrality," and the storm-cloud passed over for the time being. The next few days were fully occupied with literary work for the Magazine made necessary by our long absence.

Just before our return, our staunch friend Moolji Thackersey had died, and the Society thus lost one of its most willing workers. On the evening of 4th August, a Mahatma visited H. P. B., and I was called in to see him before he left. He dictated a long and important letter to an influential friend of ours at Paris, and gave me important hints about the management of current Society affairs. I was sent away before his visit terminated, and as I left him sitting in H. P. B.'s room, I cannot say whether his departure was a phenomenal disappearance or not. It was a timely visit for me, for the very next day there was a great explosion of Miss B.'s wrath against us two—against H. P. B. on account of a certain lady of New York, a mutual acquaintance, and against me for my decision in the quarrel with Mme. Coulomb. At a moment when her back was turned towards me and she was abusing H. P. B., a note from the teacher who had been to see us the previous evening dropped from the air into my lap. On opening it

I found advice given me as to my best course of action in the present difficulty. It may perhaps interest our late American colleagues to learn that the situation was discussed by the Master as though we were the T. S. *de jure* and not merely a *de facto* body; the ingenious theory of these latter days having apparently failed to suggest itself to the members of the Great White Lodge!\*

The next day the split in our quartette began, Mr. Wimbridge taking sides with Miss Bates. Things began to grow unpleasant. The plan had been agreed upon to purchase a return ticket and send the lady back to New York; but this was subsequently rejected by her, after Mr. Seervai had made the necessary arrangements. On the third day we dined separately; H. P. B., Damodar, and I, in her small bungalow, and Wimbridge and Miss B. in the dining-room, which we abandoned to them. Day by day things grew worse; we ceased speaking to each other at last; H. P. B. fretted herself into a fever: there was an *impasse* by the 9th, and on the 10th a complete separation between the two parties. The Coulombs moved from the adjoining compound into Miss Bates' quarters; she into theirs; Wimbridge retained his, in a small bungalow in the same enclosure with her; the door which had been cut in the dividing wall between the properties was bricked up; and two families were formed out of the original one. And how pitiful to think that this whole pother grew out of some

\* A reference to the absurd pretext put forward by the seceding members who followed the late Mr. Judge out of the Society, seven years ago, as an excuse for their illegal action.

contemptible feminine rivalries and jealousies ; that it was utterly unnecessary and uncalled for ; that no great principle was involved ; that it might have been avoided by exercising a little self-restraint ; and that, however little it might have mattered to us individually, it had a bad effect on the Society, and cast a burden upon it which it had to stagger under for many a day. One bad result of it was that the seceders managed to gain the favor of one of the leading vernacular papers of Bombay, never very cordial to us, and it used its columns to abuse the Society and Theosophy in general with a bitterness which, so far as I know, has been exhibited down to the present day.

Before the separation I had successfully used my personal influence with a Parsi friend to get Wimbridge capital to set up an art-furniture and art-decoration business—his art-education and skill in designing well fitting him to engage in it. After awhile he took suitable premises in another part of Bombay, and established a connection which has proved an extremely lucrative one, and, I believe, gained a fortune for him and his associates. We two poor literary "chums" kept moving on in the chosen path, without glancing at the Egyptian flesh-pots on either side of our thorny way ; and perverse enough, from the world's point of view, to prefer our poverty and perpetual suffering from cruel slanders, to the most enticing prospects of worldly reward. And that, in truth, was the one sufficient buckler that H. P. B. could use, and did constantly use, to repel the attacks of her hostile critics : not one of them could ever show that she gained money by her phenomena or her

Theosophical drudgery. I used to think she rather overdid it in that direction, and that, to hear her speak, one might fancy that she wanted to have one believe that, because she made nothing out of her wonders, therefore none of the other charges laid against her—plagiarism, for instance, or misquotations of texts, or misrepresentations of authors' teachings—could be true! I remember very well that various persons at Simla and Allahabad took this view of the case, and I pointed it out to her very often.

To add to the gloominess of the outlook on our return from Ceylon, we found the Bombay members inert and the new Branch asleep. Two months of our absence seemed to have almost stifled the local interest in our work, and when the vernacular paper above referred to opened its batteries against us, our sky looked cloudy. Still we kept on with stout hearts; getting the *Theosophist* out punctually every month, and attending to our ever-increasing correspondence. That was one of those crises when, in quasi isolation, H. P. B. and I were drawn together most closely for mutual support and encouragement. Though the dearest friends might prove false and the staunchest adherents fall away, we just gave each other the more words of cheer, and conspired to make each other think that the trouble was not worth mentioning and must pass over us like a fitting summer cloud. And then we knew, for both of us had the constant proof, that the Great Ones with whom we worked had their potent thought round and about us, a very shield from all harm, a harbinger of perfect success for our cause.



A few of our Hindu and Parsi coadjutors visited us regularly, and by degrees we regained our lost ground in India. In America things were at a standstill: nobody there having at that time the ability or energy to push on the movement. Judge, then but a dreaming tyro of twenty-five or twenty-six, was starving at the law, and Gen. Doubleday, our only other quasi-effective, was living in country seclusion on his army pension, and incapacitated in various ways from devoting himself to this propaganda. More than ever, the evolutionary centre was confined to us two, and the only hope of the survival of the movement was in our living on and never permitting our energies to flag for a moment. We were not so alone as we had been, for among other real helpers whom we had found in India, there was poor, slender, fragile Damodar Mavalankar, who had thrown himself heart and soul into the work with a devotion which could not be surpassed. Frail as a girl though he was, he would sit at his table writing, sometimes all night, unless I caught him at it and drove him to bed. No child was ever more obedient to a parent, no foster-son more utterly selfless in his love to a foster-mother, than he to H. P. B.: her lightest word was to him law; her most fanciful wish an imperative command, to obey which he was ready to sacrifice life itself. When a lad, brought near to death by fever and tossing in delirium, he had had a vision of a benignant sage, who came and took his hand and told him he should not die but should live for useful work. After meeting H. P. B., his interior vision gradually opened, and in him whom we know as

Master K. H., Damodar saw revealed the visitor of his youthful crisis. That sealed his devotion to our cause, and his discipleship to H. P. B. From him, I personally had unbroken trust, affection, and respect; he defended me in my absence from public and private calumny, and deported himself towards me as a son to a father. I hold his memory in respect and love.

On the very day of the rupture between our two family groups, we received from Mr. Sinnett an invitation to visit them at Simla. It was like a draught of sweet water to the caravan, and H. P. B. telegraphed her acceptance: the post was too slow for her. She fumed about until the afternoon, when she took me away on a shopping excursion, bought herself a new outfit for her *début* in "Coerulia," as the mountain capital of the Government of India is sometimes called, and began to count the hours to the earliest practicable time of departure. What came of it is widely known through the medium of various books and many journals; one notice of our presence being that made by Marion Crawford in his *Mr. Isaacs*, where he speaks of us two and Mr. Sinnett, moving about through the rhododendrons. But as the exact truth has not been all told, it remains for me to supply the missing links in another chapter.





## CHAPTER XIV.

### SWAMI DYÁNAND SARASWATI ON YOGA.

**O**N the fourth day before we left for Northern India an incident occurred in my office, which I give from my Diary notes for what it may be worth, since its genuineness has been disputed by Mme. Coulomb. At the same time I must add that I have never had any proof going to support her assertions, while her reputation for good faith is such as to demand even more corroboration than usual before I could believe them against the evidence of my own senses. H. P. B., Damodar, and I were sitting in the office conversing, when the weird portrait of the Yogi "Tiruvalla," which was phenomenally produced for Mr. Judge and myself in New York—and which had disappeared from its frame in my bedroom just before we left America—fell through the air on the desk at which I sat. Afterwards a photograph of Swámi Dayánand, which he had given me, fell similarly from space. In noting the circumstances the same evening, I wrote that, "I saw the first when it struck a tin box on my desk, and the second as it was coming

obliquely through the air." Which implies, of course, that it was *not* dropped through a slit in the ceiling cloth, as the truth-loving Mme. Coulomb says it was. Three evenings later, in presence of three witnesses besides myself, H. P. B. gave her visiting card to a visitor, who wished it, and somewhat later a duplicate card dropped from the ceiling at the gentleman's feet and was picked up by him.

We—H. P. B. and I, with our servant Babula—left Bombay for the North by the evening mail train of 27th August. After a halt at Allahabad we reached Meerut on the 30th. The entire local branch of the Arya Samaj greeted us at the railway station, escorted us to the residence of Mr. Sheonarian, and soon after Swâmi Dayânand called. In the presence of his followers, we opened a discussion intended to draw out his real views on Yoga and the alleged *Siddhis*, or human psycho-spiritual powers; his teachings to his Samajists having been calculated to discourage the practice of asceticism, and even to throw doubt on the reality of the powers; while his conversations with us had been in another tone. Our debate will be found reported in a full digest in the *Theosophist* for December 1880, and I should content myself with referring my readers to it, but for the fact that only a very small proportion of them have probably access to that volume, and it is too interesting to the general reader on Yoga, and important in its historical connection with our Society to have it passed over or ignored. I shall, therefore, reproduce its substance herewith, as follows:—

"The first question propounded to the Swâmi was

whether Yoga was a true science, or but a metaphysical speculation ; whether Patanjali described psychical powers attainable by man, and whether they had been attained, or not. The Swâmi's answer was that Yoga was true and based upon a knowledge of the laws of Nature. It was then asked whether these powers could still be acquired, or had the time passed by. The answer was that Nature's laws are unchangeable and illimitable : what had been done once could be done now. Not only can the man of to-day learn to do all the things described by the ancient writers, but he himself, the Swâmi, could teach the methods to anyone who might sincerely wish to take up that course of life. Many had come to him professing their desire and asserting their ability to command success ; he had tried three, but all failed. One was a resident of Agra. They began well, but soon grew impatient of having to confine themselves to what they regarded as trivial efforts, and, to their surprise, broke down suddenly. Yoga is the most difficult science of all to learn, and few men are capable of acquiring it now. He was asked if there are now living any real Yogis who can at will produce the wonderful phenomena described in Aryan books. His reply was that there are such living men. Their number is small. They live in retired places, and in their proper persons seldom or never appear in public. Their secrets are never communicated by them to the profane, nor do they teach their secret science (Vidyâ) except to such as upon trial they find deserving.

“Col. Olcott asked whether these great masters (Mahâtmas) are invariably dressed in the saffron clothes of

the ordinary *sannyâsi* or *fakir* we see every day, or in common costume. The Swâmi answered, in either the one or the other, as they may prefer, or circumstances require. In reply to the request that without suggestion he would state what specific powers the proficient in Yoga enjoys, he said that the true Yogi can do that which the vulgar call miracles. It is needless to make a list of his powers, for practically his power is limited only by his desire and the strength of his will. Among other things he can exchange thoughts with his brother Yogis at any distance, even though they be as far apart as one pole from the other, and have no visible external means of communication, such as the telegraph or post. He can read the thoughts of others. He can pass (in his inner self) from one place to another, and so be independent of the ordinary means of conveyance, and that at a speed incalculably greater than that of the railway engine. He can walk upon the water or in the air above the surface of the ground. He can pass his own soul (*Âtmâ*) from his own body into that of another person, either for a short time or for years, as he chooses. He can prolong the natural term of the life of his own body by withdrawing his *Âtmâ* from it during the hours of sleep, and so, by reducing the activity of the vital processes to a minimum, avoid the greater part of the natural wear and tear. The time so occupied is so much time to be added to the natural sum of the physical existence of the bodily machine.

“Q. Up to what day, hour, or minute of his own bodily life can the Yogi exercise this power of transferring his *Âtmâ*, or inner self, to the body of another?”

"A. Until the last minute, or even second, of his natural term of life. He knows beforehand, to a second, when his body must die, and until that second strikes, he may project his soul into another person's body if one is ready for his occupancy. But, should he allow that instant to pass, then he can do no more. The cord is snapped for ever, and the Yogi, if not sufficiently purified and perfected to be enabled to obtain *Moksha*, must follow the common law of re-birth. The only difference between his case and that of other men is, that he, having become a far more intellectual, good, and wise being than they, is re-born under better conditions.

"Q. Can a Yogi prolong his life to the following extent ; say the natural life of his own body is seventy years, can he, just before the death of that body, enter the body of a child of six years, live in that another term of seventy years, remove from that to another, and live in it a third seventy ?

"A. He can, and can thus prolong his stay on earth to about the term of four hundred years.

"Q. Can a Yogi thus pass from his own body into that of a woman ?

"A. With as much ease as a man can, if he chooses, put on himself the dress of a woman, so he can put over his own *Ātmā* her physical form. Externally, he would then be in every physical aspect and relation a woman ; internally himself.

"Q. I have met two such ; that is to say, two persons who appeared women, but who were entirely masculine in everything but the body. One of them, you remember, we

visited together at Benares, in a temple on the bank of the Ganges.

“A. Yes, ‘Majji.’

“Q. How many kinds of Yoga practice are there?

“A. Two—*Hatha Yoga* and *Rāja Yoga*. Under the former the student undergoes physical trials and hardships for the purpose of subjecting his physical body to the will. For example, the swinging of one’s body from a tree, head downwards, at a little distance from five burning fires, etc. In *Rāja Yoga* nothing of the kind is required. It is a system of mental training by which the mind is made the servant of the will. The one—*Hatha Yoga*—gives physical results; the other—*Rāja Yoga*—spiritual powers. He who would become perfect in *Rāja* must have passed through the training in *Hatha*.

“Q. But are there not persons who possess the *Siddhis*, or powers, of the *Rāja Yoga*, without ever having passed through the terrible ordeal of the *Hatha*? I certainly have met three such in India, and they themselves told me they had never submitted their bodies to torture.

“A. Then they practised *Hatha* in their previous birth.

“Q. Explain, if you please, how we may distinguish between real and false phenomena when produced by one supposed to be a *Yogi*.

“A. Phenomena and phenomenal appearances are of three kinds: the lowest are produced by sleight-of-hand or dexterity; the second, by chemical or mechanical aids or appliances; the third and highest, by the occult powers of



man. Whenever anything of a startling nature is exhibited by either of the first two means, and it is falsely represented to have been of an un-natural, or super-natural, or miraculous character, that is properly called a *Tamśha*, or dishonest deception. But if the true and correct explanation of such surprising effect is given, then it should be classed as a simple exhibition of scientific or technical skill, and is to be called *Vyavahāra-Vidyā*. Effects produced by the sole exercise of the trained human will, without apparatus or mechanical aids, are true *Yoga*.

“Q. Define the nature of the human *Ātmā*.

“A. In the *Ātmā* there are twenty-four powers. Among these are will, passivity, action, determined perception or knowledge, strong memory, etc. When all these powers are brought to bear upon the external world, the practitioner produces effects which are properly classed under the head of Physical Science. When he applies them to the internal world, that is Spiritual Philosophy—*Yoga—Antaryoga*—or inner *Yoga*. When two men talk to each other from far distant places by means of the telegraph, that is *Vyavahāra-Vidyā*; when without any apparatus and by employing their knowledge of natural forces and currents, it is *Yoga Vidyā*. It is also *Yoga Vidyā* when an adept in the science causes articles of any kind to be brought to him from a distance, or sends them from himself to any distant place, in either case without visible means of transportation, such as railways, messengers, or what not. The former is called *Akarshan* (attraction), the latter *Preshana*. The ancients thoroughly understood the laws of the attraction

and repulsion of all things in Nature, between each other, and the *Yoga* phenomena are based upon that knowledge. The *Yogi* changes or intensifies these attractions and repulsions at will.

“*Q.* What are the pre-requisites for one who wishes to acquire these powers?

“*A.* These are : (1) A desire to learn. Such a desire as the starving man has for food, or a thirsty one for water : an intense and eager yearning. (2) Perfect control over the passions and desires. (3) Chastity ; pure companionship ; pure food—that which brings into the body none but pure influences ; the frequenting of a pure locality, one free from vicious taint of any kind ; pure air ; and seclusion. He must be endowed with intelligence—that he may comprehend the principles of nature ; concentrateness—that his thoughts may be prevented from wandering ; and self-control—that he may always be master over his passions and weaknesses. Five things he must relinquish—Ignorance, Egotism (conceit), Passion (sensual), Selfishness, and Fear of Death.

“*Q.* You do not believe, then, that the *Yogi* acts contrary to natural laws?

“*A.* Never ; nothing happens contrary to the laws of Nature. By *Hatha Yoga* one can accomplish a certain range of minor phenomena, as, for instance, to draw all his vitality into a single finger, or, when in *Dhyāna* (a state of mental quiescence), to know another's thoughts. By *Rāja Yoga* he becomes a *Siddha* ; he can do whatever he wills, and know whatever he desires to know, even

languages which he has never studied. But all these are in strict harmony with Natural Laws.

"Q. I have occasionally seen inanimate articles duplicated before my eyes, such as letters, coins, pencils, jewelry; how is this to be accounted for?

"A. In the atmosphere are the particles of every visible thing, in a highly diffused state. The *Yogi* knowing how to concentrate these, does so by the exercise of his will, and forms them into any shape of which he can picture to himself this model.

"Col. Olcott asked the Swámi what he would call certain phenomena heretofore produced by Madame Blavatsky in the presence of witnesses—such as the causing of a shower of roses to fall in a room at Benares last year, the ringing of bells in the air, the causing of the flame of a lamp to gradually diminish until it almost went out, and then at command to blaze up again to the top of the chimney, without touching the regulator in either instance, etc. The answer was that these were phenomena of *Yoga*. Some of them might be imitated by tricksters and then would be mere *tamasha*; but these were not of that class."

I think this one of the simplest, clearest, most sententious and most suggestive digests of the Indian view of the high science of Yoga in literature. My respondent was one of the most distinctly Aryan personages of the time, a man of large erudition, an experienced ascetic, a powerful orator, and an intense patriot. Attention should

be paid to the Swâmi's assertion that one *cannot* pass on to the practice of Râja Yoga without first having subjugated the physical body by a course of Hatha Yoga, or physiological training, and that if one be found who is confining himself with success to Râja Yoga, this is *prima facie* proof of his having done his Hatha Yoga in the anterior birth. This idea is shared by all orthodox educated Hindus whom I have met, but my readers will decide for themselves whether it is reasonable or not. We may, at any rate, say that nothing is clearer than that man's personal evolution towards the spiritual life is progressive, and that every stage of physical self-mastery must be passed before "liberation" can be attained. To most believers in the theory of re-incarnation the above hypothesis will not seem destitute of a reasonable foundation: and yet it is not so clear to me that I have ever had to sleep on pointed spikes; or hang by my heels; or sit between fierce fires; or cleanse my stomach daily by the feat of *dholi*—the swallowing of yards upon yards of wet cotton cloth and then pulling it up again; or fill my abdominal cavity with gallons of water, to reach even my low stage of spiritual capacity. I think the will can be fortified even better without than with physical torture.

We were fortunate enough to meet at Mr. Sheonarian's house the now celebrated Pandita Ramabai, then married to a Bengali barrister or advocate, but visiting here with her late brother in the course of a tour. Ramabai's name and history are now so well known in all parts of the world that I need only say that at that time she was

letter-perfect in the *Gitá* and *Rámáyana*, could converse and write with great fluency in Sanskrit and compose verses in it impromptu on any given subject within the range of her reading. After a lecture I delivered on the evening of 6th September, she gave her own views first in Hindi and then, by request, in Sanskrit, displaying equal fluency in both. She had not learnt English then, but could lecture in Sanskrit, Hindi, Urdu, Marathi, Guzerati, and Kanarese—the latter her mother-tongue. She was twenty-two years old; a pale, slim, ascetic-looking young woman, not at all recognizable in the stout, worldly-wise appearing matron whom I recently saw at Poona at a lecture of Mrs. Besant's. The Ramabai of 1880 was a true type of the highly meditative Bráhmīni; the one of Poona might have sat for the type of the Western business-woman, who is more at home with lodgers and ledgers than with literature.

My debate with the Swámi went on day by day and evening by evening, despite a heat so oppressive as to be almost unbearable. One morning H. P. B. came to call me long before daylight, being afraid of heat-apoplexy, and determined that we should start at once for Simla, notwithstanding that the notices were out for my above-mentioned public lecture. But, finding that by adopting the Hindu custom of sleeping out-doors she might fare better, she changed her mind, countermanded by telegraph a previous telegram, and that next night had her high-post bedstead placed out of doors near my cot and our host's, and, protected by a large mosquito curtain from all flying

insects, she slept soundly until the chattering crows hoarsely called to each other in the neighbouring mango tope.

That day the Swâmi and I, as Presidents of our respective Societies, had a long and serious private talk, the result being that "We agreed that neither should be responsible for the views of the other: the two Societies to be allies, yet independent."

At 4.14 in the afternoon we left Meerut for Simla. From Umballa—after a halt until 11 P.M., with Indian friends—we drove all night up the mountain road to the summer capital of the Viceroy in a dak-gharry, an oblong, wooden-bodied conveyance, something like a big palanquin on wheels. We slept but little as we were entering the foot-hills of the Himalayas and H. P. B. had business with the Mahâtmas to attend to. I note that it was on this night that she told me the story about Swâmi Dayânand's body being occupied by a Master, which influenced me so much in my later intercourse with him. A five-hours' halt was made at Kalka, and we then went on in a tonga—a two-wheeled spring cart, hung very low, and with seats for four persons, the driver included—to Simla. The military road is good, though somewhat perilous at the sharper turns (with balky ponies). The scenery is imposing by reason of the altitudes and mountainous outlines and masses, but there is a great lack of woods, which robs the landscapes of the refreshing element of verdure. We came in sight of Simla just before sunset, and its sun-gilded villas gave it an attractive

appearance. A servant of Mr. Sinnett's met us as we entered the town, with *jampans*—chairs carried by porters by long poles—and we were soon under the hospitable roof of our good friends the Sinnetts, where a hearty welcome awaited us.





## CHAPTER XV.

### SIMLA AND THE CERULIANS.

**W**AKING the next morning, refreshed and happy, Simla presented to us a charming aspect. Mr. Sinnett's house was so situated on a hill-slope as to command a superb view, and from the verandah the eye took in the residences of the majority of those high Anglo-Indian officials who conduct the government of this giant empire.

Mr. Sinnett's first move was to have a very serious talk with H. P. B. as to the policy she should pursue. I have noted that he most earnestly begged her to consider this visit as a holiday jaunt, and for three weeks, not even to speak a word about the T. S. or the nonsensical watching of us by Government as possible Russian spies; in short, to "sink the shop" entirely, the better to achieve results by making people friendly to us, which they would not be if we forced them to listen to our heterodox notions and complaints of our grievances. Of course, H. P. B. promised, and, equally of course, forgot all about it when the first



visitor called. News from Bombay about the turn the Bates' affair was taking threw her into a paroxysm of excitement, and the next morning, as usual, she made me the scapegoat; stamping up and down the room and making it appear that I was the proximate cause of all her trials and tribulations. My notes say that Sinnett privately expressed to me his feeling of despair to see that she would not control herself, but throw away all her chances to make friends among the class whose good will it was most important to secure. The English, he said, always associate true merit with calm self-control.

Our faithful friend Mrs. Gordon was our first Simla visitor, and after her came a succession of the most important Government officials, whom Sinnett brought to the house to meet H. P. B. From my Diary I see that she began doing phenomena at once. She made her raps on the tables and elsewhere about the room, and out of a handkerchief, with her name embroidered on it, drew a second one marked, by request, with Mr. Sinnett's name in the same style of embroidery. Two days later, she did a queer phenomenon for a gentleman visitor: she rubbed off from the chintz cover of the chair in which she was sitting a duplicate of one of the flowers in the pattern. The flower was not a phantasm, like the smile of the Cheshire cat, but a substantial object, as though a piece of the cloth corresponding with the outline of the flower had been removed from the chintz under her hands; the chintz, however, was unmutilated. This was probably a *mâyá*.

From this time on, no dinner to which we were invited

was considered complete without an exhibition of H. P. B.'s table-rapping and fairy-bell ringing. She even made them to sound on and within the heads of the gravest official personages. One day, after a luncheon, she caused the ladies and gentlemen present to pile their hands on top of each other, and then, laying her own hand upon the top-most one, would cause raps to come with sharp metallic clicks under the lowest hand of the pile. There was no possibility of cheating here, and the assistants were all greatly interested in this proof that a current of psychic force could be sent through a dozen hands and produce sounds on the table beneath. This experiment was repeated on several occasions, and once was attended with a striking circumstance. In the dinner party was a certain well-known High Court judge. When his hands were interposed in the pile, no current would pass through, but the moment he withdrew them the raps would click again. Possibly, he thought that his special shrewdness prevented the playing of tricks, but, of course, the explanation is that his nervous system was not a conductor to H. P. B.'s nerve aura.

Among the notable acquaintances we made was Mr. Kipling, the Director of the Lahore School of Arts, the genius of whose son Rudyard had not then burst upon an astonished public.

Up to this time we had been under governmental disfavor as suspected Russian agents, and one object in view was to have this foolish misunderstanding removed so that our Indian work might not be henceforth hampered. But

I waited until we had personally met all the leading officials, and given them the opportunity of judging for themselves as to our characters and probable motives in coming out to India.

When the time seemed ripe I had, one day after dinner, a friendly chat with the Secretary to Government in the Foreign Department, and arranged for an exchange of letters, with copies of my credentials from the President of the United States and the American Secretary of State. For the sake of its historical interest and the importance of its results, I will fill out the record by printing the text of my letter :—

“SIMLA, 27th Sept. 1880.

“SIR,—Referring to our conversation of Saturday with respect to the Theosophical Society and its work in India, I have the honor, in compliance with your suggestion, to put the case in writing.

“1. The Society was organized at New York in the year 1875 by a number of Orientalists and students of Psychology, for the defined purpose of studying the religions, philosophies, and sciences of ancient Asia with the help of native scholars, experts, and adepts.

“2. It had no other object ; especially, it had no interest in or disposition to meddle with politics, in India or elsewhere.

“3. In 1878 two of its founders—Mme. H. P. Blavatsky, an American citizen by naturalization, and a lifelong student of Asiatic psychology—and myself, with two other members (British subjects), came to India to promote the

work in hand. Two of the party being English-born, the third a naturalized citizen, and the other a native of the United States, not even the thought of mixing in Indian politics had occurred to us. I myself bore a special passport (of the Diplomatic form) from Mr. Secretary Evarts with a special circular letter of introduction from the Department of State to American Ministers and Consuls, and one of similar import—an unprecedented honor, as I am told—from the President himself. Copies of these papers are now filed with the Bombay Government, and triplicates will be sent to your Department as soon as they can be procured from Bombay.

“4. False reports, based upon ignorance or malice, respecting the objects of our Indian Mission, having been made to the Government of India, we were placed under surveillance; but the work was so clumsily done that the attention of the whole country was attracted, and the idea was put into the native mind that to be known as our friends would incur the displeasure of high officials, and might seriously affect their individual interests. Thus the laudable and beneficent plans of our Society were seriously impeded, and we were subjected to many wholly undeserved indignities, as a consequence of the action of Government upon false and misleading rumors.

“5. It has been remarked by every one who has had the opportunity to acquaint himself with the facts, that, during our eighteen months' residence in India, we have exerted a wholesome and conservative influence upon the natives, and been accepted by them as the true friends of their race

and country. We have letters from every part of the Peninsula to prove this. If the Government would but undo the wrong it unintentionally did us, and restore the character we bore until the stigma of alleged political machination was so cruelly and unjustly placed upon us, we could render great service not only to the Hindus but to Western literature and science. It is not enough that the previous order to watch us should be rescinded, the suspicion has filtered from the officers of your Department through all the classes of the native population, and a blight rests upon us. An effectual remedy would be for the Department to order its subordinates to make known in their several localities the fact that we are no longer under suspicion, and that so far as our work is for the good of India, it is approved. And this, as an American officer and gentleman, I ask of you as the representative of British equity.

“ I am, dear sir,

“ Very respectfully,

“ Your obedient servant.”

The reply of the Government was not quite all that I wished for ; while assuring us that we would not be interfered with so long as we did not meddle in politics, it did not say that the orders to British residents in native states, to watch us, would be countermanded. In a second letter, I brought this to the notice of the Foreign Office, and in due course got all that I wanted. From that time we have been free.

On the 29th September, Mrs. Sinnett, H. P. B., and I went to the top of Prospect Hill. On the slate-roof of a small Hindu shrine that is there, among the many names of visitors scribbled, I discovered the cryptograph of Mahatma M. with my own name written beneath it; but how they got there I cannot say. As we sat there chatting, H. P. B. asked what our souls would most desire. Mrs. S. said, "To have a note from the Brothers drop in my lap." H. P. B. took a bit of pink note-paper from her pocket-book; traced on it certain invisible signs with her finger; folded it in triangular shape; took it in her hand; walked to the brow of the hill—twenty yards off; faced the West; made some signs in the air; opened her hands, and the paper was gone. Instead of having the answer dropped in her lap, Mrs. Sinnett got it by climbing into the heart of a tree near by. It was written on the same pink paper, folded triangularly, and transpierced on a sprig. Inside, in a strange hand, was written—"I believe I was requested to leave a note here. What do you wish me to do?" The signature was in Tibetan characters. From the evidential point of view, the weak point about this incident was that the note was not delivered in the way desired.

I now come to the much-mooted incident of the finding of an extra cup and saucer at a picnic. I shall give the narrative exactly as I find it told in my Diary entry for the 3rd of October 1880.

A party of six of us—three ladies and three gentlemen—were leaving the house for a valley some distance from town, where we meant to find a suitable place for our pur-

pose. The Sinnetts' butler had packed the hampers and put in a half-dozen cups and saucers of a peculiar pattern—one for each of us. Just as we were starting, another gentleman rode up, and was invited to join our party. The servants went on ahead with the hampers, and we leisurely followed in single file, down the sinuous and rocky path which led to the valley. After a somewhat long jaunt we came to a flat space on the comb of a ridge covered with green turf, and overshadowed by great trees. Having decided to camp there, we dismounted, and flung ourselves upon the grass, while the servants laid the tablecloth upon the ground and arranged the provisions. They built a fire to boil the kettle for tea, and presently the butler came to Mrs. Sinnett, with an anxious face, telling her that there was no cup and saucer for the Sahib who had joined us at the last moment. I heard her say, in a vexed tone, "It was very stupid of you not to put in another cup and saucer when you knew that the other gentleman would have to have tea." Turning to us, she laughingly said: "Two of you good people must drink out of the same cup, it seems." I remarked that, once, in a similar quandary, we had settled the affair by giving the cup to one person and the saucer to the other. Thereupon, one of the company jokingly said to H. P. B., "Now, Madam, here is a chance for you to do a bit of useful magic." We all laughed at the absurdity of the idea, but when H. P. B. seemed ready to accept the suggestion in sober earnest, there was an outcry of pleasure, and she was asked to forthwith do the phenomenon. Those who were lying on the grass rose and gathered near

her. She said that if she was really to do this, she must have the help of her friend Major —. He being more than willing, she requested him to take something to dig with, and so, snatching up a table-knife, he followed her about. She looked intently over the ground, presenting the face of her great seal-ring towards one spot after another, and finally said, "Please dig here." The gentleman plied his knife-point vigorously, and found that beneath the grass the ground was filled with a net-work of fine roots of the adjacent trees. These he cut and pulled out, until presently, brushing away the loose soil, a white object was uncovered. It proved to be a tea-cup imbedded in the ground, and on being taken out, was found to be of the identical pattern of the other six. Imagine the exclamations of surprise and the excitement of our little group! H. P. B. told the gentleman to continue his digging in the same place, and after cutting away a root as thick as my little finger, he excavated a saucer of the identical pattern desired. This capped the climax of our excitement, and the gentleman who had plied the knife was loudest in his expressions of wonder and satisfaction. To complete this part of my narrative, I will state that Mrs. Sinnett and I, reaching the house first, on the return of our party, went straight to the butler's pantry, and found the three other cups of the nine which she had left of the original dozen, put away on an upper shelf with their handles broken, and otherwise dilapidated. The seventh cup produced at the picnic had, therefore, not formed part of her broken set.

After luncheon, H. P. B. did another wonder which sur-



prised me more than any of the rest. One of the gentlemen said that he was ready to join our Society if H. P. B. could give him his diploma then and there, duly filled out! This was, certainly, a large order, but the old lady, nothing daunted, made a sweep of her hand, and pointing to a bush at a little distance, told him to see if he could not find it there; trees and bushes having often served as letter-boxes. Laughingly, and in apparent confidence that his test would not be complied with, he walked over to the bush—and drew forth a diploma of membership filled in with his name and that day's date, together with an official letter from myself, which I am quite sure I never wrote, but which was still in my handwriting! This put us all in hilarious spirits, and as H. P. B. was in the vein, there is no telling with what other phenomena she might not have treated us, but for a most unexpected and disagreeable *contretemps*. On our way home we stopped at a certain place to rest and chat. Two of the gentlemen—the Major and the one who last joined us—strolled away together, and, after a half-hour, returned in a very serious mood. They said that, at the time when the cup and saucer were exhumed, they thought the circumstances perfectly convincing, and were prepared to uphold that view against all comers. They had now, however, revisited the spot, and made up their minds that by tunnelling in, from the brow of the hillock, the articles might have been put where they were found. This being so, they regretted that they could not accept the phenomenon as perfectly satisfactory, and offered H. P. B. the ultimatum of doing another pheno-

menon under conditions to be dictated by themselves. I leave any one who was acquainted with H. P. B., her family pride and volcanic temperament, to picture to himself the explosion of wrath that followed this speech. She seemed about to take leave of her senses, and poured out upon the two unfortunate sceptics the thunder of her wrath. And so, our pleasant party ended in an angry tempest. For my part, in thinking over all the details of the cup and saucer incident, and with every desire to get at the truth, I cannot regard the theory advanced by the two sceptics as at all valid. Every one present saw that the cup and saucer were covered over with multitudinous roots which had to be cut and violently torn away to get at them, and both appeared to be imbedded in the soil as though they were fragments of stone; the turf above them was green and undisturbed, and if they had been introduced through a tunnel, the disturbance of the surface could not have escaped the eyes of our whole party, who were clustered about the digger while he was at work. However, let it pass for what it is worth; H. P. B.'s merit as a public teacher does not depend upon the many phenomena which this marvellous woman produced from time to time, for the instruction of such as could profit by them.

And certainly it is better to have launched the Eastern Doctrine than to have created in the ground a whole tea-service of porcelain.



## CHAPTER XVI.

### WHAT HAPPENED AT SIMLA.

SINCE the publication of the last chapter of these memoirs, I have found a printed circular issued by Damodar, for the private use of our members, and covering extracts from my private letter to him dated Simla, 4th October 1880—the day after the picnic described. On reading it I find that my Diary has served me perfectly as regards the details of occurrences with a single exception, viz., the official letter found by Major — in the deodar shrub along with his diploma, in answer to his demand, was signed “Faithfully yours — (the name in Tibetan characters) for H. S. Olcott, President of the Theosophical Society.” The body of the letter was, however, in a facsimile of my handwriting, and, if I had not known the contrary, I should have been ready to swear that I had myself written it.

The incident of the finding of Mrs. Hume’s brooch, so universally known and so often commented upon, occurred that same evening at Mr. A. O. Hume’s house. I shall

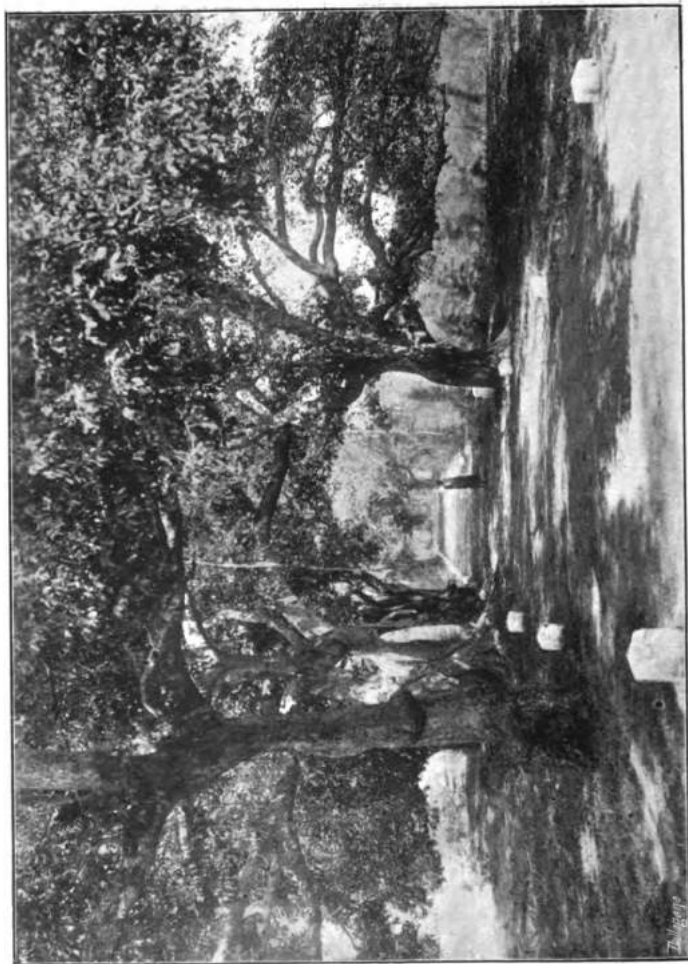
tell the story exactly as it happened, since not only are the facts clearly present to my mind, but they are also given in my letter to Damodar above-mentioned. One most important circumstance has hitherto been omitted from all the versions published by eye-witnesses, one which weighs strongly in H. P. B.'s favor and against the hypothesis of fraud. The facts are these. A party of eleven of us—including Mr. and Mrs. Hume, Mr. and Mrs. Sinnett, Mrs. Gordon, Captain M., Mr. H., Mr. D., Lieutenant B., and H. P. B. and myself—were dining at Mr. Hume's. Of course, occultism and philosophy were the topics of conversation. Psychometry was also broached, and Mrs. Gordon, obtaining H. P. B.'s consent to try an experiment, went to her room and fetched a letter in a plain envelope which she gave H. P. B. to psychometrize. The latter held it to her forehead a moment and began to laugh. "This is queer," she said. "I see just the top of somebody's head with hair standing up like spikes all over it. I can't see the face. Ah! now it begins to rise slowly. Why, it is Dr. Thibaut, of course!" And so it was; the letter was from him to Mrs. Gordon. The incident gave everybody the highest satisfaction, and—as usually happens in this phenomena-hunting business—more wonders were called for; would not Madame B. cause something to be brought from a distance? She looked calmly around the table and said, "Well, who wants something?" Mrs. Hume at once spoke up: "I do," she said. "What?" asked H. P. B. "If I could really get it, I should like to have an old family jewel that I have not seen for a long

time; a brooch set round with pearls." "Have you the image of it clear in your mind?" "Yes, perfectly clear; it has just come to me like a flash." H. P. B. looked fixedly at Mrs. H. for a while, seemed to be communing with herself, looked up and said, "It will not be brought into this house but into the garden—I am told by a Brother." After a pause, she asked Mr. Hume if he had in his garden a flower-bed shaped like a star. Yes, Mr. Hume said, there were several. H. P. B. stood up and pointed in a certain direction. "I mean there," she said. Yes, there was one at that side. "Then, come with me yourself and find it, as I have seen it drop like a point of light, in such a bed." Thereupon the company rose, put on their wraps, and gathered in the drawing-room for the expedition—all save Mrs. Hume, who did not dare expose herself to the cold night breeze. Before we started I put it to the company to recall all the incidents, and say whether they lent themselves to any theory of complicity, or leading up with conversation, or mental suggestion exercised by H. P. B. "For," said I, "if a shadow of doubt hangs over the occurrence, it will be useless for us to go any further." Those present looked questioningly at each other and with one accord agreed that everything had been fair and stamped with good faith. This is the missing link of all previous versions of the story, and I submit that, in view of my challenge and the putting of them on their guard, it is nonsense to cook up any theory of trickery when the facts are so very plain and so much candor was used throughout.

We went searching the garden with lanterns, for it was a dark night and nothing could be seen. We went by twos and threes here and there, H. P. B. with Mr. Hume, Mrs. Sinnett with Captain M., etc. The large bed shaped like a star was found and Mrs. Sinnett and Captain M. were the lucky finders of a small white paper package with something hard within. They found it by pulling up a tangled network of nasturtium and other vines that made a perfect mat of verdure. H. P. B. and Mr. Hume were at some distance and I also, until the finders called out to come and see what they had got. Mrs. Sinnett handed it to Mr. Hume, who opened it in the house, and inside was the missing brooch that had been asked for. At the suggestion of somebody—not of H. P. B. or myself—a protocol was drawn up by Mr. Hume and Mr. Sinnett, read to the company and signed by all. Now this is the plain, unvarnished story without concealment or exaggeration. Let any fair-minded reader say whether it was or was not a true phenomenon. It has been suggested that among some jewelry recovered from an adventurer who had had an intimacy with Mr. Hume's family and improperly got possession of it, this brooch was included. Granting that to be so—if it was—this no more lessens the mystery of the call for the brooch by Mrs. Hume and its discovery in the garden-bed, than the probable previous ownership by H. P. B. of the solid gold ring she caused to leap out of the rose I was holding in my hand,\* weakens the wonderful force of that phenomenon in itself. When

\* Described in the first volume of these Memoirs.





ENTRANCE AVENUE OF BANYAN TREES, ADYAR.



Mme. Blavatsky, in response to the call for a phenomenon of the *apport* class, looked around the table, she singled out nobody, but Mrs. Hume was the first to speak, and almost simultaneously one or two others followed. She being the hostess, the others yielded their own chances to her out of courtesy, and it was then that H. P. B. asked what she wished. If somebody else's wish had been given preference by the company H. P. B. would have had to deal with that person, and where, then, would the theory of her having mentally suggested the brooch to Mrs. Hume have come in? This practical difficulty is, of course, gaily disposed of by the further suggestion that H. P. B. hypnotized everybody present as to every detail, so as to make Mrs. Hume ask for the article she could most easily procure. Passing on from this, we are next confronted with the important facts (a) that H. P. B. had never set foot in Mr. Hume's garden; (b) had never been carried up the road to the door save at night; (c) that the garden was not lighted; (d) that the star-shaped bed was not within view from the drive, hence could not have been noticed by her; (e) that from the moment when Mrs. Hume asked for the brooch nobody left the table until all rose together; and that it was Mrs. Sinnett and Captain M. who found the packet, and not H. P. B. who led Mr. Hume to it, as she might if she knew the exact place of its hiding. Then—again supposing that H. P. B. had the brooch in keeping—we must account for its transport to the flower-bed between the time when asked for and that when found—a few minutes only. Those who do not positively hate

our dear departed Teacher, will, I am sure, in view of the foregoing facts, give her the benefit of the doubt and write this incident in the list of genuine proofs of her psychospiritual faculty. I now pass on.

The brutal ultimatum presented by Major H., which killed the joy of our picnic-party, kept H. P. B. in a state of tumultuous agitation for several days, but the occurrences at Mr. Hume's dinner resulted in the joining of our Society by several influential European gentlemen, and in the manifestation of much friendly sympathy towards my poor colleague.

On the 7th October I lectured at the rooms of the United Service Institution on "Spiritualism and Theosophy." \* I was introduced by Captain Anderson, Hon. Secretary of the Institution, and the vote of thanks was moved in a very kind speech by the veteran Lieutenant-General Olpherts, C.B., V.C., R.A. The audience was the largest ever gathered together at Simla, I was told. The same evening I attended the Viceroy, Lord Ripon's, ball at Government House and received many congratulations from friends on the lecture and our improved relations with the Indian Government.

Day after day we continued receiving visitors, dining out and being lionized generally. H. P. B. kept on with her phenomena, some of them very trifling and undignified, I thought, but still such as to make half Simla believe that she was "helped by the Devil." That is how my Diary entry reads, and it is noted that the author of the theory was a certain Major S., who told H. P. B. so to her face in all

\* For text see *Theosophy, Religion and Occult Science*, p. 216.

seriousness. 16th October, Mrs. Gordon had the Sinnetts, Major S., and ourselves on a picnic, and H. P. B. distinguished herself by producing from a handkerchief steeped in a saucer of water a duplicate with Mrs. Sinnett's Christian name embroidered across one corner. That evening Mr. Hume handed her for transmission his first letter to K. H., the beginning of the highly interesting correspondence about which so much has been said from time to time. Some more dinner-parties and picnics filled in the closing days of our pleasant Simla visit, and one or two excellent phenomena kept up the interest in H. P. B. at fever heat. One was very pretty. We were dining at home that day and Mrs. Sinnett, H. P. B., and I were waiting for Mr. S. in the drawing-room. The ladies sat together on a sofa, Mrs. S. holding H. P. B.'s hand and admiring for the twentieth time a lovely yellow diamond ring, that had been given the latter by Mrs. Wijeratne of Galle on the occasion of our visit that same year. It was a rare and costly gem, full of sparkle and light. Mrs. Sinnett was very anxious that H. P. B. should double it for her some time, but she had not promised. Just now, however, she did it. Rubbing two fingers of the other hand to and fro across the stone, she after a moment paused, and lifting her hand exposed the gem. Alongside it, lying between that finger and the next, was another yellow diamond, not so brilliant as hers, yet a very fine stone. It is, I believe, still in the possession of our kind and dear friend. At dinner that day H. P. B. ate nothing, but while the meal progressed kept warming the palms of her hands on the hot-water plate before her.

Presently she rubbed them together and one or two small gems dropped on the plate. Readers of M. A. Oxon's biography will recollect that this *apport* of gems was a very frequent phenomenon with him; sometimes they fell on him and about the room in showers, sometimes large single stones would fall. The Orientals say these are brought by elementals belonging to the mineral kingdom, such as Westerns call gnomes—the spirits of the mines—and in the Tamil language they are named *Kalladimandan*.

Mr. Sinnett has himself described in print the occurrence of 20th October, which he has called the "pillow incident." It would seem to have been a thoroughly genuine affair. We were picnicking on Prospect Hill and Sinnett was expecting a reply to a letter he had addressed to one of the Masters, but not to receive it there, as ours was purely a pleasure party. However, somebody—I forget whom and am writing from the meagre notes in my Diary and without reference to Mr. Sinnett's narrative—asked for another phenomenon (they always do: this salt water never quenches thirst), and it was settled that something should be brought by magic. "Where will you have it besides in a tree; we must not make our phenomena stale by repetition?" asked H. P. B. A consultation between our friends ended in the agreement that it should be made to come inside the back-pillow against which Mrs. Sinnett was leaning in her *jampan*. "All right," said H. P. B.; "open it and see if there is anything within." Mr. S. with his pocket-knife went to ripping open the pillow. The outside cover was embroidered on the face, backed with leather or some strong fabric, sewn

with very stout thread, and the seam covered with a silken cord closely sewn to it. It was an old pillow and the sewing had become so hard with time as to make it a difficult job to rip it apart. This was done at last, however, and inside was a second pillow cover holding the feathers and also strongly sewn down the seams. When this was ripped Mr. Sinnett thrust in his hand, felt among the feathers, and soon brought forth a letter and a brooch. The letter was from "K. H.," and referred to a conversation between Mr. S. and H. P. B.; the brooch was Mrs. S.'s, and just before leaving the house she had seen it lying on her dressing table. Let sensible people draw the natural inferences from the above facts.

That nothing may be wanting to complete the record of our early relations with the Government of India, and show to what nonsensical extremes it went to protect itself from the possible political designs (1) of our Society, I have on second thoughts decided to print the first answer of the Simla authorities to my remonstrances, as made in my letter of 27th September, the text of which was given in the last chapter of my narrative. It was cordial enough, but not sufficiently broad to cover our case. Here it is:—

No. 1025 E. G.

From H. M. DURAND, Esquire,

*Under Secretary to the Government of India,*

To Colonel H. S. OLCOTT,

*President of the Theosophical Society.*

*Foreign Department,  
General.*

SIMLA, the 2nd October 1880.

SIR,—Mr. A. C. Lyall having left Simla, I am directed to answer your letter to his address dated the 27th September.

2. You represent that the Theosophical Society has no interest in or disposition to meddle with politics, in India or elsewhere; that you have nevertheless been subjected to a disagreeable surveillance during your travels in India, on behalf of the Society; and that the beneficent plans of the Society have in consequence been seriously impeded. You request that the Government of India will undo the wrong unintentionally done to you in this matter by the watch placed upon your movements.

3. I am to thank you for the information which you have been good enough to supply, regarding the aims and operations of the Theosophical Society, and I am to assure you that the Government of India has no desire to subject you to any inconvenience during your stay in the country. So long as the members of the Society confine themselves to the prosecution of philosophical and scientific studies wholly unconnected with politics, which you have explained to be their sole object, they need apprehend no annoyance on the part of the Police authorities.

4. I am to add that the Government of India will be much obliged if you will have the kindness to forward to the Foreign Office — copies of the papers mentioned in the third paragraph of your letter.

I have the honour to be, sir,

Your most obedient servant,

(Sd.) H. M. DURAND,

*Under Secretary to the Government of India.*

On the 20th October I received from the Government of India the final letter I expected, setting us right

with all Anglo-Indian officials, which is certainly important enough to be inserted in this historical retrospect. It reads as follows:—

No. 1060 E. G.

From H. M. DURAND, Esquire,

*Offg. Secretary to the Government of India,*

To Colonel H. S. OLCOTT,

*President, Theosophical Society.*

*Dated SIMLA, the 20th October 1880.*

*Foreign Department,  
General.*

SIR,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated 14th October, forwarding certain documents for the information of the Government of India, and requesting that all Government officials previously warned against you may be informed that your purposes in coming to India have now been explained.

2. I am to thank you for the copies of papers forwarded, which will be brought on record in the Foreign Office.

3. With regard to your request, I am directed to say that those local authorities to whom communications were addressed in connection with your presence in this country, will be informed that the measures formerly ordered have been withdrawn.

4. I am, however, to add that this step has been taken in consequence of the interest expressed in you by the President of the United States and the Secretary of State of his Government, and that it must not be taken to imply any expression of opinion on the part of the

Government of India in regard to the "Theosophical Society," of which you are President.

I have the honour to be, sir,

Your most obedient servant,

(Sd.) H. M. DURAND,

*Offg. Secretary to the Government of India.*

The reference in the concluding paragraph of Mr. Durand's letter is to the documents I sent him, among them an autograph letter from President Hayes commending me to all American Ministers and Consuls, and one of like purport from the Hon. W. M. Evarts, then Secretary of State, together with my Diplomatic passport.

Nothing more remaining for us to do at Simla, we left that delightful mountain station by *tonga* cart to take up a pre-arranged tour in the plains. In summing up the results of the visit, it may be said that we gained a few friends, relieved our Society of its political embarrassments, and made many enemies among the Anglo-Indian public who held to the theory of Satanic interferences in human affairs. In so prim and conservative a social world it was only to have been expected that H. P. B.'s Bohemian manners should have shocked the general sense of propriety, her immense intellectual and spiritual superiority have excited envy and resentment, and her uncanny psychical powers have made her to be regarded with a sort of terror. Still, looking at it from the broad point of view, the gain outweighed the loss and the visit was worth the making.





## CHAPTER XVII.

### GORGEOUS SCENES.

OUR progress homeward was so slow, filled as the time was with halts, visits, conversazioni by H. P. B. and lectures by myself, that we did not reach Bombay until the seventieth day after leaving Simla. The incidents of the tour were memorable, picturesque, sometimes important—among the latter an illness imperilling H. P. B.'s life. I shall treat them in their proper order.

Our first halt was at Amritsar, the city which is adorned with that architectural beauty, the Golden Temple of the warlike Sikhs. It is also the *entrepôt* and a chief manufacturing centre of the Kashmir shawls and Rampur *chuddars* so prized by women of good taste. As we were then in full favor of Swami Dyánand Saraswati, our relations with his followers were most friendly, and the local Branches of his Arya Samaj gave us cordial receptions and generous hospitality everywhere. Thirty Samajists met us at the railway station of Amritsar and took us to an empty bungalow, gave a cook to wait on us, and a few necessary articles

of furniture, including large striped *durries*, or Indian cotton carpets, laid on a portion of the beaten earthen floor, for our visitors to sit upon cross-legged when calling. The walls were of brick laid up in mud after the almost universal fashion of India, and adorned with a number of cheap German lithographic pictures of ladies of palpably easy virtue, more or less bedizened with jewelry and flowers, and much uncovered as to dress. I almost exploded when—our Reception Committee having departed and H. P. B. and I being left alone in the big room—she turned her eyes from one to the other of the prints, and suddenly broke out into a most uncomplimentary and forcible remark as to the respectability of the damsels who figured in them as allegories. For hours we derived amusement and instruction from a study of a huge white-ant nest of clay that protruded from the wall at one side. Drawing our chairs up we watched the little builders coming and going by thousands and constructing their chamber walls under the evident supervision of their engineers. We punched small holes into the nest and watched them repairing the breaches; H. P. B. laid a bit of a match or an unsmoked end of a cigarette in the holes and timed the ants to see how soon they would have them covered with mud. After wearisome waiting our boy Babula and the other cook got food prepared for us, and then we drove out to see the Golden Temple.

The temple is a most poetical object to look upon. It comprises a central fluted dome, rising from four arches which cap the walls of a central tower, and is flanked at

the four corners of the main, square building, by as many mauresque kiosks, like those on the Taj Mahal. The walls of the temple are capped with tiny domes standing close together; ornamental bay windows, with highly artistic open-work carved stone lattices and screens, project from the four sides; and the first storey walls are broken into large and small panels full of carving. The structure stands on a marble-paved, bronze-railed platform, on a small island in the centre of a tank of crystal-pure water, like a magician's illusive palace rising from the sea. Access to it is by a causeway paved with squares of Italian marble, and the whole tank is bordered by a broad pavement of the same rich material. The upper portion of the temple is overlaid with gold, and its radiant appearance when the Indian sun beats upon it out of the azure sky may be imagined better than described. As it stands to-day it dates back hardly more than a century, for the original fane, begun by Ram Das in 1580 and finished by his son, was blown up with gunpowder by Ahmad Shah in 1761, the sacred tank—*Amrita Saras*, the fount of Immortality—was filled with mud, and the site was desecrated by the slaughter of cows upon the spot: a touching proof of the superiority of one religion over another for which bigoted soldiers and theological politicians have great partiality. But as I am to play neither the guide nor the moralizing archæologist, I must take H. P. B. back to our mud-walled bungalow, in our dust-and-mud-besmeared, jolting *tica gharry* (hackney carriage), drawn by two skeleton horses, to receive visitors. Before leaving we flung our offering of copper coins on the

ground in the central room of the temple, and lingered another minute to hear the *akalis* intoning verses from the Granth, or Sikh holy book, which is written on tanned bullock hides. We were glad to retire early after a fatiguing day.

The next day a delegation of Samajists came from Lahore, headed by Rattan Chand Bary and Siris Chandra Basu, two most intelligent and honorable gentlemen, whose friendship I have been fortunate enough to keep up to the present moment. A very interesting conversation and discussion was held with some thirty or forty of the Swamiji's followers, and in the evening, when we were alone with the two above-named friends, H. P. B. rang the "fairy-bells" more clearly and beautifully than I had heard her do them before in India. She made a proposal to them which led to an unfortunate misunderstanding between them and herself, which it is best that I should narrate to prevent the fact being cited against her by an enemy in the future. Up to that time Mr. Sinnett had had no opportunity of discussing Indian mystical philosophy with any educated Indian, much to his and our regret. His correspondence with Mahatma K. H. was going on, but he wanted to come face to face with him or one of his pupils. Finding Mr. Rattan Chand well-qualified to be such a spokesman, H. P. B.—as she told me and him—with the Master's concurrence, tried to persuade him to go to Mr. Sinnett as the bearer of a note from K. H. and play the part of his messenger. He was to abstain from giving Mr. S. any facts about himself, his name, condition, and place of

residence, but to answer fully all his questions on religious and philosophical subjects : the assurance being given him by H. P. B. that every needed idea and argument should be put into his head at the moment when needed. Mr. R. C. and his friend S. C. B., not aware of the extent to which this thought-transference could be made, and seeing neither Mahatma nor letter about H. P. B., showed the strongest repugnance to undertaking the affair. Finally, however, they consented and left for Lahore to get the required short leave and return next day. When they were gone H. P. B. expressed to me her satisfaction, saying that the mission would be a real one, would have the happiest effect on Mr. Sinnett, and be very fortunate for the Karma of the two young men. The next day, instead of their returning, a telegram came to say that they positively refused to carry out the compact ; and in a letter they plainly said that they would not be parties to such an act of deception, as it seemed to them. H. P. B.'s annoyance and indignation were strongly expressed. She did not hesitate to call them a couple of precious fools for throwing away such a chance as few persons had had to work with the Masters in accomplishing great results ; and she told me that if they had come, the letter would have been dropped out of space right before their eyes and all would have gone well with them. This is just one of those cases where a thing, entirely possible for an occultist, whose inner senses are awakened and whose psycho-dynamic powers are fully active, seems the wildest impossibility to the ordinary man, who cannot conceive of the object being attained save by the

use of trickery and fraudulent conspiracy. Our undeveloped young friends being left to make their own Karma, chose what they deemed the only honorable path, and so, as was said by H. P. B., wrought injury to themselves. In how many scores of cases has not poor H. P. B. been similarly misunderstood, and punished for the spiritual ignorance of others, to help whom was her main desire?

That same day we had another disagreeable experience. Our candid exposition of our eclectic views as regards different religions, at the conference of the day before, seemed to have so chilled the ardor of our Samajist hosts, that they left us all to ourselves in our cheerless quarters; and when we wanted our meals Babula told us that no food, fuel, ghee, or other cooking necessaries had been sent. So there was nothing for us but to send to the bazaar and buy our own supplies. At sundown, as nobody had turned up, H. P. B. and I took a hackney carriage and drove in search of the Samaj officers. We found one at last and came to an understanding with him, and through him with the others; whereupon they apologized profusely, and the next morning we had plenty to eat and fuel to cook it with.

In the afternoon we revisited the temple to enjoy its beauties once more. We saw some hundreds of fakirs and gossains, more or less ill-favored; akalis praying; crowds of pilgrims prostrating themselves; lighted lamps sparkling inside the temple; tall Punjabis moving majestically over the smooth marble pavements, and everywhere animation and life. Crowds followed us about showing kind civility, garlands and sugar candies were given us at the temple;

and at a shrine where the swords, sharp steel discs, coats of mail, and other warlike weapons of the Sikh warrior-priests are exposed to view, in charge of akalis, I was greeted, to my surprise and joy, with a loving smile by one of the Masters, who for the moment was figuring among the guardians, and who gave each of us a fresh rose, with a blessing in his eyes. The touch of his fingers as he handed me the flower caused a thrill to run throughout my body, as may easily be imagined.

On the 27th of the month (October) I lectured to a large audience on the "Arya Samaj and Theosophical Society," and again on the 29th on "The Past, Present, and Future of India," the text of which is to be found in my book *Theosophy, Religion, and Occult Science*. People who imagine the Hindus to be devoid of patriotic feeling, should have seen the effect of this lecture on my huge audience. As I depicted the greatness of ancient and the fallen state of modern India, murmurs of pleasure or sighs of pain broke from them; at one moment they would be cheering and vehemently applauding, the next keeping silent, while the tears were streaming from their eyes. I was surprised and delighted, and my own feelings were so wrought upon by the sight of their silent grief that I almost broke down myself. It was one of those occasions, so frequent in our relations with the Indians, when the bonds of brotherly affection were woven between our hearts, and when we felt we were blessed in having been able to come here to live and serve among our spiritual kinsmen. I recall just such an experience when I was escorting Mrs. Besant on her

first Indian tour. It was at some South Indian station that she was lecturing—on “The Place of India among the Nations,” if my memory serves. Giving way to the divine impulse, and employing almost my identical phrases, she swept her audience with her, and made them respond as though they were one great harp from whose strings her deft fingers could awaken whatsoever harmonies she chose. Driving home in the carriage, neither of us could speak a word, but only sat in silent rapture, like one who has just left a room where a Master of Music has been evoking the symphonies of Devaloka. He who has not himself felt the thrill of inspiration pulsate through his being, knows not what the word oratory means.

I must mention the visit of a pandit from Jummoo, Kashmir, for what he said about our learning Sanskrit. He had a clear, firm voice, a fluency of language, and an impressive appearance. We had a long and interesting discussion with him and found him rather a bigot than an eclectic. As he was leaving he turned to me and said I ought by all means to learn Sanskrit, as it was the only language that would be useful to me in my next birth. Perhaps he thought we might be reincarnated in some hitherto undiscovered Panditloka!

Our stay at Amritsar was prolonged a few days that we might have the unique pleasure of seeing the Golden Temple and tank illuminated for the celebration of Divali, their New Year's Day. The spectacle was well worth waiting for. A carriage was sent for us at dusk and we were driven to the Clock Tower, a modern construction



which faces the tank, from which we had a perfect view. The beautiful temple was crowned with golden and crimson lamps, alternately placed, in a vivid glory. From the finial of its central dome to the corner kiosks ran strings of colored lanterns. The base of the building was one fret-work of lighted *chirags*, or small clay yoni-shaped lamps, attached to a framework of bamboos arranged in the artistic geometrical patterns that one sees throughout Upper India in house-balconies, window-screens, doors, etc.: the distant effect being that of the temple being enwrapped in shining gold lace. The outlines of the causeway, the steps around the whole tank, and the façades of the houses surrounding it were lit up with innumerable similar lamps. A grand display of the fireworks for which the Indians have always been famous turned the scene into a sort of fairy-land. There were huge vases of colored fires, great flower-pots of spouting flame, Catherine wheels, Roman candles, rockets, and bombs set off from the tops of the buildings at the four corners of the enclosure; each blaze of color tinging the sky, reflected back from the smooth, unruffled surface of the lake, and lighting up the large model of an ancient Hindu ship that was moored near the causeway. From time to time a flight of fire balloons would gently rise into the cloudless blue sky, trailing out their line of little lights like floating stars. In great set pieces would be displayed the religious emblems, the phallus, the yoni, the double triangle—seal of Vishnu—and others. Each was greeted with a great shout of voices mingled with the clangor of bells and the music of a

military band; while at the height of the excitement a procession of thousands of Sikhs moved around the tank, headed by a tall akali carrying the banner of the Great Gurus, and all joining in chaunts of hymns in praise of the Founder, Guru Nanak.

The next day we took train for Lahore, where a warm welcome awaited us. A large delegation of Arya Samajists met us at the railway station and took us to our quarters—a detached bungalow connected with a large Anglo-Indian boarding-house near the Public Garden. They left us to ourselves while they went to their homes for dinner, and, returning at 9 o'clock, sat on the floor along with us and talked metaphysics until a late hour, after which we were both glad to get to our rest. The *crux* was the nature of *Īswara* and the personality of God, about which H. P. B. and I entertained beliefs very antagonistic to theirs.

The Anglo-Indian papers were just then full of malevolent writings against us, which made us appreciate all the more the friendliness of the Indians. I lectured to the usual overflowing audience on Sunday, the 7th November, and among the Europeans present was Dr. Leitner, the famed Orientalist, then President of the Punjab University College. At the close, the alleged Yoga Sabhāpathy Swami read a rambling complimentary address in which his praises of us were mingled with much self-glorification. He came to our place the next day and favored us with his company from 9.30 A.M. until 4 P.M., by which time he had pretty thoroughly exhausted our patience. Whatever

good opinion we may have formed of him before was spoilt by a yarn he told us of his exploits as a Yogi. He had, he said, been taken up at Lake Mânsarovara, Tibet, high into the air and been transported two hundred miles along the high level to Mount Kailâs, where he saw Mahadeva! Ingenuous foreigners as H. P. B. and I may have been, we could not digest such a ridiculous falsehood as that. I told him so very plainly. If, I said, he had told us that he had gone anywhere he liked in astral body or clairvoyant vision, we might have believed it possible, but in physical body, from Lake Mânsarovara, in company with two Rishis mentioned in the Mahabharata, and to the non-physical Mount Kailâs—thanks, no : he should tell it to somebody else.

Seven of the Arya Samajists, including our two sceptical visitors of Amritsar, joined the T. S. and helped to form a local Branch. Our time at the station was largely taken up with visitors and discussions of religious topics, but we were not without other distractions. For instance, the Viceroy, Lord Ripon, arrived on the 10th, and we saw the showy pageant of his reception. He mounted a huge elephant which was covered with a housing of glittering cloth-of-gold and wore enormous gold or gilt ornaments on its head. The howdah was gilded, and over His Excellency's head a golden umbrella was held by a picturesquely clad Asiatic servant. The Punjab Maharajas and Rajas followed on elephants according to their right of precedence, and all were escorted—it almost seemed to H. P. B., guarded—by European civilians, also on elephants. There

were European and Bengal cavalry, native soldiers in red, Indian spearmen and halberdiers, outriders, bands of musicians, war drums and cymbals clashing ; in short, a Barnum circus-like affair which only lacked the caravans of wild beasts, the great band chariot, and a cameleopard or two to make the illusion complete ! I am quite sure that every Englishman in the parade felt foolish, and every once independent native chief degraded by this public exhibition of conqueror and conquered, the real meaning of which everybody knew that everybody else knew as well as himself. H. P. B. and I saw the show from one of the turrets of the battlemented, fortress-like railway station, which is, in fact, constructed so as to serve as a fort in case of need. Her comments on the show and the bedizened participants kept me in continual laughter, and later on, in one of her incomparable letters to the *Russky Vjestnik*, she set all Russia laughing over the incident of the absence of the Maharajah of Kashmir from the parade ; which was at first suspected to cover some political plot, but which turned out to be only a case of diarrhoea !

The Shalimar Gardens, the far-famous plaisance built by Ali Mardân Khan in the seventeenth century, were illuminated in honor of the Viceroy's visit. Of all the spectacles I have seen in India this was one of the most pleasing. The garden was laid out in seven divisions representing the seven degrees of the Paradise of Islam, but only three now remain. The centre is occupied by a pond-like reservoir bordered by an elaborately indented coping and studded with pipes for fountains. A cascade falls into it over a

slope of marble corrugated in an ornamental carved diaper. There are kiosks, towers, and other constructions, and long narrow basins with copings almost as low as the grassplots which frame them in, stretch far away in different directions. Fancy this pleasure ground on a starlit Indian night, glittering with *chirags* which mark out the tanks and border every walk; with the trees aglow with colored lanterns, the central water-basin suffused with the gorgeous hues of chemical fires, and every inch of space in the paths and avenues crowded with the most picturesque, showily clad and virile multitude of human beings the world could produce; while over all from the serene sky the radiant stars look down. I have seen many countries and peoples, but never any human concourse that compared with that crowd of Sikhs, Punjabis, Kashmiris, and Afghans, in their cloths of gold and silver, their fair olive complexions, and their turbans of every delicate shade of color that the dyer's art has produced.





## CHAPTER XVIII.

### BENARES THE HOLY.

**WE** had our first opportunity to know at first hand the tenets of the Brahmo Samaj, on the next day after the Shalimar Garden fête, Babu Protap Chandra Mozumdar giving a lecture which we attended together. Our first impressions were probably identical with those of the thousands and tens of thousands who have heard his eloquent and scholarly addresses. Like all visitors to India, we were amazed at the command of English attained by an educated Hindu and sat under a sort of charm until he had finished. But then we began to cast up the account, and found that there was more music than solid nourishment in the discourse, for us : it was rhetorical rather than erudite, and we came away with a dissatisfied feeling, as one would after a dinner of *Meringues-à-la-crème*. He certainly defined very clearly the nature of his Society and its principles, the theme being "The Brahmo Samaj and its relations with Hinduism and Christianity." He spoke extemporaneously, or at any rate without MS., and

not only never hesitated for a word but never failed to use the very best synonym to express his meaning. Herein he resembled Mrs. Besant. The Brahmo Samaj, he told us, takes all that is good in the Vedas, Upanishads, Purānas, Bhārata, and Gītā, as well as in Christianity and other religions, and rejects only the dross. For a long time the "Brahmo Dharma Book" contained only extracts from the Upanishads, and I thought it a pity they had not stuck to it. They agree with the Christians in their view of man's helplessness and dependence upon a personal God, and, standing outside the door of one of their conventicles and listening to their service, I could not fail to be struck with the flavor of Nonconformism that it had. They practise some sort of Yoga and are decidedly following the Bhakti Marga along which the Salvationists go marching with their sounding brasses and tinkling cymbals. A confirmed Theist, Protap Babu spoke of Jesus as something more glorious than any other character of history, yet still a man.

A vivid contrast to this experience was afforded by the Viceregal Durbar that Lord Ripon held on the 15th November under canvas. A vast room was constructed by suspending horizontally on poles, great sheets of blue-striped canvas, closing it in with canvas screens, laying the ground with crimson carpets, and lighting it with gaudy chandeliers. The Viceroy sat upon a silver gilt throne, dressed in full court costume with a profusion of gold lace and embroidery, white knee-breeches, white silk stockings, and the blue ribbon of the Bath crossing his breast amid a blaze of orders, like a blue streamlet between jewelled banks.

Behind him swarth Punjabi servants in Eastern dress, waving Indian fans covered with crimson and embroideries of the Royal arms; two others holding fly brushes (*chdmars*) of the white tails of the Tibetan yak, and two more with cornucopias—all emblems of sovereignty: altogether a highly decorative get-up to American eyes.

The assemblage were seated in parallel rows of chairs facing each other, the Europeans on His Excellency's right, the Indians on his left, leaving a broad path open from the door to the throne. The Indian Rajas, Maharajas, and other Princes were assigned places in order of rank, the highest nearest the Viceroy. As each one drove up to the door he received an artillery salute; the troops presented arms, the band played; the Master of Ceremonies, Mr. (now Sir Alfred) Lyall, in diplomatic uniform, received and escorted him to the foot of the throne; the Prince held out a nuzzur (an offering of a certain number of gold coins), which the Viceroy "touched and remitted" (that is, did not take it); both bowed, and then the Prince was conducted to his seat and the next man's turn came. Fancy how monotonous it must have been to sit there for hours while this humbuggery went tediously on. I wondered the Viceroy could help yawning in their faces, towards the end. But it was a brave show and something worth seeing once. The Princes being all received, the Viceroy had to go through the ceremony of giving handsome presents of jewelry, silver-mounted arms, saddles, etc., etc., which the Princes "touched," and left the things to be carried out by the servants. No greater contrast



could have been possible than that between the magnificent dresses and jewelled turbans of the Princes, and the commonplace, sombre, and inelegant costumes of the non-military European onlookers.

Two days later I left H. P. B. at Lahore and went to Multan to fill an engagement to lecture. Five years previously, on that very evening, I gave my Inaugural Address before the newly-born T. S. at New York.

The main street of Multan is broad, paved with bricks, and lined with shops that compare well with those of other Indian cities. There are manufactures of enamelled silver work, silk goods, cotton and woollen carpets, etc. There was a large local Arya Samaj and also a Branch of our own Society, headed by one of the best men in India, Dr. Jaswant Roy Bhojapatra. I lectured on two successive evenings, and during the day was taken about the town to see the sights, among them one which matches the grave of Adam for pathetic suggestiveness! It is the temple of the Narasimha Avatar of Vishnu, his appearance, to wit, under the form of a man-lion for the purpose of protecting virtue and punishing wicked people. The story (and what "a story," to be sure) is that Vishnu split open one of the iron pillars of the bad king's durbar hall, emerged from it, and tore the tyrant into pieces. Well, they actually show the *identical pillar* in this Multan temple. What could one have better than that: unless it be the grave of Adam, over which Mark Twain—to his praise be it said—wept honest tears for the loss of that respectable ancestor, and set an example to the whole regenerate race of mankind!

When I got back to Lahore I found poor H. P. B. tossing in a Punjab fever, and the faithful boy Babula nursing her. She was restless, burning up with heat, and complaining of a feeling of suffocation. I sat up with her all night, but she would not let me send for a doctor, saying that it would be all right in the morning. It was all wrong, however, and the best physician in the place being called, he pronounced it a severe case and prescribed quinine and digitalis. I had to lecture that evening and did so; after which I turned nurse again, and the medicines gave H. P. B. a sound night's rest. The next day the crisis passed and the doctor pronounced her out of danger. Another good night followed for her, and the following day she gave unmistakable proofs of her convalescence by buying an hundred rupees' worth of shawls, embroideries, and other things from one of those Indian pedlars called *box-wallahs*, who besiege every sojourner in a dāk bungalow. She was interested in a simple mesmeric experiment I made that evening on some of my Hindu visitors who wished to know which was most sensitive to mesmeric influence. I made them stand with their faces to a wall, their toes touching it, and their eyes shut, while I stood silently behind each in turn, and, holding the palms of my hands towards his back but without touching him, concentrated my will-power and caused him to fall over backward into my outstretched arms. She watched their faces to see fair play and I did the "drawing." I should like to know how hypnotists who deny the existence of a mesmeric

aura would explain this simple yet striking experiment. Not one of the subjects had the least acquaintance with mesmeric science, nor did I utter a word to suggest my purpose.

Whatever the cause—whether her purchases or not—H. P. B. had a relapse of fever and passed a bad night, tossing about, moaning, and getting flighty now and then. She was better again in the morning, and consoled herself with more purchases! In the afternoon we held a meeting and organized a local Branch under the name of the Punjab Theosophical Society. I remember an amusing incident connected with it. A gentleman and his son, both orthodox Hindus, and both much interested in our views, though maintaining secrecy, called separately to talk with me. Each wanted to join the Society without the others knowing it; so I appointed that the son should meet the other applicants in H. P. B.'s room, and the father come to me in mine, a quarter of an hour earlier than the fixed time. I had H. P. B. keep the others in conversation while I received and duly admitted to membership the elder man. Then, excusing myself to him for a half-hour and leaving him a book to read, I went to H. P. B.'s room and initiated the other candidates, and excused myself to them for five minutes. Then I returned to the father, told him that we were forming a Branch, and got him to come along with me and participate in the election of officers. Imagine his surprise to see his son squatting on the floor with the others, a full-fledged F. T. S.! There was but a moment's

embarrassment, followed by a peal of hearty laughter when I explained the facts, and H. P. B. was the most amused of all over the *dénouement*. We took train that evening for Amballa, and thence moved on to Cawnpore, where we had long metaphysical discussions, and I gave two lectures, after which we went back to Allahabad and our dear friends the Sinnetts.

Leaving my colleague with them, I went over to Benares as the guest of the late venerable Maharajah, whose title is so often mentioned in the Hindu and Buddhist works, and is consequently of great antiquity. He sent a carriage for me to the station and some of his suite to welcome me in his name. I was quartered in a garden-house near his palace and by a large tank, in whose placid waters a splendid temple of his erection reflected itself.

I had my first interview with His Highness the next morning, Babu Pramada Dásá Mitra, the able and respected Sanskritist, and the *not* respected Raja Sivaprasad, coming to conduct me there. This being the young Prince's birthday, there was a grand nautch at the Palace. The white-haired, white-moustached Maharajah, as handsome a patriarch as one would care to meet, received me very kindly, making me sit with himself and his son under a baldaquin of embroidered Cashmere shawls supported by four fluted silver rods, the feet of which rested on crimson and silver footstools. He was dressed in a green Cashmere gown, with silk trousers and undercoat, and a cap of brocade. His son wore a figured green

brocade interwoven with gold, together with a cap adorned with a diamond aigrette and feathers.

The Indian nautch is the most doleful of amusements, one to set a Western man yawning. Here were three pretty, young, and richly costumed girls and one old one, moving about to the sound of Indian musical instruments in an interminable series of posturings, floor-stampings with their little feet, and turnings about; with wavings of hands and snake-like motions of fingers, and the singing of inflammatory songs in Hindi, and lewd gesture eye-winkings, until one felt the creeps all over and longed to get away to the garden for a quiet smoke. But the old Maharajah seemed to like it, and beamed benevolently on us all through his gold spectacles, so I sat and bore it as best I could. In front of him stood a monster silver chillum, or water-pipe, with a very long flexible tube enwrapped in white silk, and terminating in a jewelled mouth-piece, at which he kept assiduously pulling. When, at last, I was permitted to take my leave, he put about my neck a braided garland of gold-worked red ribbon, poured Indian perfumes on my hands, and expressed his great pleasure at seeing me. He arranged that I should move into town to his large palace known as the Mint House, and lecture on the following Tuesday.

The Mint House is so called from its having formerly been the place where his ancestors coined their money. It is a great rambling structure, almost reminding one of the Palace of Versailles *in patto*, and an ideal fitting-ground for ghosts. I felt so, indeed, that night, when I

was left quite alone in a great chamber larger than many a lecture-hall, and was quite prepared to be aroused from sleep by a detachment of mischievous phantoms. But none came and I was left in peace. The erudite Dr. G. Thibaut, Principal of Benares College, came and dined with me, and spent the evening in profitable conversation. I returned his visit the next day, and also called on Raja Sivaprasad and Babu Pramada Dásá Mittra. The next day we went to pay our respects to Majji, the female ascetic, or Yogini, and found her very amiable, and communicative about religious questions. Later in the day we visited, in his garden retreat, the naked and lovable old Yodi Bhaskaranda Swami, with whom I was delighted. At 6 P.M. I lectured on "India" in the Town Hall to a crowded audience of—as they told me—"all the aristocracy and learning of Benares." The old Maharajah and his son were present, and Raja Sivaprasad served me as translator with great ability; his knowledge of English having been perfect whatever his demerits may have been. He is dead now, and nothing said, whether good or bad, can affect him, but he was throughout life a supple courtier, who curried favor with every European official, played the sycophant, and got titles, estates, and honors of sorts, earned the contempt of his compatriots and, at the same time, that of the whites to whom he "bent the pregnant hinges of the knee that"—well, that he might get what he coveted. I shall never forget how Dr. Thibaut looked at me when the late Raja left us after telling us how, during Lawrence's Punjáb campaign, he had got into Runjit

Singh's camp and counted his guns for Lord Lawrence. Elevating his eyebrows, the quiet German orientalist said "Der Radja Sahib has ferry peculiar notions of patriotism!" in which sentiment I agreed. We three were driving back from a morning sail on the Ganges along the river front to see that unique spectacle, the morning ablutions of tens of thousands of pious Hindus. They crowded the steps of the crumbling ghâts and half-ruined palaces that line the river's edge; they sat praying on the wooden platforms, sheltered by awnings or palm-leaf roofs; they stood knee-deep in the water; they beat their washed cloths on the stone steps: ascetics smeared their bodies with sacred ashes; the women polished with mud their bright brass jars until they looked like new gold, filled them with Ganges water, and walked away with them on their left hips; they thronged the burning-ghât, where corpses were being consumed on the pyres and others waited their turn; and the morning sun shone bright on sparkling brasses, red cloths, white turbans, and the seething multitudes that pressed up and down the broad staircases that rose to the level of the crowded city streets, while peacock-prowed quaint craft rode at their moorings or floated down the stream. Such a scene is visible nowhere else as this at Holy Benares in the early hours of the day.

What makes it more impressive is the fact that this same scene has been repeated daily from earliest ages; such as it is now it was when the Krishna Avatara moved among men. But how long it will survive no man can foretell. The hand of Time is already laid upon the structures that

line the shore. Some of the finest, most majestic palaces and bathing-ghâts are falling into ruin. Great masses of masonry, undermined by river floods, have fallen in upon each other or their foundation courses have sunk below the surface of the water ; the stucco has dropped from palace-walls, leaving the bricks exposed ; a grand mosque of Islam, whose dome and minarets dominate the scene, was built of the stones of ancient temples which the conquerors had demolished ; the burning-ghât is a disgraceful desolation, where the pyres are built on slopes of debris ; and the very castemen who are seen at their morning devotions along the city front, seem for the most part to be doing them in a perfunctory way as if to be seen of men, not moved by deep religious impulse. "Ichabod" seems written upon this holiest of old Aryan shrines by the land of that Western Progress which despiritualizes nations while enriching them : which empties the heart while filling the pocket.

My good friends Babu Pramada Dásá Mittra and Ram Rao kindly took me to see a noted Yogi, whose name was, unfortunately, not entered in my Diary. He sat in the open air in a triangular courtyard of a house by the bank of the Ganges, with a throng of some fifty or sixty persons gathered about him. He was a large, handsome man, of venerable aspect, seemingly engaged in meditation and partially entranced. His personal cleanliness presented a pleasing contrast with the repulsive dirt and squalor of the majority of sanyasis. I was told that he was deeply versed in the system of Patanjali, and had for many years been



regarded as one of the foremost Yogis of India. Of course, being new to India, I took him at the public valuation, and coming forward saluted him respectfully in the ancient fashion. I had some conversation with his disciples and came away. My illusions were, however, soon dispelled, for I learnt that he was actually at that moment engaged in a law suit for 70,000 rupees, which he was pushing on with all possible vigor. A Yogi hungry after rupees was indeed an anomaly, and, needless to say, I did not repeat my call.

From there I went to a meeting of the Society of Benares Pandits held in my honor, at which I again urged their consideration of the project to appoint a suitable committee to undertake the coinage of Sanskrit equivalents to our Western, Greek, and Latin scientific and other terms. They promised, of course, and, equally of course, never did anything.

The following day I met Pandit BĀLĀ Shastri for the first time. Dr. Thibaut ranked him as the greatest Sanskrit scholar in all India. He was the Guru of several of the chief Indian Princes and universally respected. Since then he has died and the country thus suffered a loss that seems irreparable. I wish our Western literati could have seen him as I saw him that day. A pale man, of slight figure and medium height, calm and dignified in manner, the expression of his face mild and captivating, no trace of animalism or sordid passion there—the face of a poet or a sage, of one who lived in the world of thought and was in but light touch with the bustling world; and,

lighting it up with a radiance of intellect, a pair of eyes black, brilliant, mild, serene, the memory of which haunts me after all these sixteen years. Another Pandit, the Librarian of Benares College, accompanied him and took part in the discussion. I did my best to impress on their minds the crying need for a revival of Sanskrit Literature for the sake of its priceless contents, which were so necessary at the present time when the world's spiritual hopes were being swamped in the sea of materialism. I was bold enough to tell Bâlâ Shastri that if Hindu religion and philosophy were suffered to go into eclipse he would be largely responsible for the disaster, since he, more than any other man, was able to stem the current. I proposed that he and I, as representatives of the Pandit class, on the one hand, and of the world-covering agency of propaganda, on the other, should join forces; I asked him to convene a private meeting of the principal Benares Pandits and let me address them, to which he assented, and we left it to Babu Pramada Dásá Mitra to make the necessary arrangements.

At 4 o'clock that day H. P. B. arrived from Allahabad by the slow train, and we were as glad to see each other as if we had been long separated.





## CHAPTER XIX.

### A MASTER OF DJINNS.

**W**E were together at Benares eight days, during which time we saw much of the old Maharajah, his suite and other notables of the city. His Highness sent his Secretary to inquire after H. P. B.'s health early in the morning after her arrival, and, later, came himself with Babu Pramada Dásá and Raja Sivaprasád as interpreters, and had hours of discussion on philosophical and religious subjects. On another occasion he had his treasurer with him and offered to have counted out, then and there, a large sum of money (many thousands of rupees) for the benefit of our Society if H. P. B. would "show him some miracles." Of course she refused him the smallest gratification, as she had other rich Hindus before—one, the late Sir Mungaldas, at Bombay—but as soon as he departed, did a number of phenomena for poor visitors who could not have afforded to give her even ten rupees. But she told the aged Prince an important secret about the hiding-place of certain lost family papers which, if I am not

mistaken, had been hastily concealed during the Mutiny. Though disappointed, yet I have reason to believe that the Maharajah respected her far more than if she had accepted his present. This indifference to money is always taken in India as good proof of the disinterested piety of religious teachers. The Lahore Yogi, who showed his samādhi to Maharajah Runjeet Singh, ruined himself for ever in the latter's eyes by accepting his costly gifts. "But for that," said an old servant of his to me once at Lahore, "the Maharajah would have kept him for life near him and revered him as a saint."

The morning sail down the Ganges past the ghâts was repeated for H. P. B., the same two gentlemen accompanying us. This time, we caused our boat to linger long off the burning-ghât and watched the whole process, from the bringing and submersion of the corpse in the sacred stream to the raking of its ashes into the water. It is a brutally realistic scene, with no poetry or refinement about it, and if cremation had been introduced at the West in that rough guise there would not have been more than one body incinerated, I am sure. With the use of the crematorium every repulsive feature is eliminated, and it is no wonder that this method of disposing of the dead has become so popular.

On the same afternoon we visited a Muslim fair then being held, at which we saw our first examples of the phenomenal dexterity which is acquired in India in the management of the sword. A man lies flat on his stomach on the ground, with his chin resting on a guava fruit—say

as large as a medium-sized pear ; another man stands with his back towards him, marking time with his feet and body to the rhythmic beating of a tom-tom ; he holds in his hand a sabre with an edge like a razor, and a thick and heavy back, which he also moves to the rhythm ; suddenly he wheels about face, sweeps his sabre through the air and under the man's chin, and the latter, rising, shows the guava sliced in halves. Even now, the bare recollection of it makes one shudder to think what would have happened if that trenchant blade had swerved but a trifle from its transverse path through the fruit. The same feat of skill was shown in the case of guavas and limes pressed under a man's naked heel. It should be borne in mind that in every case the swordsman's back is towards the assistant, and that his aim is taken while the sword is whirling through the air.

On the 14th December the expected meeting and conference between myself, as P.T.S., and the chief Pandits of India, came off at Babu P. D. Mitra's residence. The dignity of the assemblage will be evident to all well-informed Orientalists, when they read the following list of names, some of them the most renowned in contemporary Sanskrit literature :—

Dr. G. Thibaut, Principal of Benares Anglo-Sanskrit College.

Pandit Bālā Shastri, late Professor of Hindu Law, Benares Anglo-Sanskrit College.

Pandit Bapu Deva Shastri, Professor of Astronomy, Benares Anglo-Sanskrit College.

Pandit Yagenswāra Ojha, Benares Anglo-Sanskrit College.

Pandit Kesavli Shastri, Benares Anglo-Sanskrit College.

Pandit Dāmodara Shastri, Professor of Grammar, Benares Anglo-Sanskrit College.

Pandit Dhondirāga Shastri, Librarian, Benares Anglo-Sanskrit College.

Pandit Ramkrishna Shastri, Professor of Sankhya, Benares Anglo-Sanskrit College.

Pandit Ganghadeva Shastri, Professor of Poetry and Rhetoric, Benares Anglo-Sanskrit College.

Bapu Shastri.

Babu Shastri.

Govinda Shastri.

Babu Pramada Dāsā Mitra, late Professor of Anglo-Sanskrit Literature, Benares Anglo-Sanskrit College.

The last-named gentleman interpreted into Sanskrit as rapidly and fluently my address to the Pandits, as he did their replies and observations to me, in English, which he writes and speaks like an Englishman. I doubt if there is an Orientalist in any Western land, from Professor Max Müller downward, who could do that: certainly, the attempts of such as have visited India and Ceylon to converse in Sanskrit with our Pandits have not impressed the latter with their command of the "language of the gods," to judge from what they have told me.

Our conference lasted several hours, and point after point was carefully considered, each party watchful to prevent the appearance of having become subordinate to

the other. The final result was the adoption and signing of the following articles of agreement :—

“ *Whereas*, the interest of Sanskrit Literature and Vedic Philosophy and Science will be eminently promoted by a brotherly union of all friends of Aryan learning throughout the world ; and

“ *Whereas*, it is evident that the Theosophical Society is sincerely devoted to the accomplishment of this most worthy object, and possesses facilities which it is desirable to secure ; therefore

“ *Resolved* that this Samaj accepts the offer made on behalf of the Theosophical Society, and declares itself in friendly union with the said Society for the purposes specified, and offers to render whatever assistance it can for the carrying out of such plans as may be agreed upon between the governing officers of the two Samajas.

“ *Provided*, nevertheless, that this act of union shall not be understood as making either of the two Societies subordinate to the rule or jurisdiction of the other.”

(Signed) BAPU DEVA SHASTRI,  
*President.*

(Signed) BAL SHASTRI,  
*Vice-President.*

Accepted for the Theosophical Society,

H. S. OLCOTT, *President.*

Attest,

PRAMADA DĀSĀ MITTRA,  
*Secretary of the Meeting.*

BENARES : *Margashirsha Suddha 13th,*  
*Sawvat 1937.*

Without the help of Babu Pramada Dásá such a result would have been quite impossible, and we have to thank him for enabling us to vindicate the eclecticism of our Society thus early in its sojourn in India. Coming so soon after our triumphant Buddhistic progress in Ceylon and on top of H. P. B.'s and my public profession of Buddhism at the temple in Galle, it showed great high-mindedness on the part of the Benares savants, whose Hindu orthodoxy was beyond question. The feeling of the learned President of the Sabha was, however, very strongly shown in his declaration that he actually preferred Christianity to Buddhism, but at the same time he recognized that good might come to Hinduism from such an alliance as that proposed on the basis of sectarian neutrality. On account of her sex the Pandits did not want H. P. B. to take part in the conference.

Our days were fully occupied with talks, public lectures, visits from the Maharajah and other princes and commoners, and visits by ourselves to sundry temples and other local monuments of the past. We were greatly interested in one of our visitors, one Mohammed Arif, an official of one of the Courts and a very learned person. He had an extensive knowledge of the literature of Islam, and showed us a chart he had prepared, on which were inscribed the names of some 1500 renowned adepts and mystics, from the Prophet down to our times. He had also a practical knowledge of occult chemistry, and, at our request, consented to try an experiment with my help. He had brought from the bazaar some thick and large *bratties*, or fuel-cakes of dried



cow-dung, a little charcoal, two Jeypore rupees (of pure silver), and some dried vegetable products. Scooping out a small cavity in the flat side of each bratty, he filled it with pounded cloves, shindrá bark, and bechums (myrobolams, I think), buried a rupee in one of them, applied another bratty over it, and set fire to the lower cake. The other rupee was disposed of in like manner. The cakes burned slowly, being reduced to ashes only after a couple of hours. The rupees were then transferred to second pairs of bratties and left until the latter were consumed. A third time they were put into fresh cakes, and left to themselves all night. It was expected that in the morning we should find the coins completely oxidized, the pure metal being changed into an oxide of the consistency of lime, and crumbling between the fingers. The experiment proved, however, only partly successful, the surface of the coins being oxidized but the interior left unchanged. Mohammed Arif was dissatisfied with the result and wished to repeat the experiment under better conditions, but time did not serve either of us and we had to leave the station before it could be done. At any rate, partial oxidation was obtained, and I really cannot understand how this could be effected, with such simple agents as the feeble fire of six smouldering *bratties* and a few pinches of cloves and other vegetable products. The old gentleman, while paying full reverence to the achievements of modern science, still maintained that there was yet very much to learn from the ancients about the nature of the elements and their potential combinations. "Among Indian alchemists," he said, "it has long been a

theory universally accepted, that if a diamond is by a certain process known to them, reduced to ashes, these ashes added to melted tin are capable of changing the latter into silver. Practically, of course, the experiment is commercially valueless, the transforming agent being more costly than the resultant product. But the thought is important in its suggestiveness, for if the ashes of one substance containing carbon, when obtained by a certain process will transmute tin into silver, it opens the inquiry whether a nearly-related ash from another carbonaceous substance might not give the same result under proper conditions. If the addition of carbon to iron converts it into steel, by some secret law not yet fully understood, why is it an unthinkable proposition that its addition to tin by some better process than any at present known to European chemists, might also harden that metal and give it properties as different from the mother metal as those of steel are from those of iron. True"—continued the old man, looking at me with his intelligent eyes—"modern chemistry does not show any such affinity between carbon and tin, nor does it show that there is none. We do know that in ancient times a process was known for imparting to copper tools the cutting hardness of steel; and that secret is lost. Chemists may, therefore, well pause before dogmatizing as to what was or was not possible for the alchemists. They have a deal yet to learn before they recover the Lost Arts of the older time. The Indian alchemists have proved that they can harden tin by combining with it carbon; hence they cover a broader ground than modern chemists in the department of

metallurgy." "But why, then," I asked, "is Alchemy so obsolete?"

"Alchemical Science is dishonored," he replied, "by the neglect of the educated, and the trickery and base frauds of charlatans, but still it is a great Science. I believe—nay, I know—that the transmutation of metals is possible."

The old enthusiast talked in Urdu, which was admirably translated by Rai Baldeo Buksh and another high local official, and the interviews I had with him were among the most interesting I ever held with any one. He evinced a thorough familiarity with Arabic and Persian literature, and his air of dignity was that of a high-minded scholar devoted to the acquisition of knowledge. I got him to put his ideas on paper and had them translated for the *Theosophist* (*vide* May No. of 1881, p. 178). On my last visit to Benares I found, upon inquiry, that he is now retired and living on a very modest pension in some obscure village, where, perhaps, he has not a single neighbor who can appreciate his erudition and high intelligence.

We met several persons at Benares who had had personal knowledge of the wonder-working powers of Hassan Khan Djinni, the Muslim sorcerer previously mentioned. Among others a Mr. Shavier told us the following. He had put his watch and chain into a small box, which was locked up in a chest in the presence of Hassan Khan, but the next moment he held the articles in his hand, having drawn them through the two boxes by the power of his elemental spirits. The man was a native of Hyderabad, Deccan, and

learnt his art from his father, a greater adept in Occultism than himself, who duly initiated him with certain weird ceremonies. He had been given power over seven *djnis*, on the condition that he should lead a moral and temperate life. But his passions took possession of him, and one by one the elementals broke loose from his control until he had but one left to do his bidding, and of this one he was in constant dread. He had to abide the convenience of this spirit, and so was not able to perform phenomena at his own pleasure. Mr. C. F. Hogan, who knew him intimately, tells us (*Theosophist*, Jan. 1881, p. 81) that the proximity of the genius was made known to him by the stoppage of his breathing through one of his nostrils. In stature he was somewhat above the middle height; of dark brown complexion, and a rather robust physique; on the whole, his appearance was rather pleasing than otherwise. His dissipations, however, at last undermined his mental if not his physical strength, and he is said to have died in prison.

Mr. Shavier told me a queer story which might well have been taken from the *Arabian Nights*. Some years ago, there lived at Ghazipur a poor but learned Moulvi, who for want of better employment opened a day school for boys. Among his pupils was a bright lad who displayed much aptitude, and was always respectful to his teacher, for whom he frequently brought presents. One day he brought him some rare sweetmeats with his mother's compliments. The teacher expressing a desire to pay his respects to the parents, the lad said he would tell them and bring back their response. The next

day a satisfactory response being made, the teacher dressed himself in his best and accompanied the boy on his way home. He led him out of town and to some distance in the country, but no signs of houses being seen, he began to get worried and at last demanded an explanation. The pupil then told him that they were just near his home, but before taking him there he must tell him a secret. He was of the race of the Jinnaths (*djnis*), and a great honor was done the teacher in admitting him to a view of their hidden city. He must first, however, swear that under no provocation would he reveal the way to it; and if he should ever break his oath, he would certainly be struck stone-blind. The Moulvi took the required oath, and the lad lifting a trap-door which had been invisible to the eyes of the former, a flight of steps was disclosed, which they descended, and finally came into the city of the Jinnaths. To the Moulvi's eyes everything seemed as it was in the Upper World; streets, houses, shops, conveyances, dancing, music, and everything. The lad's father received his guest with cordiality, and the intimacy thus begun was continued for years, to the great benefit and satisfaction of the school-master. His friends wondered at his prosperity, and finally persuaded the poor fool to show them the way to the trap-door at the top of the mysterious staircase. But just as he was on the point of revealing the oath-protected secret he was struck blind and never recovered his sight. The Moulvi was living in the town of G—— at the time when Mr. Shavier related the story to me, and it is said that everybody of his acquaintance was aware of the cause of his

blindness. This subterranean town of the Jinnaths, with its houses and elemental inhabitants, recalls the similar tale of "The Coming Race," of Bulwer Lytton, and suggests a common folk-lore origin for both.

Our visit to Benares coming to an end, we packed our things, sent our luggage to the railway station, and drove from the Mint House to Fort Rāmanāgar, to take leave of our kind and venerable host, and thank him for his hospitality. The old Prince was very courteous and affectionate to us, begged us to come again, and said we must make our home with him whenever we should visit Benares. As we rose to leave, he laid a splendid Kashmir shawl over H. P. B.'s shoulders, which she wanted to "touch and return," but he looked so hurt at her rejection of his well-meant kindness, that she relented and expressed her thanks, through the gentleman who acted as interpreter. From thence we drove to the station, and at 6 that evening reached Allahabad and the Sinnetts; H. P. B. suffering excruciating pain from an attack in her left wrist from *dengui*, that terrible "broken bone" fever which gives more suffering than even the persuasive instruments by which the paternal Inquisition promoted orthodoxy.





## CHAPTER XX.

### CEYLON BUDDHISM EXPLAINED.

**H.** P. B.'s rheumatic fever continued several days, causing her agonizing pains: the arm swelled to the shoulder and she tossed about night after night, despite the devoted and unselfish ministrations of her physician, Dr. Avinas Chandra Banerji, of Allahabad, who won all our hearts by his kindness and patience. The first sign of her complete convalescence was her going with me to a big shop and buying a lot of things! At a ceremony of initiation of new candidates, on the 24th December, some of her melodious astral bells were rung, to the surprise and delight of the persons present.

During our brief stay with the Sinnetts a number of notable visitors called, and we enjoyed many hours of improving conversation with Prof. Adityram Bhattacharya, the erudite Sanskritist, and others, upon Indian Philosophy. I lectured two or three times to large audiences, and, H. P. B. having now quite recovered her usual health, we took train for Bombay on the 28th December, and, without

adventure, reached home on the 30th. The last days of 1880 were thus passed in our new bungalow, "The Crow's Nest," on the rocky slope of the hill of Breach Candy. It had been selected and taken for us in our absence, and we were charmed with its spacious, high-studded rooms, its large verandahs, and its extensive views of sea and land. Since the beginning of the year 1879, we had been living in the thickly settled Indian quarter of Girgaum Back Road, in a grove of palms where the sea-breezes scarcely penetrated, and the shift to the new locality was delightful. A special advantage was that the number of our casual visitors became so much lessened, by reason of our distance from the centre of population, that we found time for reading, and I find my Diary contains frequent references to this fact. We occupied our new premises until December 1882, when our headquarters were permanently established at Adyar. The proper rental of the bungalow was rs. 200 per mensem, but we got it for rs. 65 because of its evil reputation for being haunted. The alleged ghosts did not trouble us, however, save in a solitary instance, and that was quickly disposed of. One night I had gone to bed and was dropping asleep, when I felt one corner of my *charpai* being lifted, as if by some one standing in the thickness of the wall, which it was touching. Instantly recovering my full consciousness, I pronounced a certain Arabic word of power, that H. P. B. had taught me in New York, and the cot was replaced on its legs and the meddlesome spook decamped and never troubled me more.





AVENUE OF COCOA PALMS AT ADYAR.



The New Year came in and found me writing at my table, until 2 A.M., editorial articles for the *Theosophist*. The early weeks of the year were rather uneventful as a whole, although we were brought into friendly or unfriendly relations with certain personalities. The writer of that since well-known treatise, *The Elixir of Life*, a Mr. Mirza Murad Ali Beg, came to us on the 20th January, for the first time. He was of European birth, a scion of the old Hampshire family of the Mitfords, which has produced several noted writers, including Mary Russell Mitford, authoress of *Our Village* and other works. This young man's grandfather had come out to India with some Frenchmen, and served under Tippoo Sultan. When that cruel and sensual chieftain was killed, Mr. Mitford took service with the East India Company. His son was born at Madras, and among other eccentricities turned Mussulman, and, when we met him, was in the military employ of the Maharajah of Bhaunagar as "Chief Cavalry Officer"—practically a sinecure. His had been a wild, adventurous life, more full of misery than the opposite. He had dabbled in Black Magic, among other things, and told me that all the sufferings he had passed through within the preceding few years were directly traceable to the malign persecutions of certain evil powers which he had summoned to help him get into his power a virtuous lady whom he coveted. He had sat, under the instructions of a Muslim black magician *guru*, in a closed room, for forty days, with his gaze fixed upon a black spot on the wall, in which he was told to imagine the face of his

intended victim, and repeating, some hundred thousand times, a prescribed mantram, in half Arabic, half Sanskrit. He was to continue this until he should actually see the lady's face as if alive; and when her lips moved as if to speak, she would have been completely fascinated and would come to him of her own accord. All this happened as foretold, his nefarious object was gained, the woman ruined, and he himself fell under the power of the bad spirits whom he had not the moral strength to dominate after having accepted their compulsory service. Certainly he was a distressful person to be with. Nervous, excitable, fixed on nothing, the slave of his caprices, seeing the higher possibilities of man's nature, yet unable to reach them, he came to us as to a refuge, and shortly after took up his residence in our house for a few weeks. A strange-looking creature for an Englishman he was. His dress was that of a Muslim throughout, save that he had his long light-brown hair tied up in a Grecian knot behind his head, like a woman. His complexion was fair and his eyes light blue. In my Diary I say that he looked more like an actor made up for a part than anything else. The writing of the *Elixir of Life* occurred some time later, but I may as well tell the story while he is under my mind's eye.

From the time that he came to us he seemed to be engaged in a strong mental and moral conflict within himself. He complained of being dragged hither and thither, first by good, then by bad influences. He had a fine mind, and had done a good deal of reading; he wanted to join our Society, but, as I had no confidence in his

moral stamina, I refused him. H. P. B., however, offering to become responsible for him, I relented and let her take him in. He repaid her nicely, some months later, by snatching a sword from a sepoy at Wadhwan Station, and trying to kill her, crying out that she and her Mahatmas were all devils! In short, he went mad. But to return. While with us he wrote some articles which were printed in the *Theosophist*, and one evening after a talk with us, sat himself down to write on the power of the will to affect longevity. H. P. B. and I remained in the room, and when he began his writing she went and stood behind him, just as she had in New York when Harisse was making his sketch of one of the Masters, under her thought-transference. The article of Mirza Saheb attracted deserved attention on its appearance (see *Theosophist*, III. 140, 168), and has ever since ranked as one of the most suggestive and valuable pamphlets in our Theosophical literature. He was doing well, and there was a good chance for him to retrieve much of his lost spirituality if he would only stop with us; but after giving his promise to do so, he obeyed an irresistible impulse and rushed back to Wadhwan and to destruction. His mind did not recover its equilibrium; he turned Roman Catholic, then recanted back into Islam, and finally died, and was buried at Junagadh, where I have seen his humble tomb. His case has always seemed to me a dreadful instance of the danger one runs in dabbling with occult science while the animal passions are rampant.

I shall run rapidly over the events of 1881, and note

only two or three that had intrinsic importance. The case of Damodar was one of them. When this dear young man joined the Society and put his heart into the work, he got from his father permission to live with us, irrespective of caste restrictions and as though he had taken the vows of the Sannyasi. The father and an uncle were also active members at that time. According to the custom of Guzerati Brahmins, Damodar had been betrothed in childhood, of course without his consent, and the time arrived when he would have to take up the married life. But his sole ambition in life was now to lead the existence of the spiritual recluse, and he viewed marriage with the greatest repugnance. He felt himself the victim of custom, and was passionately eager to be freed from the abhorrent contract, so that he might become a true *chela* of Mahatma K. H., whom he had seen in his youth, and again after coming to us. His father, a wise and high-minded man, at last consented, and Damodar assigned over to him his share of the ancestral estate, amounting, if I rightly recollect, to some 50,000 rs., on condition that his child-wife should be taken to his father's house and comfortably maintained. This arrangement went on all right for a time; but when Damodar had become completely identified with us, and had even gone so far as to become a Buddhist with us in Ceylon, the family revolted and began a persecution to compel the poor boy to come back into caste. This he would not do, and the result was the withdrawal of his relatives from the Society, and their waging a not very reputable war against us, innocent objects of their

anger, in the shape of scurrilous fly-sheets and other attacks on our reputations, which were printed and circulated by somebody or other at Bombay. One particularly slanderous one, I remember, was circulated to my audience on the occasion of a lecture at Framji Cowasji Hall. A copy was handed me as I was entering. Reaching the platform I read it, and, showing it to the audience, laid it on the floor and put my foot on it, with the remark that that was my answer to our unprincipled calumniator, whoever he might be. The burst of applause that followed showed that no more need be said, and I proceeded with my discourse.

Damodar remained with us in the most intimate friendship, working with ceaseless devotion and absolute unselfishness until 1885, when he went from Madras to Tibet *via* Darjiling, and is still there, in training for his future work for mankind. False rumours of his death in the Himalayan snows have been circulated from time to time, but I have excellent reason for believing that he is alive and well and in due time will return. I shall recur to this later on. His bereaved father died soon after the unpleasant breach between them, carrying with him all our respect and best wishes.

It had been arranged that I should return alone to Ceylon and begin the collection of a National Education Fund to promote the education of Buddhist boys and girls. The scheme had—as H. P. B. assured me—the full approbation of the Mahatmas, and her own concurrence had been strongly expressed. Thereupon I had written to Ceylon

and made all necessary arrangements with our friends. But, on the 11th February, as it seems, H. P. B. fell out with me because I would not cancel the engagement and stop and help her on the *Theosophist*. Of course, I flatly refused to do anything of the kind, and as the natural consequence she fell into a white rage with me. She shut herself up in her room a whole week, refusing to see me, but sending me formal notes of one sort or another, among them one in which she notified me that the Lodge would have nothing more to do with the Society or myself, and I might go to Timbuctoo if I liked. I simply said that my tour having been fully approved of by the Lodge, I should carry it through, even though I never saw the face of a Master again; that I did not believe them to be such vacillating and whimsical creatures; if they were, I preferred to work on without them. Her ill-temper burnt itself out at last, and on the 18th of that month she and I drove out in the new carriage which Damodar had presented to her! A Master visited her on the 19th and exposed to her the whole situation, about which I shall not go into details, as all has turned out as he forewarned us. On leaving, he left behind a much-worn gold-embroidered head-covering, of peculiar shape, which I took possession of, and have until this day. One result of this visit was that, on the 25th of the month, she and I had a long and serious discussion about the state of affairs, resulting — as my Diary says — “in an agreement between us to re-construct the T. S. on a different basis, putting the Brotherhood idea forward more prominently, and



keeping the occultism more in the background, in short, to have a secret section for it." This, then, was the seed-planting of the E. S. T., and the beginning of the adoption of the Universal Brotherhood idea in more definite form than previously. The wording of the paragraphs was entirely my own, and is quite open to alterations.

I have recorded in the entry for one of those days, an admirable description of the potential re-appearance of latent images of past things, which I found on reading that wonderful book *The Dabistan*. Says "Abu Ali, the prince of physicians (whose spirit may God sanctify),

"Every form and image which seems at present effaced,  
 "Is securely stored up in the treasury of time—  
 "When the same position of the heavens again recurs,  
 "The Almighty reproduces each from behind the mysterious veil."

These latent images are those which Buchanan's psychometers can see and describe on being put into connection with the foci of A'kasha wherein they are lying latent.

I sailed for Ceylon on the 23rd April, in company with a Mr. Æneas Bruce, of Scotland, a veteran traveller and most amiable gentleman, who had joined our Society. We reached Point de Galle on the fourth day and were received with much enthusiasm. Our leading colleagues came aboard with greetings and garlands and escorted us to the shore, where over 300 Buddhist boys of our first-established school were standing in line to welcome us. White cloths were laid from the landing for us to walk upon, and there was a brave show of greenery and flags,

with no end of cheers and joyful acclamations. A great multitude of people were there to follow our carriages to the school-house, an upper-storied building on the Harbor beach, where rooms had been fitted up for our accommodation. As usual a number of yellow-robed monks, headed by the venerable Bulâtgama Sri Sumanatissa, Chief Priest of the principal temple of Galle, were there to welcome us with their chantings of Pali *gâthas*, or verses.

The main object of my present visit was, as above stated, the raising of an Education Fund and the rousing of popular interest in the subject of education generally. To effect this I needed the co-operation of all the principal priests of the Island; if I could get about eight or nine men on my side, the rest would be a mere matter of detail. These men were H. Sumângala, Dhammalankâra, Wimalésâra, Piya-râtna, Subhuti, Potuwila and Wêligama. Then there was Megittuwatte, the "silver-tongued orator," incomparably the finest speaker in the Island, to be dealt with, but not like the others. He had been for very many years a Thera, or ordained monk, but for certain irregularities of conduct had been reduced to the lower rank of *samanêra*. This group of intellectual men swayed all the power in the two 'sects' recognized among them, the Siam and the Amarapooa. As I have elsewhere explained, there is no difference whatever, of dogma, between these two Sinhalese Buddhist 'sects'; only that of the sources of their respective ordinations. The Siam priests had got ordination from that country at a past epoch, when civil war had wellnigh uprooted the religion of the Buddha in

the spicy island. Hindu Tamil invaders had overturned the indigenous Buddhist sovereign, destroyed their finest temples, and burnt their religious books, by stacks "as high as the tops of the cocoanut trees." In this crisis, upon the expulsion of the foreign dynasty and the re-establishment of the proper sovereign, his eyes were turned to Siam, and an embassy was sent to that Court to ask that holy monks might be lent to re-ordain the remaining Sinhalese monks. This request being complied with, the result was the establishment of the new Siam sect under Royal patronage. Much later, when postulants of lower castes were denied ordination by the aristocratic Brotherhood, of the *Willalla* caste mainly, they sent delegates to the king of Burma, whose capital was then at Amarapoorā, to seek for ordination. Succeeding in their object they returned, fully ordained *bikshus*, to Ceylon, and the new "Amarapoorā" sect sprang into existence. As usual among theologians, there was no fellowship between the two bodies; they never worked in concert, whether sitting in Council, exchanging religious services, or jointly appealing to the people. All this was too absurd to me for tolerance, and as I found myself on equally good terms with both sets of leaders, I determined, if possible, to bring about cordial co-operation for the good of the religion as a whole. There was then just arising a third sect, a schism, in the body of the Amarapoorā sect, headed by a monk of great force of character, fine education and quenchless energy. His name was Ambâhagawatte, and he called his sect the Ramanya Nikāya (I spell it as pronounced). His rallying

cry was, of course, Reform: the priesthood had become lazy, unobservant of their duties, the religious education of the people was being neglected; there must be a change. He set the example of austerity of life, observing strictly the rules of Vināya, and requiring the same of those who chose to follow him. From the start he made an impression, his sect gradually grew strong, and, although he has been dead several years, it has prospered and now embraces a large body of zealous and able monks, and devoted laity. I had to bring these various threads of power into one strong tie of union, and set myself to accomplish the purpose. Beginning with personal interviews with the leaders, and getting their individual promises of help, I took the lecturing field, moving from village to village in the Western Province, of which Colombo is the chief town and centre of influence. First, Mr. Bruce and I wrote a couple of popular tracts for campaign purposes, which, after being submitted to the priests in Sinhalese translations, were printed and put in circulation. The Missionary party were not idle, you may be sure. Private slander, open abuse, absurd attacks on Buddhism, and the copying of foreign scurrilous articles against the Society and its Founders, were the order of the day. The poor schemers had not the wisdom to see that, since the Buddhists had accepted us as their champions and co-religionists, the more we were abused and denounced, the stronger grew the popular love for us: we and they being fellow-sufferers in a common cause.

Finding out the shocking ignorance of the Sinhalese about

Buddhism, I began, after vainly trying to get some monk to do it, the compilation of a *Buddhist Catechism* on the lines of the similar elementary hand-books so effectively used among Western Christian sects, working at it at odd times, as I could find leisure. To fit myself for it I had read 10,000 pages of Buddhist books, of course in English and French translations. I finished my first draft on the 5th May, and on the 7th took it with me to Colombo. That evening the High Priest, Sumāngala, and Megittuwatte, came to discuss my scheme of the Education Fund. After several hours' interchange of views, we agreed upon the following points, viz., that it should be a Fund for the propagation of Buddhism, that there should be Trustees, that we should sell subscription tickets or Merit Cards of various denominations, that the money should be deposited in the Post Office Savings Bank, and that Megittuwatte should go on a tour with me. I got Sumāngala to consent to issue an appeal to the Buddhist public for the Fund, and to endorse me as its collector. From the Government blue books we discovered that eight out of eleven of the schools in the Island were in the hands of the Missionaries, the rest belonging to Government: in the former, the children were taught that Buddhism was a dark superstition, in the other no religious teaching at all was given. So, between them both, our Buddhist children had but small chance of coming to know anything at all of the real merits of their ancestral faith. Our work was clearly cut out for us, and at it we went *con amore*. My first begging lecture was at Kelanie, on the Buddha's Birthday, and resulted in the

paltry sale of 60 rs. worth of tickets, and one subscription of 100 rs. towards the Fund.

My *Catechism* had been translated into Sinhalese, and on 15th May I went with it to Widyodaya College to go over the text, word by word, with the High Priest and his Assistant Principal, Hiyayentadûwe, one of his cleverest pupils and a man of learning. On that first day, although we worked eight hours, we disposed of only 6½ pages of the MS. On the 16th, beginning early in the morning and continuing until 5 P.M., we got over 8 pages; then we stuck. The *impasse* was created by the definition of Nirvana, or rather of the survival of some sort of 'subjective entity' in that state of existence. Knowing perfectly well the strong views entertained by the school of Southern Buddhists, of which Sumāngala is the type, I had drafted the reply to the question 'What is Nirvana?' in such a way as to just note that there was a difference of opinion among Buddhist metaphysicians as to the survival of an abstract human entity, without leaning either towards the views of the Northern or Southern school. But the two erudite critics caught me up at the first glance at the paragraph, and the High Priest denied that there was *any* such difference of opinion among Buddhist metaphysicians. Upon my citing to him the beliefs of the Tibetans, Chinese, Japanese, Mongolians, and even of a Sinhalese school of which the late Polgāhawatte was leader, he closed our discussion by saying that, if I did not alter the text, he should cancel his promise to give me a certificate that the *Catechism* was suited to the teaching of children in Buddhist schools,

and should publish his reasons therefor. As this would virtually destroy the usefulness of my educational monograph, and cause such a breach between him and myself as to make it tenfold more difficult to push on the schools project, I yielded to *force majeure*, and made the paragraph read, as it has ever since stood, in the many editions through which the *Catechism* has since passed. The tedious labor of critical revision was finally completed, the MS. fair-copied, re-revised, trimmed, added to, and at last made ready for the printer, all this taking weeks and causing no end of bother to me. It was such a novelty, this, to condense the essence of the whole body of Buddhist *Dharma* into a little hand-book that one might read through in a couple of hours, and their inherited tendency towards passive resistance to all innovations upon the fixed order of things was so strong that I had to fight my way inch by inch, as one might say. It was not that the priests did not feel the greatest friendliness for me and the highest appreciation of the possible good that might accrue to the nation from our school project, but the conservative instinct was too strong to be pacified at once, and points that had been passed upon had to be reconsidered, and long discussions entered into as to the spirit of the Buddhist sacred books, before I could be allowed to go to press with my work. I am perfectly convinced that if I had been an Asiatic of any race or caste, the book would never have appeared, the author would have simply been tired out and have abandoned his attempt. But, knowing something of the bull-dog pertinacity of the Anglo-Saxon character, and holding me in

real personal affection, they finally succumbed to my importunity. The Sinhalese and English versions appeared simultaneously, on the 24th July 1881, and thenceforward, for some weeks, the hand-presses of Colombo could not strike off copies fast enough to meet the demand. Sumāngala ordered 100 copies for the use of the priest-pupils in his College; it became a text-book in the schools; found its way into every Sinhalese family; and within one month of its publication was admitted in Court, in a case that was being tried in the Southern Province, as an authority upon the question at issue. This, of course, thanks to Sumāngala's Certificate of Orthodoxy, appended to the text of the work. This, we may say, was substantially the beginning of our campaign for Buddhism against its foes, Missionary and other, and the advantage has never been lost. For whereas previously the entire nation were virtually ignorant of the basic principles of their religion, of even one of its excellent features, now every child, one may say, is as well informed, and as ready to recognize false representations about the national faith, as the average Sunday-school child in the West about the principles of Christianity. It is a duty and a pleasure to re-state here that the money for printing the two versions of the Catechism was given me by that saintly woman and sweet friend, Mrs. Ilangakoon, of Mātara, since, alas! deceased. Thanks to the careful scrutiny given it by the two learned monks of Widyodāya College, it has found such wide favor throughout the world that up to the present time it has been translated and published in twenty different languages. I have found it in Burma, Japan, Germany,



Sweden, France, Italy, Australia, America, Sandwich Islands, throughout India, and elsewhere: from the grain of mustard-seed has developed the great tree. The only disagreeable incident in its history is, that a person calling himself "Subhadra Bhikshu" plagiarized almost its entire contents and appropriated to himself its title, in a German Catechism that he brought out, and that has since been published in English.





## CHAPTER XXI.

### CREATING A SINHALESE BUDDHIST FUND.

**I**F any one fancies that the influence which our Society enjoys in the East has been gained without hard work he should look through the pages of this Diary. Day after day, week after week, and month after month are to be seen the records of journeys taken in all sorts of conveyances, from the railway carriage to the ramshackle little hackery, jutka and ekka, drawn by a single pony or bullock; to the common country cart, with its huge wheels, its bottom of bamboo poles, sometimes but thinly covered with straw, and its pair of high-humped Indian oxen straining at their yoke—a thick pole laid across their tired necks and tied to them by coir ropes; to roughly built boats covered with arches of dried palm-leaves, but with neither bench nor cushion; to elephants carrying us in their howdahs, or, more frequently, on great pads, which are simply mattresses belted around them by giant girths. Journeyings by clear days are recorded here, and days of pouring tropical rains; nights

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of moonlight, of starlight, and heavy showers; nights, sometimes, when sleep is broken by the ear-splitting sounds of the jungle insect world, the horrid yelp of the jackal pack, the distant noise of wild elephants pushing through the cane groves, the ceaseless shouts of the driver to his lagging bullocks, and his country songs, mostly in *falsetto* and usually discordant, to keep himself awake. Then the mosquitoes swarming about you in the cart, with their exasperating drone, menacing slow torture and white lumps swelling on the skin. Then the arrivals at villages in the dawn; the people all clustered along the road to meet you; the curiosity that must be gratified; the bath under difficulties; the early breakfast of coffee and *appas*—a thickish sort of rice cakes, with fruit; the visit to the monastery; the discussions of plans and prospects with the Buddhist monks; the lecture in the open air, or, if there be one, the preaching pavilion, with a great crowd of interested, brown-skinned people, watching you and hanging on your interpreter's lips. Then come the spreading of the printed subscription-sheets on a table, the registering of names, the sales of Buddhistic tracts and catechisms; the afternoon meal, cooked by your servant between some stones, under a palm-tree; perhaps a second lecture for the benefit of newly-arrived visitors from neighboring villages; the good-byes, the god-speeds of rattling tom-toms and squeaky gourd-pipes, the waving of flags and palm fronds, the cries of *Sādhu! Sādhu!* and the resumption of the journey in the creaking cart. So on and so on, day after day, I went all over the Western

Province on this business, rousing popular interest in the education of their children under the auspices of their own religion, circulating literature and raising funds for the prosecution of the work. So great was my discomfort that at last I set my Yankee ingenuity to work, and had built for me a two-wheeled travelling-cart on springs, which could give ample sleeping accommodation for four people; had lockers projecting from the sides, for holding table-furniture, tinned provisions, a small library, and my bathing kit; two large ones under the floor for baggage, sacks of vegetables and curry-stuffs; a tight canvas roof on hoop-iron ribs, a chest in front for tools and spare ropes, hooks underneath for water-bucket, cattle-trough, etc., a secure shelf over the axle for the driver's cooking-pots, and rings behind for attaching a led bullock. After we got that, our troubles were at an end, and I lived in that conveyance for weeks at a stretch. It weighed less than a country cart, and was as comfortable as need be. By a simple change of longitudinal seat-planks inside, I could, at will, have a writing room, dining room, sleeping room, or an omnibus-like arrangement, with two cushioned seats running fore and aft, to accommodate eight sitters. It was as much a novelty to the simple country folk as the *Buddhist Catechism*, and priests and laity used to flock around to see its mechanical wonders. After the lapse of fifteen years the cart is still in serviceable condition, and has been used by Dharmapala, Leadbetter, Powell, Banbery, and various other workers in Ceylon. I have travelled many miles in the best Indian bullock-coaches,

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but not one compares for comfort and convenience with this. It would be a kindly act for some one to build it for the public, for it is equally useful for any part of the world where there are roads for a two-wheeled conveyance and stout oxen to draw it. If I have permitted myself to say so much about it, it is only that my readers might fancy themselves along with me in my pioneering educational mission among the good Sinhalese, and realize how some of our time has been spent in Asia.

I was occupied with this business until the 13th December, with occasional long breaks for visits to Colombo and Galle, and one to Tuticorin, South India, with a Buddhist Committee, about which I shall presently have more to say. The sum subscribed by these poor villagers towards the National Fund was only about 17,000 rs., and of this, as it turned out, the Trustees collected no more than about 5000 rs.; so that, pecuniarily speaking, my time was not too profitably spent for the Education Fund. For myself I, of course, neither asked nor received a penny. If this scheme had been undertaken the previous year, when the whole Island was boiling with excitement and enthusiasm over H. P. B.'s and my first visit, ten or twenty times as much might have been collected, but one cannot always think of everything, and this educational movement was a natural evolution out of experience.

I had great bother and trouble in getting formed of the best men two boards, one of "Trustees" and the other of "Managers," with a lot of red-tape checks and

regulations and stuff generally. There was such petty jealousy, such contemptible intrigues to get the control of the money, and such ingratitude shown towards me, that I was at one time so disgusted that I was ready to throw up the whole thing and let them make their funds and found their schools by themselves. But then, again, I had undertaken a duty which nobody among them, with their inexperience and their troubles of caste antipathies and local jealousies, could perform, and just because of their pettiness toward me, I felt that there was the greater need for me to stick to my work. I am glad I did so, for now we see the splendid harvest that has come from that sowing of seed: schools springing up everywhere; 20,000 Buddhist children rescued from hostile religious teachers; religion reviving, and the prospect brightening every year. Under the terms of the Trust, the collections were first lodged by me in the Government Savings Bank, then turned over to the trustees, and by them loaned out at good interest on real-estate mortgages, the annual increment being given out for the fostering of Buddhist educational enterprises. It was a foolish policy to leave a village with subscriptions unpaid, for when the excitement of the moment had died away, the makers of fine promises bethought them that rupees were rupees, and school-houses then existed only in the mind's eye, and they clung to the cash as something tangible and real: if the dreams should ever take shape, why then— They have, and the rupees withheld from me have since been generously given to the cause

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which sits close to the national heart—that of their religion.

About this time a cluster of sympathetic Hindus at Tinnevely had agreed to form a Branch of our Society and wanted me to come and inaugurate it. It seemed to me a good and noble thing to get a deputation of Buddhist Theosophists to cross to India with me and fraternize with their Hindu colleagues, if the latter would make them welcome. I found the thing feasible, and after necessary preliminaries it was carried out. Our visit and its concomitants was of the most picturesque, besides setting a precedent previously unheard of in Hindustan since the great Emperor Asoka ruled the whole Peninsula and made Brahmin priests and Buddhist bhikshus to dwell together in kindly tolerance and mutual respect. At the same time it triumphantly showed the power of our talisman of Universal Brotherhood which—as I said in the last chapter—H. P. B. and I had a little while before agreed to put forward as our leading policy.

On the 21st October our party embarked at Colombo. We numbered four, viz., Messrs. Samel Perera, William D'Abrew Rajapakse, William F. Wijeyesekara, and myself. Then there was "Bob," my Sinhalese servant, a most useful and necessary adjunct, with his basket of table and cooking utensils. We reached Tuticorin, the southernmost Indian port, the next forenoon, and found waiting at the jetty a huge crowd, including many Indian gentlemen of position who took us to the hotel, saw to our comfort, and put me up to lecture to a packed house that evening in

the Anglo-Vernacular School building. There was such a crowd, and they made so much noise with their shuffling feet on the stone floor, that I overtaxed my throat to make myself heard, a bad beginning for the next day's business. The President and another representative of the Tinnevelly Branch came at 7 by train and stopped all night to escort us. Tinnevelly is but thirty miles from Tuticorin, so it did not take us long to get there the next morning. But at a wayside station we were intercepted by a waiting crowd who had us out on the platform and gave us cocoanuts, plantains, and betel leaves in token of welcome, and wreathed our necks with jessamine chaplets to do us honor after their poetical fashion. At the Tinnevelly station there was a crowd; 2000 people at least sweltered together in and about the building to get a glimpse of us. There were all the town notables in gala costume, and the huge elephants from the Temple, with their mighty brows painted with caste marks, which were made to raise their trunks and salute us with a roar. And priests with broad and high foreheads holding before us in benediction polished platters of brass, holding betel leaves, red powder and burning lumps of camphor. And the presentation of notabilities, of whom each gave us two limes, with courtly salutations. And the clangor of huge horns, and long slim trumpets, or shawms, blown lustily amid the din of a dozen tom-toms. Then came a great procession, headed by the elephants trumpeting, the nobility and officials, on foot, escorting our palanquins, and my "Bob" in front of us carrying a brass jar of water on his head, a tuft of betel leaves emerging



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from the narrow mouth of the jar. And the banners and flags, large and small, each bearing some quaint device, waved all up and down the line, the 2000 following and shouting joyfully. The omens, too, they said, were propitious: a frightened pullet flew over my head in the right direction; a *nilakanta*, or vividly blue bird, was seen in an adjacent field on our right; a lizard chirped over our house porch the proper number of times. So everybody was happy in the glowing sunshine, and the town had on its holiday look.

They took us to our quarters, an upstairs house with an upper and a lower verandah, whose portico and whole façade were decked out with flags and greenery. The street was packed with people for hours. We held a sort of durbar, or reception, at which there were speeches, replies, written addresses, betel, more garlands, limes, etc. In the evening I initiated fourteen new candidates and organized the Branch in due form. Then something to eat, and bed, and, for me, dreamless sleep until morning.

My throat was so sore that I looked forward with some apprehension to the work I should have for it that day and the next. However, I soon had something to divert my thoughts from my physical disability, for the morning post brought me a letter from the Principal of the local Hindu College which let me into the wiles of the gentle missionary. My correspondent said that, although he called himself a Christian, he did not approve of some of the measures adopted in the interest of missionary propaganda, and enclosed for my information a copy of a pamphlet which

had been circulated through the town the day before, to prejudice the community against us ; the copies being distributed by hand by the servants of the missionaries, with the verbal message that they were sent "with the compliments of the Secretary of the Tinnevelly Theosophical Society." In violation of the law which requires that the names of the printer and publisher shall appear on every printed work, this pamphlet revealed neither. Its contents were reprints of two meanly slanderous articles against us, from a London and a New York paper. The occasion to expose the dishonorable tactics of the enemy was so inviting that before beginning my lecture that afternoon at the Hindu College, I called attention to the pamphlet and denounced its authors in suitable terms. The blow recoiled upon the heads of our would-be assassins and our popularity was doubled. This is the sort of warfare that we have had to encounter throughout the whole period of our Indian work ; and almost invariably the offenders have been Protestant missionaries.

On the next day occurred the ever-to-be-remembered incident of the planting of a cocoanut within the Temple compound, by our Buddhist delegation, as an act of religious amity and tolerance. The Nelliappa Pagoda, as it is called, is a very ancient stone structure with the usual pyramidal Goparams carved to the summit with figures in high relief, and the covered stone ambulatories encircling the four sides. It was crowded to suffocation by a curious multitude when our procession reached there. Our order of formation was as follows : the frisky "Bob," wearing his

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Sinhalese comb and his hair in a big knot, appeared in the lead, carrying on his head his brass jar of water, with a ripe cocoanut resting on a bed of betel leaves on top; then the Temple band of musicians playing their loudest at our tympanums; then myself, followed by the three Sinhalese Buddhists; then a large body of notables, and some 1500 people bringing up the rear. We entered the Temple with flags flying and music playing amid a tumult of applause. Bob kept steadily on, and soon his shining jar seemed floating on a dark sea of humanity, as the crowd wedged in between him and ourselves. At last we struggled on to the platform prepared for us and mounted it. Five thousand people began shouting at once. Just a few yards back of us, in the open air, a hole had been dug for the nut, and it was covered over with an ornamental canopy. I held up my hand as the signal for silence, but as at least fifty or a hundred strong-lunged people began shouting to the rest to keep silence, it may be imagined what luck a speaker would have. When these shouters lost their voices, as many more took up the cries, and so it went on and on, until I thought I should have to give my address in pantomime; whereupon, comically enough, there came back to my memory the recollection of the fairylike pantomimes of the Ravel Family which I had seen in boyhood! I tried to speak in the hope that when they saw my lips move and my body swaying, the crowd would give me a chance, but my bad throat compelled me to stop very soon. Then, when the case seemed hopeless, a light-skinned, intellectual-faced Brahmin, naked to the waist, arose in his place,

towering above the squatting multitude, and, raising both arms full length above his head, pronounced the sacred salutation "Hari, Hari Mahadeva-a-a!" The clear resonant sounds rolled far and wide, and silence fell upon the chattering multitude: I could even hear the sparrows twitter and the crows cawing outside. Instantly I began my discourse and got through it more or less successfully. It was an appeal for religious tolerance and brotherly love, for their fraternal reciprocation of the good feeling which had brought over these Sinhalese, whose ancestors were Indians like theirs, and whose religious Teacher was recognized by them as one of the Avatars of Vishnu. It seemed to me I touched their hearts, for there were all the outward signs of friendliness. After I had finished, the Sinhalese chanted Pirit, benedictory verses in Pali; we four moved over to the place of planting, took the Ceylon cocoanut from its betel-leaf bed on the mouth of Bob's water jar, placed it properly in the ground, recited the *Mangalam* benediction, and then, sprinkling it with costliest rose-water given me by a Bengali friend for the express purpose, I christened the auspicious tree that was to be, "Kalpavriksha," after that wondrous tree of Paradise from whose all-supplying branches the happy ones may take whatsoever object their heart desires. A tempest of cheers and hand-clappings followed the completion of the ceremony, and we returned to our quarters, delighted with the day's successes. The next day we returned to Ceylon by the S.S. "Chanda," and I resumed my work for the Education Fund.

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The ordinary steam-passenger sees little of the loveliness of Ceylon, although that little is calculated to whet his desire to see more. The drives about Colombo, the exquisite railway trip by the seashore to Mount Lavinia, and the climb by rail to Kandy and Nuwera Eliya are experiences never to be forgotten; but I have seen the Island thoroughly, have visited almost every little village in the Maritime Provinces at all times of the year, and I can endorse every word of praise that Professor Ernst Hæckel has written about it as fully deserved. And I saw the people as they are, at their very best; full of smiles, and love, and hospitable impulse, and have been welcomed with triumphal arches, and flying flags, and wild Eastern music, and processions, and shouts of joy. Ah! lovely Lanka, Gem of the Summer Seas, how doth thy sweet image rise before me as I write the story of my experiences among thy dusky children, of my success in warming their hearts to revere their incomparable religion and its holiest Founder. Happy the karma which brought me to thy shores!

One of the most delightful of my trips of 1881 was that to the hill-district of Ratnapura (City of Gems), the country where the famed precious stones of Ceylon are dug, and where the lordly elephant rules the forest. The scenery is charming, the verdure that clothes the landscape is of that brilliant tint peculiar to the Tropics in the rainy season. The encircling hills are blue and misty in the clouds which float about their crests. As I strolled down the road that passes through the town I met a string of

tamed elephants with their mahouts, and stopped them to pay them some agreeable civilities. I fed them with cocoanuts bought at a neighboring stall, and patted their trunks and spoke friendly to them after the fashion of the wise. It was interesting to see how they got at the contents of the hard-shelled fruit. Holding them in a curve of their trunks, they smashed them against a stone or laid them on the ground and stepped on them just hard enough to break the shells. One cracked his against a stone, let the juice run into his proboscis, and then poured it into his mouth. A large beast is worth 1000 rs.—say, rather more than £55 in our now degraded rupees. Feudalism still holds its own in the Hill tracts of Ceylon, having hardly yet been extirpated with the change of Government from Native to British rule.

I lectured first at the Dewali, a temple dedicated to one of the Indian "patron deities" of Ceylon. Iddamalgodde Basnayaki Nilami, a noble of the old régime, is the incumbent of this temple and derives from it a considerable income. These Dewalis, or Hindu shrines, one sees in many places actually adjoining the Buddhist Viharas and within the same compound (enclosure). They are an excrescence on pure Buddhism, left by the Tamil sovereigns of former days, and, for the most part, are handsomely endowed with fields and forests.

A *perahéra*, or elephant procession, was a fine sight. Imagine fifteen or twenty of these huge beasts marching along, all decorated with rich trappings; tinsel covered carts; Buddhist priests in yellow robes, borne along in

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portable shrines, trying to look meek but really swelling with pride; devil dancers (*kappakaduwe*) in fantastic costumes, and wearing huge, hideous masks, and harlequins following after; the three *Nilamis*, or noble headmen, in carriages, and the rear brought up by a long procession of men carrying food in baskets slung to *pingoes*, flexible poles of elastic wood, such as are commonly employed for carrying burthens: the whole wild scene lit up by torches innumerable, of dried cocoanut fronds, which burn with a bright glare that turns every dusky figure into a charming artist-model.

After breakfast the next morning we "went gemming," that is, to dig a little in a piece of ground that one Mr. Solomon Fernando had given me for what I could get out of it for the Fund. For the first and only time in my life I realized the gaming excitement of mining. The chances were even whether I should get nothing or turn over a sapphire worth £1000. I handled the spade first myself, but the climate soon warned me to turn over the search to the hardy coolies who stood waiting. We dug a half hour, and got about a handful of sapphires, rubies, topazes, and imperfect cats-eyes by washing the dirt. I took them away in high glee, fancying in my ignorance that the whole sum we needed for the Fund might perhaps be taken from this pit. Alas! when I had the gems appraised in Colombo, I found there was not a single stone of any commercial value in the lot. I never got anything at all from the pit, which was not the generous Mr. Fernando's fault. But I am wrong: I did get something later from

him—a good *loupe*, or magnifying-glass, which he had cut for me from a pure rock crystal taken from my pit.

At 4 o'clock that day I spoke at the preaching-shed in the town and got 500 rs. subscribed. But most of it is still unpaid; subscribing, for show, and paying, for conscience' sake, being two quite different affairs, as we found by sad experience in India as well as in Ceylon. Stupid people, to believe in the law of Karma, and then break such voluntary contracts as these! They remind me of the Sinhalese folklore story of the dull-witted fellow who engaged a blacksmith to make him a knife, and cheated him by giving him soft iron instead of good metal!

A local Branch of the Society resulted from my visit to this town. Another lecture followed on the next day, and the five most important *Nilamis* and *Ratemahatmeyas*—chief officials—were admitted into the membership of the Society. A Baptist missionary, attended by a grinning black catechist, came to my lodgings for an intellectual wrestle with me upon the respective merits of Buddhism and Christianity. They retired sadder, if not wiser men, and made no converts that time. At 11 P.M. our party embarked in a paddy boat, a platform laid over two canoes, to descend the river to Kalutara, where we were to take train. The Captain proved a cheat and a traitor, for, although our bargain was for the exclusive occupancy of the boat, he let come aboard about twenty-five men, despite our remonstrances. Finding argument useless, I bade our friends remove our luggage, and, collaring the fellow, took him before a police magistrate, who was close



at hand. Leaving him in custody we engaged another boat and pushed off at once. We learnt afterwards from an acquaintance who was on a third boat, that, tying up by the bank at a village down the river, he overheard the men on our first boat talking near him about the failure of their plot to rob me of the money I had collected at Ratnapura, and, if necessary, dispatch me! It seems that these villains were notoriously bad characters from the Pettah of Colombo.

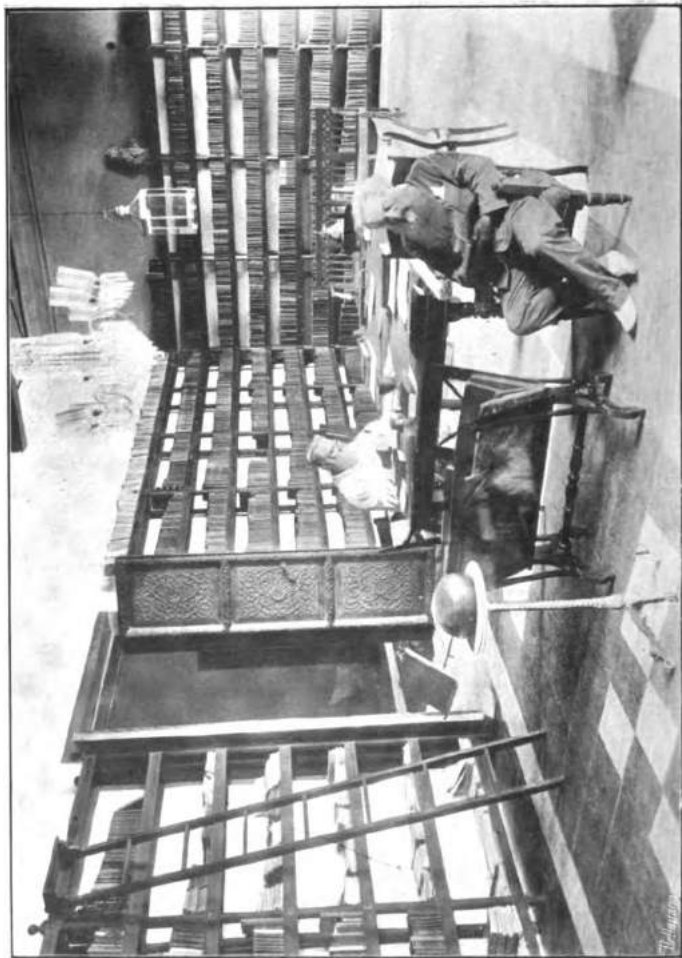
We spent the next day delightfully on the river, admiring the green banks, the luxuriant foliage, the bright-plumed birds, and the mountain chain with its ever shifting tints. Our meals, cooked on board in the most primitive style, consisted of curry and rice, and were eaten off leaf-plates, with our fingers, in Eastern fashion. The night was lovely as Paradise, with first a blaze of stars and then the fairy moonlight, creating about us a dream-landscape and silver-paved stream. The jungle noises were most novel to me, a stranger, and so was a huge crawling animal we saw moving at the water's edge, which I took to be an alligator, but which proved to be a huge lizard, seemingly six feet long. We shot the rapids at one place, and enjoyed the excitement of watching to see if our frail craft should go to pieces and leave us floundering in the water. But our Captain proved a splendid helmsman, and his son, a handsome, well-shaped lad of 13 years, stuck to his bow-oar with cool courage, and we soon passed down to the calm water below. This boy was a wonder to me. He ate nothing but curry and rice, and had not

got his growth, yet he plied the oar throughout the trip of fifty-seven miles, for twenty-two hours at a stretch, save occasional short reliefs, and was as fresh at the end as at the start. I thought it would be hard to find a Western youth who could equal that feat of endurance.

We had no cots or bunks to comfort us, but sat all day and slept all night on mats laid on the bamboo deck, after a bone-crushing fashion which I prefer to leave to the reader's imagination rather than dwell too long upon details. I will only say that a night passed without a mattress, on a tiled roof, is luxury in comparison with it. We reached Kalutara before cockcrow the next morning, took train, and got back to Colombo, for early breakfast, tired enough.

As everybody knows, there is no caste in Buddhism; it is repugnant to its principles, and yet it is recognized, and tenaciously held to among the Sinhalese Buddhists. There are no Brahmins or Kshatriyas among them, the highest social division being that of the agriculturists called *Willallas*. This is but a superior grade of Sudras, yet they are the aristocrats of the Island. Below them, socially, are various sub-divisions, also marked by their callings, such as peelers of cinnamon bark, fishermen, toddy-drawers, and others. It is stupid to a degree that they should stick to their old notions, but the social divisions have been accentuated under Hindu dynasties extending over centuries, and such fixed habits are hard to eradicate. My policy was, throughout, to ignore them; and the better to create a bond of sympathy among my





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colleagues in the interest of our work, I arranged with the intelligent leaders of the Colombo Buddhist T. S. for an anniversary dinner to celebrate the completion of its first year of existence. The function came off at our Colombo headquarters on the evening of July 3rd, and was a delightful success. Fifty-seven of us sat at table regardless of castes, and good feeling prevailed. There were speeches in abundance, and the pleasant episode of presenting a diamond ring to Mr. Wijeyesekara, the indefatigable Honorary Secretary. "The king of stones to the prince of secretaries," as I put it in my presentation speech on behalf of the subscribers. Liberal gifts of money were made for Branch expenses by members, and all went off so well that everybody felt as if the true spirit of Buddhism had descended upon us.

On the 7th July I held a second Convention of priests of both sects, to take counsel as to the best way to push on our work. Sixty-seven of them attended as delegates, and the pleasing spectacle was seen of the members of the two sects eating together. This was an advance upon last year's Convention, when, as may be remembered, I had them fed in separate rooms. My Convocation address was very attentively listened to, as interpreted to them. I had had prepared a large map of the Western Province, showing the boundaries of the different *Korales* (townships?), with their respective populations, and advised them what to do. Approbative speeches were made by H. Sumāngala, Waskaduwe Subhuti and Megittuwatte—the latter, as usual, a splendid one, which warmed all hearts. Resolu-

tions favoring my plans and pledging help were passed, and we adjourned in the best of spirits.

The religious agitation reached all classes, even penetrating into the jails. On the 20th August I received a petition from the convicts in Wellikodde Jail, Colombo, to come with Megittuwatte and lecture to them on their religion, Buddhism. The monk, being a recognized religious teacher, required no special permit, but my case had to be referred to the Colonial Secretary, who granted it after some hesitation. Our audience comprised two hundred and forty criminals, including murderers and those in for murderous assault. One bright-faced, innocent-looking lad of 14 had been implicated in nine murders; in his last case he had held the victim while his uncle stabbed him to death! The uncle and two accomplices made their living by highway robbery and murder. The lad would be set to watch passers along a certain road and give signals, when, if all were safe, the hidden assassins would come out and slay their victims, rob them, and bury their bodies in the jungle. The uncle was hung, the boy spared on account of his youth. I took as the text of my remarks—which were translated by Mr. C. P. Goonewardene—the legendary story of Angulimala, the robber and bandit, whom Lord Buddha converted and made into an exemplary man.

The report of this meeting spreading among the criminal classes, I was invited to lecture, on the 25th September, to a group of a hundred convicts engaged in building the new Lunatic Asylum. Here, again, I had pointed out to

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me a boy murderer—a Muslim, who slew his man when only 10 years of age.

One efficient plan adopted for raising money was a house-to-house visitation in the crowded quarter of Colombo, the "Pettah." Mr. W. D'Abrew, Mr. J. R. De Silva, and other leading members of the Colombo T. S., took it up with great spirit, and achieved success. Their way was to go the length of one street at a time, with a cart filled with "penny savings-bank" earthen pots, to gather the inhabitants of a dozen houses together, explain the objects of the fund, get each of them to take a pot and promise to put in the slot whatever sum they could spare. At the end of the month the Committee would come around again, break the pots, count the coppers, in the presence of the donors, enter the names and amounts in a register, and give fresh pots. In this simple way several hundred rupees were collected within the year. Large employers of Coolie labor, like the stevedores, Messrs. Matthew and H. A. Fernando, would get donations from their men on pay-days, and, in various ways, good-will was shown by the Buddhist public. A touching case of generosity was reported to me one evening, just before a Branch meeting. While the Committee were haranguing some householders in a certain street, a poor, tired-looking woman, miserably clad, was seen to be listening with rapt attention. Presently she turned away and entered a house, from which she soon re-appeared, and, approaching the Committee, handed them a single rupee for the fund. Bashfully, and with tearful eyes, she said that she gained her livelihood by grinding rice

for another poor woman who sold *appas*—the species of girdle-cakes I have mentioned above: her husband—a cartman—was laid up and unable to work; she had been saving up coppers of the smallest denomination, during the last six months, to buy herself a decent cloth; but she felt it was much better for her to help this noble object of the fund than to keep the money for herself: she would wear her old, torn garment another half-year. The story brought the tears to my eyes when I heard it. In the course of the evening, I addressed the Branch about this modern instance of “the widow’s mite,” and said, “Gentlemen, this poor woman has earned her good Karma by her pious deeds; now let us earn the same by relieving her distress.” I threw a rupee on the floor and invited others to do the same. Thirty rupees were soon gathered, and I bade the Committee find the woman and give her the sum. Some time after that, I had her brought to Widyodaya College, to a lecture of mine, and made her sit quietly near the platform, on which were gathered the High Priest and many other monks. In appealing to the large audience for funds, I said that certain gentlemen—naming them—had given 500, 250, 100, and other sums of rupees out of their abundance, but I would now show them a person who had given more than them all combined. Then I told the story and called the woman on to the platform. She was greeted with thunders of applause, and we got a large subscription that day for educational purposes.

A second Convention of monks was held by me that year at Galle. There were ninety-seven delegates, and the High



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Priest, Sumāngala and Rev. Bulatgama were the chief speakers. The object of the meeting was to lay out a programme for the next year's work, which was to be this time confined to the Southern Province. Upon counting up, at the close, it was found that fifty-two lectures had been bespoken, five more than I had given that year in the Western Province. A committee of twelve influential priests was chosen to co-operate with the lay members of the Galle T. S., for getting up the lectures and fixing a timetable. After a two days' session the Convention adjourned. The Trust Deed and other legal papers having—after the most vexatious and unnecessary delays and impediments—been executed, and all other business closed up, I sailed for Bombay on the 13th December.

It is my pleasant duty to state that, throughout these subsequent nineteen years, a certain number of the members of the Colombo Branch have applied themselves to the onerous task of keeping alive the Buddhist movement, with unflagging conscientiousness. When one realizes their inexperience in the management of public business unconnected with Governmental supervision; their infirmities of temperament, due to an enervating climate and to centuries of national disorder and the exclusion of the ancestors of most of them from public responsibilities, the embarrassing and unprecedented relation of the laity with the priesthood, in this religious and educational movement, the well-nigh irrepressible friction of caste, and the suspicion which many uneducated and unenlightened men feel towards foreigners, who are at the

same time whites, one should rather wonder at the tenacity shown in pure altruistic work, than be surprised and shocked at faults that have cropped up in the course of events. For my part, I have never changed one iota in my first estimate of the Sinhalese, nor in my brotherly affection for them; and I feel heartily grateful when I see how this re-born religious sentiment has struck its roots deep into the heart of the nation, and how highly encouraging are the prospects for the future. Our Society Branches have, with a few exceptions, been inert and useless as centres of Theosophy, but all have the right to take credit for a great total of work done along philanthropical lines. My Western Province tour of 1881 was mismanaged, weeks of my time were frittered away, a mere fraction of the money subscribed on paper was collected; yet, in the long run, all has turned out for the best, and in reviewing the history of that year I have no reproaches to make against those who did their best according to their lights.

On the 19th December I reached home and was joyously welcomed by our headquarters group, whom I found in good health. Things in my absence had gone on in their usual way, the circulation of the *Theosophist* and the volume of our correspondence had increased, and all was peace. But a rude shock awaited me. *H. P. B. conveyed to me a most kind message from the Masters about my success in Ceylon, seeming to have completely forgotten the angry threats and even written declaration that the Society would be abandoned by them if I went there, and that neither with*

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*them nor with her would I have any further relations.* Thenceforward, I did not love or prize her less as a friend and a teacher, but the idea of her infallibility, if I had ever entertained it even approximately, was gone forever.





## CHAPTER XXII.

### FROM BOMBAY NORTHWARD AND BACK.

A NUMBER of phenomena occurred at our house during the first week in January 1882, upon which I shall not dwell, as the details have all been published and doubt has been cast upon the genuineness of some. My rule has ever been, throughout my forty years of psychological researches, to eliminate all incidents which appeared to me tainted with the least suspicion of bad faith: I wish to count only those which have, to my mind, the stamp of genuineness. I may be deceived, often, but I try to be honest.

An early incident of the year was the arrival at Bombay, on a round-the-world tour, of the late Mr. D. M. Bennett, Editor of the *Truthseeker*. He came on the 10th of January, and was met on board his steamer, the P. and O. "Cathay," by K. M. Shroff (the Parsi gentleman who lectured in the States), Damodar and myself. Mr. Bennett was a medium-sized stout man, with a big head, a high forehead, brown hair, and blue eyes. He was a very

interesting and sincere person, a Freethinker who had suffered a year's imprisonment for his bitter—often coarse—attacks upon Christian dogmatism. A sham case was manufactured against him by an unscrupulous detective of a Christian Society at New York, who ordered of him, under an assumed name, a copy of a popular work on sexual physiology, which Mr. Bennett supplied in his capacity of bookseller, without having even read it. A prosecution was then begun against him for circulating indecent books through the post, and an evidently prejudiced judge and jury condemned him to prison. The animus and trickery were identical with those of the bigots who prosecuted Mrs. Besant and Mr. Bradlaugh in the matter of the Knowlton pamphlet. He was made to serve out his whole term of one year, despite the fact that a petition, signed by 100,000 persons, was sent to President Hayes on his behalf. When he was discharged, a monster audience welcomed him enthusiastically at the most fashionable public hall in New York, and a fund was subscribed to pay his expenses on a world-round tour of observation of the practical working of Christianity in all lands. The record of his observations was embodied in an interesting work, entitled "A Freethinker's Journey around the World." His shrewd and sarcastic notes on Palestine are especially striking.

In conversation, I learnt from him that both he and his wife had been members of the Shaker Society; he, for a number of years. His religious yet eclectic mind had revolted against the narrowness and intolerance of the Shakers

and of Christian sectarians in general; he and the gentle Shakeress in question decided to marry and make a home of their own; they left the Community; he devoted himself to the study of Christian evidences; became a confirmed skeptic, and, after some years in mercantile business, devoted the rest of his life to a vigorous Free-thought propaganda. There was a candor and friendliness about the man which made us sympathize at once. The "Occult World" of Mr. Sinnett had just appeared, and Mr. Bennett read it with avidity: in fact, he made very extensive quotations from it in his journal and in his new book. A full discussion about our views with H. P. B. and myself led him to apply for membership, and this put me into the dilemma which I have frequently described, orally and in writing, but which should not be omitted from my present historical sketch, as the case teaches a lesson too much needed by us all.

A blatant theological Boanerges, named Cook—Joseph Cook, the *Reverend* Joseph Cook, to be exact—a burly man who seemed to believe in the Trinity, with himself as the Third Person—happened at Bombay on a lecturing tour, simultaneously with Mr. Bennett's arrival, and was "boomed" by the Anglo-Indian public. Their journals did their best for him, and used the story of Mr. Bennett's martyrdom as a trump card, denouncing him as a corrupter of public morals and a jail-bird whom decent people should avoid. The Christ-like Joseph opened the ball at his first lecture at the Town Hall, and committed the blind folly of equally denouncing us, Theosophists, as adventurers, in the

hearing of a large audience of Hindus and Parsis, who loved and knew us after two whole years of intercourse. The clue thus given to the hostile press caused them to attack and revile Mr. Bennett to such an extent that I hesitated to take him into membership, for fear that it might plunge us into another public wrangle, and thus interfere with our aim of peacefully settling down to our proper business of theosophical study and propaganda. It was an instinct of worldly prudence, certainly not chivalric altruism, and I was punished for it, for, on expressing my views to H. P. B., she was overshadowed by a Master who told me my duty and reproached me for my faulty judgment. I was bidden to remember how far from perfect I had been when they accepted my offer of service at New York, how imperfect I was still, and not venture to sit as a judge over my fellowman; to recall that, in the present instance, I knew that the applicant had been made the scapegoat of the whole anti-Christian party, and richly deserved all the sympathy and encouragement we could give him. I was sarcastically told to look through the whole list of our members and point out a single one without faults. That was enough; I returned to Mr. Bennett, gave him the Application blank to sign, and H. P. B. and I became his sponsors. I then turned upon our reverend slanderer and defied him to meet me in public on a given date, and make good his false charges against us. Swami Dyânand Sarasvati—then in Bombay—also challenged him on behalf of the Vedic Religion, and Mr. Bennett on his own account. The Swami and I received shifty replies, but Mr. Bennett's note

went unanswered. Mr. Cook's excuse was that he had to go to Poona. Captain A. Banon, F. T. S., 39th N.I., who was with us at the time, sent him a challenge to meet us at Poona, with notice that if he again evaded us, he—the Captain—should post him as a liar and a coward. We held the meeting at Framji Cowasji Hall, Bombay, on the evening designated in our challenges ; Mr. Bennett, Captain Banon, and I made addresses ; I had Damodar read some certificates of our good character and of my public services in America, and the packed multitude, which crammed every inch of room and the approaches to the Hall, thundered their approval of our conduct. The next evening H. P. B., Banon and I went on to Poona, only to find Mr. Cook had fled to the other side of India without filling his engagement with the Poona public !

The following day I lectured at Hirabagh, in the Town Hall, to so large an audience that the room would not hold them, and we had to adjourn to the open air. We stopped four days at Poona, during which time there was another lecture again at the same place, and we formed the Poona T. S., which still exists under the same President, Judge N. D. Khandalvâla, whose name is familiar to all our Branches throughout the world as one of our ablest and staunchest associates. We then returned to Bombay. In due course, Mr. Bennett was formally admitted to our membership, in company with the late Prof. J. Smith, M.L.C., C.M.G., of Sydney University, and a young Hindu gentleman of Bombay.

On the 12th January (1882), the seventh anniversary



of the T. S. was celebrated at Framji Cowasji Hall, in presence of one of our usual monster audiences. Black-guard handbills had been freely circulated to try and do us some harm, but the most cordial and sympathetic spirit prevailed throughout the meeting. Mr. Sinnett was present and spoke, and the other speakers, besides myself, were Moorad Ali Beg, and Messrs. D. M. Bennett and K. M. Shroff; all receiving great applause. Damodar read the Treasurer's Report, which very completely vindicated H. P. B. and myself from the low calumny that we were running the Society for personal profit. I have a Diary note of a few days later, stating that Mr. Shroff brought us word that the meeting had done us great service in bringing around public sympathy to our side.

I note, among several phenomena occurring in those days, one which I think good. Damodar received four letters by one post which contained Mahatmic writing, as we found on opening them. They were from four widely separated places and all post-marked. I handed the whole mail to Prof. Smith, with the remark that we often found such writings inside our mail correspondence, and asked him to kindly examine each cover to see whether there were any signs of its having been tampered with. On his returning them to me with the statement that all were perfectly satisfactory, so far as could be seen, I asked H. P. B. to lay them against her forehead and see if she could find any Mahatmic message in either of them. She did so with the first few that came to hand, and said that in two there was such writing. She then read the messages

clairvoyantly, and I requested Prof. Smith to open them himself. After again closely scrutinizing them, he cut open the covers, and we all saw and read the messages exactly as H. P. B. had deciphered them by clairvoyant sight.

Within the next fortnight we saw much of Prince Harisinhji, Prince Dajiraj, Thakur Sahib of Wadhwan, the Thakur of Morvi and other notables, and there were numerous phenomena in the way of letter-dropping from the ceilings of rooms, and once from the open sky, when we were in the garden. They have been described before, and will be found copied in the *Occult World*.

On the 14th February I delivered, in the Town Hall, Bombay, in presence of an overflowing audience of Parsis, and with Mr. Nanibhai Byramji Jeejeebhoy, one of their most distinguished personages, in the chair, a prepared lecture on "The Spirit of the Zoroastrian Religion" (*vide* "Theosophy, Religion, and Occult Science," London, George Redway, 1882), in which I endeavoured to show its highly spiritual character, and its identity with Hinduism and Buddhism in the matter of Yoga-training and the awakening of spiritual powers in man. The approbation of the audience was shown in a way to convince us all that the discourse was satisfactory. At the close, some interesting and kindly remarks were made by the Chairman, and by Mr. K. R. Cama and Ervad Dastur Jivanji J. Modi, the learned Orientalists. A subscription paper was subsequently circulated among the Parsis, and 20,000 copies of the lecture were printed in English and a Guzerati

translation—a gratifying compliment. I must say for myself, that I only consented to prepare the discourse after I had vainly tried to persuade Mr. Cama to do it, for I thought it somewhat presumptuous for an outsider to handle so great a subject, with so little material available for quotation. In fact, I believe the Zoroastrian Religion had never been discussed from the same standpoint before. The comments of the Parsi press were various; some very favorable, some the reverse. But it happened that the adverse criticisms were all from Editors who prided themselves upon their 'reformatory' principles, and were out of sympathy with Zoroastrian orthodoxy: in short, they were Freethinkers, believing nothing in either spirit or Yoga, and the chief among them regarding the legends of their great priest-adepts of old as fairy-tales and childish nonsense. Of course, from such critics, we had nothing good to hope. To this day they are hostile, but we manage somehow to get on very well without their praise: there are more Parsi members of the T. S. now than ever before, and the Bombay T. S. is almost wholly composed of those excellent people and staunch friends.

A long tour to the North was my next important work of that season. With Pandit Bhawani Shunker as a companion, I left Bombay on the 17th February, by train. H. P. B., Damodar, Shroff and a large number of other members came to the station to see us off. Passing by Mount Abu, the sacred Jain mountain with its bare, rugged, splintered crests, and through "Malwa's fields of sleep," or poppy districts, we reached Jeypore on the

second morning. The usual compliments of limes and garlands were given us at the station, and we were installed at the very comfortable rest-house in this most bright and attractive of Indian cities. I lectured at the Maharajah's College, in a spacious quadrangle, from a platform under a great red canopy, to a large audience. There were 900 students in the College, two-thirds of them Hindus and one-third Mussulmans: there is also a separate school for young nobles. I was shown the College Library, and, being asked to make a note in the visitors' Register, wrote: "This is a good Missionary Library": which it was; some Padre, having been entrusted with the book selection, filled the shelves with the driest, stupidest, most namby-pamby works on Christian Theology. I thought it a petty swindle.

The Jeypore Branch T. S. was formed on the next day with respectable officers and members.

Passing on to Delhi, whence I enjoyed my first view of the architectural wonders created by the Mahommedan Emperors of the past, and the picturesque Chandni Chowk boulevard, I lectured as usual and formed many notable acquaintances. It was while strolling along this street and noticing the imprints of Urdu seals at the doors of the seal-engravers' shops, that I was struck with the resemblance they bore to the cryptographic signature of one of our Mahatmas, and, for the mere whim of it, ordered a common brass seal (price 4*d.*) engraved with it, to show H. P. B. on my return. I had no ulterior purpose whatever, and as it turned out, it was a stupid mistake, for one may imagine

my resentment when, many years later, I saw candle-smoke impressions of this wretched object affixed to palpably bogus Mahatmic notes and letters sent out by the late Mr. Judge. How the wretched seal got into his possession I do not know, but when we met in London, in 1894, he told me that it was no longer in existence, and he hoped that would pacify me. On seeing an imprint of the seal on a false message, I had written him that, if I found that any scoundrel was using it for evil purposes, I should denounce the fraud and publish in the *Theosophist* a facsimile of the seal. He advised me, in reply, not to do so, because the public would believe me *particeps criminis*; to which I wrote that I did not care in the least what might be said about me, as I was perfectly innocent of wrong and my conscience would support me: but expose the swindle I certainly should. I have his letters on this subject, and suppose that mine to him are among his papers.

At Meerut and Bareilly, the next towns on my programme, the routine of lecturing and branch-forming was repeated. At Rohilkund Institute the subject of my discourse was a brass dinner-plate, a queer selection one would say, but it was provoked by the following incident. Here, as everywhere else, I was treated with the greatest kindness and respect by my Indian friends: they provided me with a furnished house, and had a Brahmin cook to prepare my food, which I ate off a brass plate. On the day of the lecture three or four of them were standing about, watching me eat with my fingers in the ancient fashion. They had paid me so many compliments that I was tempted

to give them a lesson, so I quietly asked them what they should do with that plate when I had gone. They blushed, and were too embarrassed to speak. I said, "Don't hesitate to tell the truth. I know what you will do. The plate will either be given to the scavenger or passed through fire to purify it before any of you Brahmins can touch it. Why is this? See that cook's filthy cloth and his generally untidy appearance, and say if I am not less likely to defile the plate than he." They hung their heads, not wishing to be impolite to their guest, but one of them finally said, "We don't know the real reason why, but only that it is so inculcated in our Shastras." "Very well, then," I said; "I shall take this plate as my text this evening and explain the mystery." So I did, discoursing upon the nature of the human aura, the theory of gradual purification by Yoga, and the theoretical state of spiritual refinement at which the true Brahmin arrives. I showed them how their custom of eating separately, father not touching son, brother brother, nor relative relative, while at meals, was strictly based on this theory of individual development as opposed to the collective one of the family, and that as electricity and magnetism are transmitted by conductors from one object to another, so, if an advanced Brahmin should touch a person less pure, he risked contamination of the aura and consequent injury to himself. The mistake made in these spiritually degenerate days, I said, was to suppose that because an unwashed person happened to have been born a Brahmin he must, of necessity, have a less polluting touch than a cleanly white person. Of caste, only the bare name

now survives, and that is usually an obstruction and a nuisance to all concerned. It should either be restored to its pristine value and utility or thrown aside as a worn-out vestment. I find, by my Diary, that I employed pictures of Hindu gods to exemplify the esoteric meaning of their quaint shapes and multiple symbols.

At Lucknow I saw the battered Residency, which withstood the five months' siege by the swarming thousands of Sepoy rebels, thanks to the heroic bravery and dauntless fortitude of its small, ill-fed, ill-armed garrison. I saw the cellars where 250 women and children lived throughout that fearful time, and where most were heroines and some died of fright.

Among the new members of our local Branch were some Princes of the Oudh Royal Family—Mohammedans—who were flatly charged with having apostatized from Islam and adopted the new religion of Theosophy! My lecture was given in the Baradari, or Hall of the Twelve Columns, a spacious structure standing in the late King's pleasure or Kaiserbagh, where he used to waste his useless life in sensual revels of naked women and love-dramas and songs. He must have been a beast.

To Cawnpore next, the ever-memorable scene of the brutal massacres of the Rebellion. A new Branch here, and two lectures, and then on to Allahabad and the perennially charming Sinnetts. There were meetings of Theosophists and lectures and some phenomena at Mr. Sinnett's house, which I shall not dwell upon. I sent Bhavani Shunker back to Bombay and went on myself to Behar and Bengal.

Berhampore, once the centre of military and political activity in the Company days, has always been one of the best working nuclei of the Theosophical movement. The late Babu Nobin K. Bannerji, his colleagues Dinanath Ganguly, Satcory Mukerji, and some others, possessed the two elements of success for any public movement—perfect conviction and perfect zeal. Their names figure conspicuously in our Society's Indian history. A great fuss was made over my visit, and yet they seemed to think they had failed to show me enough respect. A Rajah's carriage, with driver and footmen in gaudy liveries, came many miles to meet me on the other side of the Ganges and drive me to Berhampore; at the seven-mile post a guard of honor of red-coated sowars met and closed in behind the carriage; in the town I had to pass between two rows of saluting Sepoys, silver-sticks-in-waiting, and all sorts of more or less decorative flunkeys from the Palace; there were double lines of pennons fluttering from lance-staffs; my quarters gay with bunting and greenery, and every sort of worldly flim-flam that is farcically supposed to administer to the pleasure and complacency of public men.

Besides seeing my dear colleagues I had the honor and profit of becoming acquainted with Babu Ram Das Sen, the Oriental scholar and valued correspondent of the chief European Orientalists, who also joined our Society and remained its friend until his premature death.

Calcutta was my final stage on this roundabout tour of 1882. I was first entertained there by my excellent friends Colonel and Mrs. Gordon, and, later, by the Maharajah, Sir



Jotendro Mohun Tagore, the premier Indian noble of the Metropolis. At the Gordons' happened the famous phenomenon of the dropping of letters from the medium Eglinton, and H. P. B., out of the air. All the details were published at the time by Mrs. Gordon, and may be read by everybody who chooses.

A few days later I accepted the invitation of Maharajah Sir Jotendro Mohun Tagore, and became his guest at his palatial Guest-House (Boituckhana) for the remainder of my stay in Calcutta. This gentleman is one of the courtliest, most cultured, and estimable friends I have ever known. He fills a great position with perfect dignity and graciousness. I have enjoyed his hospitality several times; once along with H. P. B., and once with Mrs. Besant and Countess Wachtmeister.

The first four days of April were devoted to writing my lecture on "Theosophy the Scientific Basis of Religion," as I could find time in the intervals of other engagements. On the 4th, the Maharajah held a reception for me, to make me acquainted with the chief Indian gentlemen of the city. On the 5th, my lecture was given at the Town Hall to a tremendous audience: the larger, I fancy, because of the publication in the unfriendly local journals of the then recent savage and unprovoked attack on us by Swami Dayānand Saraswati. Such attempts at injuring our cause have invariably recoiled on their authors. The beloved Bengali author and philanthropist, the late Babu Peary Chand Mitra, was my Chairman.

H. P. B. joined me the next day at the Boituckhana, and

that evening, at the same place, we organized the Bengal Theosophical Society, one of our best known branches, with Babu Peary Chand Mittra as President, Babu Norendranath Sen as Secretary, and Babu Balai Chand Mullick as Treasurer. For many years now, Norendra Babu has been the President, and may almost be said to have done most of the public work of the Branch himself, in his capacity of Editor of the *Indian Mirror*; for the public has been kept fully advised by him of every important event in the history of our movement, and his brave appeals have done much towards bringing about the Hindu revival in Bengal; which is a well-known and universally admitted fact.

On the 9th of the month, I went in company with Mrs. Gordon to the garden-house of Babu Janaki Nath Ghosal, a very influential Bengali gentleman, and admitted into membership his ideally beautiful wife—daughter of the venerable Debendra Nath Tagore, associate-founder, with the late Rajah Rammohun Roy, of the famed Brahmo Samaj. Mrs. Ghosal, besides being a Peri for beauty, is also one of the brightest intellects of the day, and her children inherit her talents. Along with her, I admitted three other Indian ladies. This sounds simple enough to Western people, but they should recollect that since the days of Mussulman supremacy the high-born ladies of Bengal have been secluded behind the *purdah*, or entrance-door curtain of the Zenana, the Brahmo ladies alone excepted, and the fact of my being admitted so often as I have, into the family privacy, is a striking proof of the kindly light in which I am regarded by the Hindus.

H. P. B. and I stopped in town until the 19th (April), busy as working bees, writing, receiving visitors, holding discussions with outsiders, and meetings of the new local Branch. I see that on the 14th there was a recast of officers, the new list being as follows: *President*, Peary Chand Mitra; *Vice-Presidents*, Dljendra Nath Tagore and Raja Syama Shankar Roy; *Secretary and Treasurer*, Norendranath Sen; *Assistant Secretaries*, Balai Chand Mullick and Mohini Mohun Chatterji.

We embarked on the 19th for Madras, but the "India" lay at the wharf all night taking in cargo, and what with this awful din, the scorching heat of the cabins and the mosquitoes, one may imagine the kind of night we spent and the kind of temper H. P. B. was in, the next morning! We had our first chance to learn by personal experience the dangers and difficulties of the navigation of the Hughli River, but, after anchoring for the night, we got to sea on the 20th and headed for Madras.

We reached that port on the 23rd at 11 A.M., but got a message from T. Subba Row asking us to stop aboard until 4 P.M., for which hour a formal reception had been arranged. We did as requested, and, on landing, were greeted by the principal Indian gentlemen of Madras and a large crowd of sightseers. We enjoyed the breezy drive along the beach-road—the best in India—and were lodged in the bungalow of the late Sir T. Madhava Row in the suburb of Mylapore. Our old Sinhalese colleague, Mr. W. D'Abrew, was with us. At the house an extremely well-worded address signed by the best known Indian gentlemen of the place, and bound

as a book in red morocco, was read to us by the Hon. Mir Humayun Jah, a representative of the Mysore ex-royal family of Tippoo Sultan, who then garlanded us in the customary Eastern fashion. My reply was warmly received. Our time was crowded with engagements, during the next succeeding days, with visitors and receptions of candidates into membership; among the latter, T. Subba Row, whom I had to admit alone in private, for some unfathomable reason of mystery; the venerable philanthropist and statesman, Dewan Bahadur R. Raghoonath Row; Judge P. Sreenivas Row, Judge G. Muthuswamy Chetty (also of the Court of Small Causes) and his sons, and, in fact, most of the leading men of Madras of Asiatic race. The community seemed caught by a wave of enthusiasm for the time being, and it was not strange that we two should have believed it would last, but time dispelled the illusion. Shortly afterward the Cosmopolitan Club, with lounging, reading, and billiard rooms, was started, and our excited friends gradually left metaphysics and Yoga philosophy for the elevating game of pool and the mental pabulum of the newspaper files. However, for a time our rose-garden bloomed and we inhaled the sweet odors of compliment. So great was the rush for membership that I had to admit the candidates *en bloc*, and I have an entry to the effect that I took in one party of twenty-two on the roof-terrace in the moonlight. Of course we had to state the case of Theosophy before the general public, and so, on the 26th April (1882) I lectured at Pachaiappah's Hall on "The Common Foundation of Religions," to a crushing multitude that made the Trustees

dubious about the safety of the building, the public hall being in the first story, up a long flight of steps. The same question has arisen many times since, I am happy to say, for our public meetings have always overcrowded the building. H. P. B. and Abrew was on the platform beside me ; she, the cynosure of all eyes. The next evening a lot of twenty-one more candidates were accepted, and after the ceremony, the Madras Theosophical Society came into being, with R. Raghoonath Row as President, and T. Subba Row as Secretary. The former used his best endeavors to make it a useful Branch, but he was not well seconded by the latter, who was a most indolent executive officer.

On the 30th of the month H. P. B. took a party of seventeen of us, including T. Subba Row, the Dewan Bahadur, and myself, to Tiruvellum, once a very holy place, owing to the great souls who lived—and some still live, as it is alleged—there. A procession, with music and flowers, met and escorted us from the station to the place assigned for our lodging. We were particularly anxious to visit the sanctuary of the temple, but, as the sordid Brahmins in charge demanded a bonus of rs. 25, we felt so disgusted that we refused to go into the polluted shrine, and returned the same day to Madras.

A second lecture being on the programme for the next day, the Dewan Bahadur and his associate committee-men tried to prevent a repetition of the crush of the first day by charging for reserved seats, the proceeds to go to some charity. On reaching Pachaiappah's Hall, however, we had great trouble to push our way from the door to the stage

through the packed crowd, while the poor Dewan Bahadur, albeit one of the most honored personages in Madras, was so jammed into a corner that, instead of constraining the audience to go hither or thither, he was obliged to call for the help of my square shoulders and muscular strength to rescue him from his plight.

We began, the next day, a journey by canal in a house-boat, which may as well be described in a separate chapter.





## CHAPTER XXIII.

### A HOUSE-BOAT JOURNEY WITH H. P. B.

**I**N all our years of intercourse H. P. B. and I had never been so closely drawn together as on this boat-journey on the Buckingham Canal—a famine-relief work that fed thousands of starving peasants during a tragical epoch of the Duke of Buckingham's Governorship of Madras. Hitherto we had lived and worked in the company of third parties, whereas now we two were alone in a *budgerow*, or small house-boat, with our servant Babula and the cooly crew as our sole companions while the craft was in motion. Our quarters were cramped enough, to be sure. At either side of the small cabin was a locker covered with a mattress; the lid arranged to lift on hinges, the inside forming a huge chest for storage of one's effects. Between the two lockers—each

“A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day”—

was a portable table which, when not in use, could be folded up and hung from the ceiling. A lavatory, a small pantry with shelves, a cooking platform outside, behind,

with a broken earthen pot-bottom, laid on sand, for fire-place, and some few indispensable cooking utensils, a large jar for drinking water, and our camp table-furniture completed our domestic arrangements and sufficed for our wants. When a fair wind blew, a sail was raised and we glided before it; when adverse, the coolies jumped ashore, and, with the tow-line passed over their shoulders, dragged us along at the rate of perhaps three miles an hour. In another boat followed some of our best and kindest Madras colleagues, among them that golden-hearted old man, P. Iyaloo Naidu, Retired Deputy Collector, whose acquaintanceship was a privilege, whose friendship an honor. Our destination was the town of Nellore, a two-days' journey by water.

As we had not started until 7 P.M. (3rd May 1882), and the moon was almost full, it was a sort of fairy voyage we were making on the waveless silvery water. No sound broke the silence, after once leaving the city limits, save the occasional yelps of a pack of jackals, the low murmur of our boat-coolies' voices, talking together, and the lap-lap-lapping of the water against the boat. In place of glass sashes, there were hinged venetian blinds, with hooks to fasten them to the overhead deck-beams at pleasure, and through these a gentle night breeze blew cool, and brought us the smell of wet rice-fields. My colleague and I sat, enchanted with the scene and refreshed by the grateful and unaccustomed rest from our life of excitement and publicity. We talked but little, being under the witchery of the night, and went to our beds with the certainty of a refreshing sleep.



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Wafted along by the breeze of the S.-W. monsoon, our boat sailed steadily throughout the night, and morning found us well on our way. At an early hour we tied up at the bank, for the coolies to build their fire and cook their curry and rice; our people in the other boat joined us, I went for a swim, and Babula cooked us a capital breakfast, which our colleagues, because of their caste prohibitions, could not share. Then on once more, the boats as noiseless as spectres. H. P. B. and I occupied the whole day with arrears of correspondence and editorial writing for the *Theosophist*, with occasional breaks for conversation. Of course, the one theme for us was the condition and prospects of our Society, and the probable ultimate effect on contemporary public opinion of the Eastern ideas we were spreading. In this respect we were optimists in the same degree, no shadow of doubt or difference crossing either of our minds. It was this ever-potent, overmastering feeling of confidence that made us so indifferent to calamities and obstacles which might have otherwise brought us to a standstill fifty times during our career. It may not be gratifying to some of our present colleagues, yet it is strictly true, that our forecasts dealt with the coloring of modern thought with Theosophical ideas far more than with the possible extension of the Society throughout the world; of that, we had practically no expectation. As, when leaving New York for Bombay, we did not even dream that the Society might cover India and Ceylon with Branches, so now, on that silently moving boat, we gave no thought to the possibility of its creating a popular agitation that would plant its

branches and create its centres of propaganda throughout America and Europe, to say nothing of Australasia, Africa, and the Far East. Why should we? To whom could we look then? Where were the giants fit to carry such a heavy load on their shoulders? This was but in 1882, remember, and outside Asia there were but three Branches of the T. S. in existence (not counting the New York centre, which had not been re-organized). The London Lodge and the Corfu (Ionian) Branch were inert bodies. Mr. Judge was away in South America for a Silver-Mining Company (I believe I am right about the date), and nothing like an active propaganda had been organized in the United States. We two old people in the boat were practically managing the thing alone, and our field was the East; and as H. P. B. showed no more prophetic gift than myself at the time, we talked and worked and built our foundations for the great future that neither of us foresaw.

How many of the present multitude of Fellows of the Society would give almost anything to have had the close intimacy I enjoyed with my friend on that boat journey! What made it all the pleasanter and more profitable was that she was in good health and spirits, and there was nothing to mar the charm of our companionship: otherwise, I might almost as well have been a cage-companion of a hungry lioness at the Zoo; one of us must certainly have gone ashore and walked, or shifted into Iyaloo Naidoo's tender! Dear, lamented friend, companion, colleague, teacher, chum: none could be more exasperating at her worst times, none more lovable and admirable at her best.

I believe we have worked in lives before, I believe we shall work in lives to come, for the good of mankind. This open page of my Diary, with its but few fragmentary notes, brings back to memory one of the most delightful episodes of the Theosophical movement, and I see a picture of H. P. B. in her shabby wrapper, sitting on her locker opposite me, smoking cigarettes, her huge head with its brown crinkled hair bent over the page she was writing on, her forehead full of wrinkles, a look of introverted thought in her light blue eyes, her aristocratic hand driving the pen swiftly over the lines, and no sound to be heard save the liquid music of ripples against the boat's sides, or the occasional rub of a cooly's naked foot on the roof above us, as he moved to tighten a rope or obey some order of the helmsman.

The next evening at 5 o'clock we reached a place called Muttukur, where we landed to go overland to Nellore, a distance of fifteen miles. Our round of bustle recommenced. A large delegation was waiting for us: we were conducted to a tent where refreshments were offered, and our hands and necks were soon full of fragrant flowers. An Address of Welcome was responded to, and in due time we found ourselves in a light phaeton with coolies for horses. Lithe, active fellows, they ran us along so as to cover the distance within three hours. A certain weird interest attaches to them, as they are a tribe of ancient origin called "Anadhia," who are hereditary serpent-charmers and extirpators. People who wish to sleep safe in their beds without the thought of snakes getting into their rooms, call an Anadhi and he walks around and around the house, repeating

charms and setting up some enchanted stick or other fetish, after which no serpent will venture to trouble the inmates. Our friends declared this to be a well-known fact, and on their authority alone I give it record. I was told a thing worth knowing by travellers and hunters who have to camp out in snaky localities. It was this, that a serpent *will not pass over a rope of horsehair*, and that perfect immunity may be obtained from their visits by laying such a horsehair rope around one's house, tent, or whole camp. My informants did not know whether this is attributable to the roughness of the prickly rope hurting the snake's tender skin, or to some magnetic (auric) or other occult property of the hair being antipathetic to the reptile. However, that doesn't so much matter as the fact itself, if true.

We got to Nellore at 11 P.M., and received an ovation. A splendid house had been fitted up for our party; there were many flowers, and decorative greenery, and, late as was the hour, I had to reply to two addresses—one in Sanskrit, the other in English, after which we were allowed to go to our beds, tired out. A lecture was given the next day; the following one was devoted to editorial work and admissions to membership; in the evening a delegation of the most learned Pandits of the district came and put us questions; and at 11 P.M. we formally organized the Nellore T. S. A second lecture on the 9th May, more admissions of candidates, and more writing finished up our business at Nellore, and we then moved on to a canal station called Mypaud, whither the boat had been taken to save eighteen miles of canal travelling. Our writing and talks were now resumed

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and in due course we got to Padaganjam, the limit of canal navigation in the hot season, and the place whence, to proceed on to Guntur, our Ultima Thule, we had to take palanquins and *jampan*s, or carried chairs. They did not turn up until the following day, and as the coolies had to rest, we did not start until just before sunset.

Our caravan consisted of four palanquins and one *jampan*, which, added to the baggage-porters, made our coolies number fifty-three persons. We soon came to a ford where a river had to be crossed, and the performance made me laugh heartily and H. P. B. to swear. The water was so deep that, to keep our palanquin floors dry, the bearers had to balance the thick poles on their heads, to lift us high enough. Before entering the water they stripped naked, all but their *langooti*, or breech-clout. Picking their steps with greatest caution and sounding with their staves, they went in deeper and deeper until the water came up to their armpits. I politely led the way so that H. P. B. might know if I was drowned, and turn back. It was a ticklish experience to sit there motionless, so as not to destroy the balance of the round pole resting on my six coolies' heads, and, fancy what a mess I and my papers would be in if one of the men made a mis-step; however, one travels to gain experience, so I lay on my back as still as possible. When in mid-stream I began to hear the sound of a familiar voice from the next palanquin, and presently H. P. B. began shouting at me that these men would surely upset her. I shouted back that it didn't matter, as she was too fat to sink and I should fish her out. Then she began to use weighty objur-

gations at me, with occasional diversions at the coolies, who, not understanding a word, kept on their way as before. At last we reached the opposite shore and my colleague rested herself by getting out and walking about, and, after a few cigarettes, had forgotten her recent troubles.

The journey was very tedious and hot, the thermometer standing at 98° F. in the shade, and the coolies keeping up night and day, during the three days we were on the road, a monotonous refrain which at last became terribly trying to the nerves. Then at night they carried large torches made of a mop of cotton twist, saturated with cocoanut oil, which burnt with a cloud of smoke that almost choked us in the palanquins, and made a most villainous smell. They were carried at either side of each palanquin so that the coolies might see any snakes that might be coiled in the path, and as the wind blew across our path there was no escaping the smoke from the torch on the windward side, and when we had the chance to look at each other at the next halt we found that we and our clothes were smutted almost black. It was compensation enough, however, to see the jemadar, or head cooly, kill a big cobra on which the forward bearers would almost certainly have trodden but for the torch-light.

Guntur was reached at sunset on the third day, and we were plunged at once into a scene of tumultuous welcome. The whole population, they told us, saving those too old, young, or infirm to be about at night, had come outside the town to meet us. They numbered thousands, and every one of them seemed determined to come close enough to

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have a good look at us. The result may be imagined: our progress was like forcing one's way through a compact wall of flesh. We were first taken to a tent where we had refreshments and introductions to the notables of the place; but the crowd became so importunate that this business was cut short, and H. P. B. and I had to mount on chairs to show ourselves. Then a short speech had to be made, and only then were we put into some sort of conveyance—jampans, I believe—and moved on in the procession. The streets were jammed with people, from house to house, and we could only move at a snail's pace. Limelights and Bengal colored fires blazed about us at every step, and it was really curious to watch the lighting up of H. P. B.'s massive head and shoulders with the different glares. As she preceded me I had a capital chance to observe the artistic effects. A more truly popular ovation could not be imagined, for all the elements were there, including the continuous roar of cheering that ran along with us, a river of sound, all the way to our destination. Of torches there was no end, and Guntur was as light as by day. Two triumphal arches spanned the principal streets. Arrived at the house, we had to receive and reply to two addresses in English and two in Telegu, the tone of exaggerated compliment in all of them making us feel like a pair of fools, and putting me to a strain to find words to answer them with proper reserve. After this ordeal came more introductions, prolonged conversations, and the initiation of one candidate, who was obliged to leave town before morning.

The next day's lecture was on "The Soul: arguments of

Science in favor of its Existence and Transmigrations"; the subject having been given me because of the prevailing tone of scepticism among the educated young men of the place. The chief of the local Lutheran Mission, Rev. L. L. Uhl, and a number of his friends were present and took notes. If I recollect aright I stated in my discourse that the hold of theological Christianity on the educated minds of the West was weakening and a decided reaction had set in: a wave of freethought was sweeping over Europe and America. My reverend friend gave notice that he should answer me at his chapel on the next morning, and invited me and my friends to be present. We went, and were much disappointed; his discourse being of a character which I noted as "weak and sloppy," in my Diary. As his manner towards me was friendly, I proposed that we should issue a joint pamphlet on the *pro* and *con* of Christianity, which he agreed to. I promised to send him my MS. "as soon as I could find the time to prepare it"; being careful to tell Mr. Uhl that my attention was so constantly demanded by current official business that I could not promise to be ready at any specified date. In point of fact Mr. Uhl, after waiting for me a long while—perhaps eighteen months or two years—brought out his side of the argument in a separate pamphlet, which was widely circulated by him as a campaign document, so to call it, and proof of my inability to make good my assertions. The fact is, however, that within six months from the time of the agreement I had gathered together and sent on to the President of the Guntur T. S., a large batch of cuttings and notes suitable



for the purpose, and requested him to make up from them the pamphlet and send it me for revision, as I was absolutely unable to give the needed time to the affair. I also wrote Mr. Uhl about my difficulties. But my friend waited upon other friends, and they individually and collectively did nothing, and at last, after Mr. Uhl's blast had been blown, I got back my bundle of notes: and threw it into a waste-paper basket, and so dropped the matter: it being cheaper to leave my reverend critic to enjoy his triumph than to attempt the impossible of writing my pamphlet, when I had much more important and congenial matters to attend to. By the time that his treatise appeared, I had organized seventy new Branches of the Society, and travelled over all India and Ceylon.

On the day of our departure from Guntur, H. P. B. and I enjoyed our first experience with one of those marvels of mental training, a Brahmin *Ashtavadhani*. There exist in India many men who have, by a course of training during many years, cultivated the memory to a degree incredible to those who have not witnessed their feats personally. Some can keep up fifty, and even more, separate mental processes simultaneously; in comparison with which phenomena the most marvellous stories about our Western chess-players seem commonplace. The proceeding is as follows: As many persons as are to take part in the test, seat themselves near by, and the Pandit begins with the first on the right. Let us say, with a game of chess. He names the first move, looks a minute at the board, and moves on to the next man, with whom, perhaps, he plays

some other game. Here, again, he names his play and passes to the third man, for whom he may be asked to compose an original poem in Sanskrit on a given subject, the initial or terminal letter of each line to be one selected by the other person. He ponders deeply and then dictates a line fulfilling the conditions. From the next man he is to take, word by word, and the words out of their order at the choice of the dictator, a verse in any language whatsoever, known or unknown to the Pandit, he receiving one word at a time, repeating it until the sound becomes familiar to his ear, and laying it away in his memory until, the sitting finished, he must repeat the whole verse with each word restored to its proper sequence. The next man, perhaps, taps on a bell as many times as he chooses, and the Pandit is to recollect the whole and name the total when he makes his last round of the circle. Then may come the making of a "magic square" of figures in so many columns, each column and each cross line to figure up the same. Then, with the next man, a dispute on any one proposition in either of the six schools of Hindu Philosophy, the argument and demonstration to proceed by stages as he comes around to that person. Then the next neighbor may give him a gigantic sum in multiplication or division or some other part of arithmetic, say a sum in which multiplier and multiplicand shall each be of a dozen figures. And so on to a most bewildering extent, until one just sits amazed and wondering if the human brain is capable of such multiplex activity. On the occasion in question H. P. B. dictated to our Pandit the

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celebrated Russian poem on the Volga, and I, several sentences in Spanish which I learned when a boy, but he rendered them accurately at the close of the entertainment, every word in its place. At 10 that evening we started in our palanquins on our return journey.

By morning we had covered thirty-one miles, with three changes of bearers, coming to the small village of Baput, where our baggage-coolies should have met us, but as they did not turn up until 7 P.M., we had to pass the day as best we could, and did not move on until 8.30 P.M. That night we made a stretch of twenty-three miles, which brought us to Padaganjam and the Canal. A very esteemed friend, the late Mr. Ramaswamy Naidu, Assistant Salt Inspector, had sent his servants to get ready for us a comfortable house, in which we spent the day waiting for his own house-boat, which was placed at our disposal. It arrived at 2 P.M., with our friends Messrs. P. Iyaloo Naidu and L. V. V. Nayadu ("Doraswamy," to his intimates), and we embarked at sunset.

The monsoon wind being now contrary, our boat had to be dragged by the coolies. Poor devils! they had a hard time of it, for the mercury stood at 109° in the shade the next day, and neither of us felt the energy to do any work; we could only sit idle and swelter. Fortunately for the coolies, we were kept waiting nearly all the day at Rāmāpātnam for some candidates for membership and did not go on until midnight. Another fearfully hot day followed. At night we were detained several hours by the obstinate boatmen, who refused to cross an inlet of the

sea until the end of the ebb. At 3 A.M. I went outside to see how things were getting on, and found the boat noiselessly moving through the water, the coolies pulling the line on the tow-path, and the *serang* (captain) steering and singing to himself a droning chant. At 6 we reached Myypaud, where Nellore friends awaited us with carriages, but as we were to return by land to Madras, it took time to get our luggage packed, and we did not start until 8 o'clock, by which time the heat was suffocating. The poor Yanadhis seemed fairly done up, and yet we reached Nellore by 11, thankful for the shelter of the stately house, with its thick walls, brick terraced roof and wide verandahs, that keep the rooms darkened and comparatively cool.

A great Brahmin Pandit of the Vedantin school came to see us that evening, evidently with the sole object of showing up our ignorance; but in us two old campaigners, especially in H. P. B., with her wit and sarcasm, he got more than he bargained for, and in a couple of hours we were able to expose to the company present his intense selfishness, vanity, and bigoted prejudices. Our victory cost us something, however, for I see a Postscriptum note in my Diary that he subsequently showed himself "our active enemy." Good luck to him and to all the noble army of our "enemies"; their hatred never did them the least good nor the Society the least harm. Our ship does not sail on the wind of favor.

Seventeen letters, three articles for the *Theosophist*, and the reading of a pile of exchanges kept me fairly busy the next day until evening, when I lectured on "Aryan

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Wisdom." The next day was like it, and the next, until we—at 5 P.M.—took bullock carriages for Tiruppati, seventy-eight miles away, and the nearest station on the Madras Railway. In that scorching weather it was a hot and tedious journey, but it ended at last, and so did our waiting time of twelve hours for a train, and the train journey to Madras, which we reached in due course and were met and escorted by friends to our former bungalow.

In my travels over India and Ceylon I had been observing places, people, and climates, with a view to selecting the best place for a permanent headquarters for the Society. Liberal offers of houses, free of rent, had been made us in Ceylon, and, certainly, the Island presented a most charming appearance to one seeking an Asian home; but several considerations, such as its isolation from India, the cost of postage, and the backward intellectual state of the people as a whole, overweighed its loveliness and led us to choose India in preference. Up to the present time, however, no good property had been offered us, and we had made no definite plans. On the 31st May, however, we two were begged by Judge Muttusawmy's sons to go and look at a property that was to be had cheap. We were driven to Adyar, and at the first glance knew that our future home was found. The palatial building, its two riverside smaller bungalows, its brick-and-mortar stables, coach-house, godowns (store-rooms), and swimming-bath; its avenue of ancient mango and banyan trees, and its large plantation of casuarinas (one of the cone-bearing trees) made up an enchanting country residence, while the price

asked—rs. 9000 odd, or about £600—was so modest, in fact, merely nominal, as to make the project of its purchase seem feasible even for us. We accordingly decided to take it, and in due course this was effected by the noble help of P. Iyaloo Naidu and Judge Muttusawmy Chetty, the first of whom advanced part of the money and the other secured a loan of the rest, on very easy terms. An appeal was at once issued for subscriptions, and within the next year I had the satisfaction of being able to pay it all off, and receive the title-deeds. The cheapness of the price is accounted for by the fact that the opening of the railway to the foot of the Nilgiri Hills brought the lovely sanitarium of Ootacamund within a day's ride of Madras, caused the high officials to spend half the year there, and threw their grand Madras bungalows on a market without bidders. What I paid for "Huddleston's Gardens" was about the price of the old materials if the buildings should be torn down. In fact, that was what was to have happened if we had not turned up as buyers just when we did. We stopped a week longer at Madras, during which I lectured twice, and more new members were admitted, and on the 6th of June we took train for Bombay. More than fifty friends, with flower gifts, saw us off, and prayed us to hasten our return to take up our permanent residence among them. At 11 A.M., on the 8th, we reached Bombay, and found many friends assembled to meet us and see us home.

People glibly speak of Madras as "the Benighted Presidency": and as being insufferably hot. The fact is, how-



ever, that as regards climate I prefer it above the others, and as to Sanskrit Literature and Aryan Philosophy, it is the most enlightened of the Indian Presidencies ; there are more learned Pandits in the villages, and the educated class, as a whole, have been less spoilt by Western education. In Bengal and Bombay there are more *litterateurs* of the class of Telang and Bhandarkar, but I cannot recall one equal to T. Subba Row, of Madras, in bright genius for grasping the spirit of the Ancient Wisdom. And his being at Madras was one of the causes of our fixing upon that Presidency town for our official residence. Although he is dead and gone, yet we have never regretted our choice, for Adyar is a sort of Paradise.





## CHAPTER XXIV.

### BARODA TO CEYLON, AND THE HEALINGS OF SICK FOLK THERE.

ONE of the moral thunderstorms that pelted us in those days was the ill-natured attack that the Swami Dyânand Saraswati made against us, in March 1882, and I see by my Diary that my first work after our return to Bombay was the preparation of our defence. It appeared in the July *Theosophist*, as a Supplement of 18 pp., and I think it must have been tolerably convincing, since its facts have never been gainsaid by the Swami or his followers. Among the proofs was the facsimile of his proxy paper, empowering me to cast his vote as a Council Member in its meetings. He had denied his membership in the Society, and averred that we had used his name as a Councillor without permission; stigmatizing our conduct as cunning and unprincipled! How many equally groundless charges, innuendoes, slanders, and literary attacks have been circulated against the Society and its managers, from its foundation down to the present time, and into what complete oblivion have they successively fallen!

In June 1882, H. P. B. and I accepted an invitation to visit Baroda, the flourishing capital of H. H. the Gaikwar. Judge Gadgil, F. T. S., and other high officials (*Durbaris* is the name for them in all Native States) met us at the station, and took us to a bungalow adjoining the new and splendid Palace of His Highness. We had as many visitors as usual on our tours, which means that our reception-room would be crowded with inquirers day and evening. The Gaikwar holding a Durbar that day I was invited to it, and later was held in talk with His Highness about Theosophy for three hours or more. I had great hopes then that I should find in him our most sympathetic friend among the Indian Princes. He was young and very patriotic, which, in India, means that he should have an ardent love for his ancestral religion and be kind to all its friends. His private life was pure and his aims high; in strong contrast with those of most of his class, who are, as a rule, debauched by the infernal influences about their courts. I had the more reason for my hope in his markedly kind and respectful manner towards myself, but we have been disappointed: his English tutor made him a bizarre sort of materialist, the cares of State have overworked him, and, while he talks much about Theosophy, he is theosophical in neither his belief nor practice. At the same time, he is a man of great energy and ability, and his life has been pure throughout. His Dewan, or Prime Minister, at the time of our visit, was the Rajah Sir T. Madhava Row, K.C.S.I., whose conspicuous ability as a statesman has been pointed out by *The Times*. He was a handsome

man, of distinguished appearance and courtly manners, and a picturesque object to look at when dressed in his court costume. To us he was polite and genial, talked intelligently on philosophical questions, and asked from H. P. B. such phenomenal proofs of her alleged super-physical powers as would convince him of the soundness of the basis of our theories as to man's duplex nature. He got nothing more than a few raps on tables and bell-sounds in the air, but his Naib, or Assistant Dewan did. This gentleman, since also dead, was one of those highly educated, intellectually gifted graduates of the Bombay University, who have made their shining marks in contemporary Indian History. Mr. Kirtane was the old friend and college-mate of Judge Gadgil, who earnestly wanted him to join our Society and help in forming a local Branch. But the former, while pious and rather inclined towards Mysticism, was as sceptical as his chief, Sir T., about the development in our times of the Yogic powers, and looked askance at us on account of our affirmative declarations. Sir T. Madhava Row was more statesman than scholar, and nothing of a Mystic: Mr. Kirtane was more of the second and third than of the first. So he got the proofs, withheld from the Dewan Sahib. It happened in this way, as I now recollect it. I had been out to see the Gaikwar, and on my return found Kirtane and Gadgil standing at the threshold of H. P. B.'s open door, while she was in the middle of the room with her back towards us. Our two friends told me not to step inside, as Madame B. was doing a phenomenon and had just turned them out on the

verandah where I found them. The next minute she came towards us, and, taking a sheet of paper from the table, told the gentleman to mark it for identification. Receiving it back, she said, "Now turn me in the direction of his residence." They did so. She then laid the paper between her palms (held horizontally), remained quiet a moment, then held it towards us and went and sat down. Cries of amazement broke from the two Durbaris on seeing, on the just before clean sheet of paper, a letter addressed to me in the handwriting and bearing the signature of the then British Resident at that Court. It was a most peculiar, small caligraphy, and the signature more like a tiny tangle of twine than a man's name. They then told me their story. It seems that they were asking H. P. B. to explain the scientific rationale of the process of precipitating upon paper, cloth, or any other surface, a picture or writing, then invisible to the onlooker, and without the help of ink, paints, pencils, or other mechanical agents. She told them just what I have explained in my first volume of these *Old Diary Leaves*, in connection with her New York precipitations of the Yogi's and M. A. Oxon's portraits, the writing of the latter, and other phenomena: she explained that inasmuch as the images of all objects and incidents are stored in the Astral Light, it did not require that she should have seen the person or known the writing, the image of which she wished to precipitate; she had only to be put on the trace and could find and see them for herself and then objectivate them. They urgently begged her to do the thing for them. "Well, then," she finally said,

"tell me the name of some man or woman most unfriendly to the Theosophical Society, one whom neither Olcott nor I could have ever known." At once, they mentioned Mr. — the British Resident, who held us and our Society in especial hatred, who never missed the chance of saying unkind things of us, and who had prevented the Gaikwar from inviting H. P. B. and myself to his enthronement, as he had otherwise intended, on the suggestion of Judge Gadgil. They thought this a poser. That it was not, the sequel proved. I thought they would explode with laughter when they read the contents of the note. It was addressed to "My dear Colonel Olcott," begged my pardon for the malicious things he had said against us, asked me to enter him as a subscriber to our "world renowned magazine, the *Theosophist*," and said he wished to become a member of the Theosophical Society: it was signed "Yours sincerely" and with his name. She had never seen a line of the gentleman's writing nor his signature, never met him in the flesh, and the note was precipitated on that sheet of paper, held between her hands, as she stood in the middle of the room, in broad daylight, with us three witnesses looking on.

I have seldom faced a more brilliant audience than that which listened to my first Baroda lecture on Theosophy. It was held in the gorgeous Marriage Hall where the members of the Royal Family of Baroda are wedded. The Gaikwar, his Prime Minister, and all the nobles and English-knowing officials of the State, together with the British Resident and staff, were present, and at the close

the vote of thanks was moved by a Muslim Durbari, who became subsequently Dewan. His speech struck me as being a gem of pure English rhetoric and polished courtesy. It was at once instructive and amusing to listen to his compliments, for I happened to know that the speaker was a thorough infidel, who believed in no religion whatsoever, except that of "Get on," had no faith in us, and his performance was a clever feat of carrying water on both shoulders simultaneously!

A second lecture on "Science and Hinduism" followed on the next day, at the same place, before the same resplendent audience. That evening we gained a very valuable colleague in Dr. Balchandra, Chief Medical Officer of Baroda, who is one of the most intellectual and best educated men of India. I think it was for his special benefit that H. P. B., that evening, read the contents of a telegram in its sealed envelope before it was opened. She also rang her atmospheric bells, and the next day complied with the Gaikwar's request to make some table rappings for him, during the course of a long interview which he sought.

From Baroda we went on to Wadhwan to see our friend the reigning Thakore Sahib. We then returned to Bombay, and divided work between us by my driving on the Editorial matter for the next *Theosophist*, and her driving herself to the verge of apoplexy; for I see an entry of 28th June, that "H. P. B. is threatened with apoplexy, so my departure for Ceylon is again postponed." She recovered her normal health in due time, having meanwhile passed

through a fit of extreme irritability, in which she made things lively for all of us. I finally got away to sea on the 15th July, and I leave the reader to imagine how charmed I must have been on the P. and O. steamer, when it is stated that the monsoon had burst a fortnight earlier, that the ship pitched and rolled like mad in the angry sea, and that she was so stuffed full of cargo that every cabin in the second class, save the three or four we occupied, was packed with sandal-wood, onions, and licorice-wood, which mingled their various odors with that of the hot oil of the engine and the foul smell of damp cotton mattresses. I write that down as my worst episode of ocean travel.

I was returning to the island, after a half-year's absence, to go on with the Educational propoganda. My first impressions were most discouraging. It seemed as if all the life had left the Branches and members when I had sailed for Bombay, and only rs. 100 of the unpaid subscriptions—some rs. 13,000—had been collected. Of the Trust Fund money, rs. 243 had been used for current expenses, and along with it rs. 60 belonging to the *Buddhist Catechism* Fund. Paltry excuses were made, and I had to accept them as I could do no better. There was nothing left for it but to just go to work again, reinfuse life into everything, wipe out the story of the half-year's idleness, and set the machinery in motion. So I began with the High Priest and Megittuwatte, and arranged for some lectures that the committee had asked me to give in Colombo. Then, at a Branch meeting, I explained the system of voluntary self-taxation adopted by many good



Christians, by which sometimes ten per cent. of their incomes is set aside for religious and charitable work : I had seen my father and other pious Christian gentlemen doing this as a matter of conscience. Then I read a memorandum in which I had it proved that what they, our Colombo martyrs, had given and spent for this Buddhist Revival movement amounted to just  $\frac{3}{4}$ ths of 1 per cent. of their incomes : this was easy to do, as most of them were Government servants, in receipt of fixed salaries. I left them to draw the plain inference for themselves.

The town lectures were delivered, and on the 27th July the Colombo T. S. celebrated its anniversary with a dinner. Our Hall was decorated with flowers and green leaves and sprays, in the tasteful fashion in which the Sinhalese excel. On the end wall was a drawing of a white and black hand clasped, under the word "Brotherhood," and on the other sides ran the following condensed statement of the Law of Karma : "The Past you cannot recall. The Present is yours. The Future will be what you make it." The next day I went on to Galle to begin my tour in that province.

My first public discourse was at Dondera, the southernmost point of the island. I passed my fiftieth birthday at Galle in literary work and in a mental retrospect of my past life, of which more than half had been devoted to work for the public. The knowledge that I should not see another semi-centennial anniversary only strengthened my determination to accomplish as much for Theosophy as possible in the years that might be available.

I shall not burden my record with notes of the various

villages that were visited, nor of the sum subscribed to the Buddhist Fund. On the 9th August, however, I lectured at Wijananda Vihare, where H. P. B. and I first publicly took Pansil and thus proclaimed ourselves Buddhists, in the year 1880. My neutrality with respect to differences of caste and sect made me welcome to all, and I passed from vihare to vihare, addressing now an audience of Villallas, now one of the Fisher caste, anon one of the great Cinnamon-peeler caste; each time collecting money for the common object. The meeting at Kelagana Junction was picturesque and radiant with the bright shades of green peculiar to tropical Ceylon. My platform was formed of large tables, and on it a small stand and three chairs, two of which were occupied by as many yellow-robed monks, the third by myself. It was under the thick shade of a breadfruit tree. There had been a long procession with flags, banners, and tom-toms; bright-colored cloths were hung down the fronts of houses and across roads; and there were no end of cheers and shouting, but, as noted in my Diary, it was "much glory but little cash for the Fund." The collection was only rs. 42.77, and it is not surprising that I added in my note the word "Humbug!" It was much the same the next day, when only rs. 50 were subscribed, and I summed up the experience in the words "Procession and flummery." Things went on day by day with varying success, but everywhere plenty of goodwill and kindness. They are a loving people, the Sinhalese, and mean to do all they can according to their lights. I was in Colombo on 24th August, to attend the wedding of one of our best

workers, with the sister of our first Sinhalese friend, J. R. De Silva. The ceremony was only the signing of the civil contract and exchange of pledges at the office of the Government Registrar of Marriages, the time having not yet come for our Buddhist Registrar and the modified ancient ceremony now used by him. Mr. De Silva's house had been richly decorated in kalsomine by himself, and turned into a bower of greenery. We went in a procession of carriages to the Registrar's office with the bridal couple, and escorted them back again to the bride's house; then there were refreshments, and at 5 P.M. we all went by rail to their future residence, the village of Morutuwa. Here a *walking* procession was formed, with the newly-married couple in front, next to the band, the bride in her veil, white gown, and satin slippers. The whole village was alive; there were blue lights burning, rockets and Roman candles being let off, the Volunteers' band discoursing excellent music. But when we approached the house there was a bridge to cross and the music ceased and the procession moved on in silence. It gave me the idea of a company of ghosts moving without noise and lighted up by the moonlight. A fine supper was served in a long palm-thatched structure, specially erected, and there were toasts to everybody worth toasting, until half an hour before midnight, when we returned to town by special train. A conference with Sumangala Thero and Hiyeyentaduwe, his Assistant Principal of the College, about a number of new questions and answers that I had drafted for a new edition of the *Buddhist Catechism*, occupied the

next day, and I then returned to Galle and my touring work.

An incident occurred on the 29th of August, at China Garden, a quarter of Galle, which has become in Ceylon historic. After my lecture, the subscription paper was laid out on a table and the people came up in turn to subscribe. A man named Cornelis Appu was introduced to me by Mr. Jayasakere, the Branch President, and he subscribed the sum of half a rupee, apologizing for the pettiness of the amount because of his having been totally paralyzed in one arm and partially in one leg for eight years, and therefore unable to earn his livelihood by his trade. Now at Colombo, on my arrival from Bombay, the High Priest had told me that the Roman Catholics had made their arrangements to convert the house-well of a Catholic, near Kelanie, into a healing-shrine, after the fashion of Lourdes. One man was reported to have been miraculously cured already, but on investigation it proved a humbug. I told the High Priest that this was a serious matter and he should attend to it. If the hypnotic suggestion once got started, there would soon be real cures and there might be a rush of ignorant Buddhists into Catholicism. "What can I do?" he said. "Well, you must set to work, you or some other well-known monk, and cure people in the name of Lord Buddha." "But we can't do it; we know nothing about those things," he replied. "Nevertheless it must be done," I said. When this half-paralyzed man of Galle was speaking of his ailment, something seemed to say to me, "Here's your chance for the holy well!" I had known

all about Mesmerism and Mesmeric Healing for thirty years, though I had never practised them, save to make a few necessary experiments at the beginning, but now, moved by a feeling of sympathy (without which the healer has no healing power to radically cure), I made some passes over his arm, and said I hoped he might feel the better for it. He then left. That evening I was chatting with my Galle colleagues at my quarters on the seashore, when the paralytic hobbled in and excused his interruption by saying that he felt so much better that he had come to thank me. This unexpected good news encouraged me to go farther, so I treated his arm for a quarter of an hour and bade him return in the morning. I should mention here that nobody in Ceylon knew that I possessed or had ever exercised the power of healing the sick, nor, I fancy, that anybody had it, so the theory of hypnotic suggestion, or collective hallucination, will scarcely hold in this case—certainly not at this stage of it.

He came in the morning, eager to worship me as something superhuman, so much better did he feel. I treated him again, and the next day and the next; reaching the point on the fourth day where he could whirl his bad arm around his head, open and shut his hand, and clutch and handle objects as well as ever. Within the next four days he was able to sign his name with the cured hand, to a statement of his case, for publication; this being the first time in nine years that he had held a pen. I had also been treating his side and leg, and in a day or two more he could jump with both feet, hop on the paralyzed one, kick

equally high against the wall with both, and run freely. As a match to loose straw, the news spread throughout the town and district. Cornelis brought a paralyzed friend, whom I cured; then others came, by twos and threes first, then by dozens, and within a week or so my house was besieged by sick persons from dawn until late at night, all clamoring for the laying on of my hands. They grew so importunate at last that I was at my wits' end how to dispose of them. Of course, with the rapid growth of confidence in myself, my magnetic power multiplied itself enormously, and what I had needed days to accomplish with a patient, at the commencement, could now be done within a half hour. A most disagreeable feature of the business was the selfish inconsiderateness of the crowd. They would besiege me in my bedroom before I was dressed, dog my every step, give me no time for meals, and keep pressing me, no matter how tired and exhausted I might be. I have worked at them steadily four or five hours, until I felt I had nothing more in me, then left them for a half hour while I bathed in the salt water of the harbor, just back of the house, felt currents of fresh vitality entering and re-enforcing my body, gone back and resumed the healing, until, by the middle of the afternoon, I had had enough of it, and then had actually to drive the crowd out of the house. My rooms were on the upper story—one flight up—and most of the bad cases had to be carried up by friends and laid at my feet. I have had them completely paralyzed, with their arms and legs contracted so that the man or woman was more like the

gnarled root of a tree than anything else ; and it happened sometimes that, after one or two treatments of a half hour each, I made those people straighten out their limbs and walk about. One side of the broad verandah that ran around the whole house, I christened "the cripples' race-course," for I used to mate two or three of those whose cases had been worst, and compel them to run against each other the length of that side. They and the crowd of onlookers used to laugh at this joke, and wonder at the same time, but I had a purpose in it, which was to impart to them the same unflinching confidence in the effectiveness of the remedy that I felt, so that their cures might be radical. Quite recently, while in Ceylon, on my way to London, I met one of my bad patients of those days, whom I had cured of complete paralysis, and asked him to tell those present what I had done for him. He said that he had been confined to his bed for months in a perfectly helpless state, his arms and legs paralyzed and useless. He had been carried upstairs to me. I had treated him a half hour the first day, and fifteen or twenty minutes the next. I had cured him so effectually that in the intervening fourteen years he had had no return of his malady. Fancy the pleasure it must have been to me to have relieved so much suffering, and in many cases to have restored the invalids to all the enjoyments of good health and all the activities of life.

I see that the first patient that Cornelis brought me, after he was cured, had the thumb and fingers of his right hand clenched with paralysis so that they were as stiff as

wood. They had been so for two and a half years. Within five minutes the hand was restored to its flexibility. The next day he returned with his hand all right, but the toes of his right foot constricted. I took him into my room and made him as good as new, within a quarter of an hour. This sort of thing went on even at the country villages on my routes through the Southern Province. I would reach my stopping-place in my travelling-cart, and find patients waiting for me on the verandahs, the lawn, and in all sorts of conveyances—carts, spring-waggons, hand-carts, palanquins, and chairs carried on bamboo poles. An old woman afflicted (how much, indeed!) with a paralyzed tongue was cured; the bent elbow, wrist, and fingers of a little boy were freed; a woman deformed by inflammatory rheumatism was made whole. At Sandaravala, a beggar woman with a bent back, of eight years' standing, gave me a quarter-rupee (about 4d.) for the Fund. When I knew what she suffered from, I cured her spine and made her walk erect.

Baddegama is a noted centre of Missionary activity and—so far as I was concerned, and Buddhism generally—of malevolence. It was the view of this lovely landscape—so it is said—which suggested to Bishop Heber the opening verse of his immortal Missionary Hymn. There had been threats that the Missionaries were going to attack me at my lecture there, and the Buddhists naturally thronged to hear me. Several of our members came out from Galle, and whom should I see there but Cornelis Appu, who *had walked the whole twelve miles*. No doubt, then, as to his



having been cured! The gentle Missionaries were conspicuous by their absence, and I had the huge audience all to myself.

I was amused by a case that came under my hands at the little hamlet of Agaliya. An old, wrinkled native woman of seventy-two years of age had been kicked by a buffalo cow while milking, some years before, had to walk with a staff, and could not stand erect. She was a comical old creature, and laughed heartily when I told her that I should soon make her dance. But after only ten minutes of passes down her spine and limbs she was almost as good as new, and I seized her hand, threw away her staff, and made her run with me over the lawn. My next patient was a boy of seven years, whose hands could not be closed, on account of a constriction of the tendons of the backs. I cured him in five minutes, and he went straight away to where the breakfast was ready for the family, and fell to eating rice with his right hand, now quite restored.

In due time I got back to the Galle Headquarters, where a second siege by the sick had to be undergone. I have noted down an incident which shows the uncharitable and selfish spirit which actuates some of the medical profession—happily, not all—with regard to the curing of patients by unpaid outsiders; for, remember, I never took a farthing for all these cures.

A number of former patients of the Galle General Hospital, who had been discharged as incurable, came to me and recovered their health; and, naturally, went to shouting the news on the house-tops, so to say. The

medical profession could not very well remain blind or indifferent to such a thing, and one day my doings with my patients were overlooked by one of the civil surgeons of the district. On that day 100 patients presented themselves and I treated twenty-three; making, as I see it noted, some wonderful cures. Dr. K. recognizing one of the men, brought him to me with the remark that he had been pronounced incurable after every treatment had failed, and he would like to see what I could make of him. What I made was to enable the sick man to walk about without a stick, for the first time in ten years. The Doctor frankly and generously admitted the efficacy of the mesmeric treatment and remained by me all day, helping me to diagnose; and doing the duties of an hospital assistant. We were mutually pleased with each other, and at parting it was agreed that he should come the next day after breakfast, and help me in whatever way he could. He, himself, was suffering from a stiff ankle or something about his foot, I forget just what, which I relieved. The next day he neither came nor sent any word. The mystery was explained by a note he wrote to the mutual friend who had introduced him to me. It seems that on leaving me, full of enthusiasm about what he had seen—as any open-minded, unspoilt young man would naturally be—he went straight to the Chief Medical Officer and reported. His superior coldly listened, and, when he had finished, delivered himself of the sentence of major and minor excommunication on me. I was a charlatan, this pretended healing was a swindle, the patients had been paid

to lie, and the young doctor was forbidden to have anything more to do with me or my monkey-tricks. To clench the argument, he warned the other that, if he persisted in disregarding his orders, he would run the risk of losing his commission. And if he could find that I took any fee, he should have me prosecuted for practising medicine without a licence! So my quondam assistant and admirer, forgetful of his duty to perfect himself in the healing art, of the paramount claims of Truth to his loyalty, and of science to his professional devotion, of all he had seen me do and its promise of what he could, in time, himself do, not even remembering his relieved foot, nor the claims of politeness upon those who make appointments and are prevented from keeping them, did not come the next day nor even send me one line of apology. I felt sorry for him, because all his future prospects in Government service were at stake; at the same time I am afraid I did not respect him as much as I should if he had manfully stood out against this pitiful and revolting professional slavery; this moral obliquity, which would rather that the whole of mankind should go unhealed unless they were cured by orthodox doctors, in an atmosphere of medical holiness and infallibility. The acquisition of the power to relieve physical suffering by mesmeric processes is so easy that, in ninety-nine cases out of the hundred, it would be one's own fault if it were not developed, but I think that is too important a question to broach at the end of a chapter, so let it stand over for the present.



## CHAPTER XXV.

### POSSIBLE DISCOVERY OF THE SECRET OF PSYCHOPATHIC HEALING.

THE Asiatics have certainly perfected the art of feeding the vanity of public men, and their public men seem to like it. To us Westerns, however, too much grandeur is a bother, and one is constantly being put into dilemmas where one has to quietly play the part of willing victim, or by churlish refusal make oneself seem a very underbred person to one's Oriental friends. This is *à propos* of my Diary entry of 3rd October 1882, that I had that day crossed a brimful river in Ceylon, and walked a mile to the temple where I was to lecture, on white cloths spread over the whole route for my eminent feet, between two continuous lines of palm-leaf fringes, and under a white canopy (*Kodiya*) which enthusiastic Buddhists carried on painted staves, over my respectable head. At the same time paralytics, clamoring for the laying on of my hands, besieged me along the whole route. I could have dispensed with the whole *tamasha* without the least difficulty,

but the crowd could not. What a fool one does feel when, perched on a decorated elephant, or carried in an open sedan chair, half smothered with thick garlands of tuberosc blooms, and surrounded by shouting thousands, one sees even one European standing by the roadside or in a verandah, looking sneeringly at one as if he were really a voluntary mountebank. Talk about nerve—this is one of the things to try it, for one can so easily foresee the circulation of the story throughout the station and the contemptuous comments that will be made upon one's abasement of the race-dignity, while one's whole heart is fixed upon doing good to others and impatient of all this childish show. The most difficult lesson for a white man in Asia to learn is, that the customs of his people and those of the dusky races are absolutely different, and that if he dreams of getting on well with the latter he must lay aside all prejudices and hereditary standards of manners, and be one with them, both in spirit and in external forms. If the English conquerors of the dark-skinned nations could only realize and act upon this principle, they would rule through love instead of by craft and force. They make themselves respected and feared, but loved?—never. However, they are not going to change their natures to please me, so I shall pass to the illustration of the point I was making in the last chapter, about the true secret of successful Psychopathy, or mesmeric healing.

The secret in question was revealed to me by an experience I had at a small village in Southern Ceylon, during this tour which we are now tracing. I think it was at

Pitiwella, five miles from Galle, though I am not sure, having failed to record the case apart from others treated on the same day. My interpreter, secretary, and servant, together with many other witnesses, will be able to recall the facts if my word is challenged, so it does not matter. A man suffering from hemiplegia, or paralysis of one side, was brought to me for treatment. I began on his arm, making passes along the nerves and muscles, and occasionally breathing upon them. In less than a half hour I had restored the arm to flexibility; so much so that he could whirl his arm around his head, open and close his fingers at will, grasp and hold a pen or even a pin, and, in fact, do anything he liked with the limb. Then—as I had been kept continuously at work on similar cases for several hours, and felt tired—I bade the Committee to make him take a seat and give me time to rest. While I was smoking a pipe, the Committee told me that the patient was well-to-do, had spent rs. 1500 on medical men without getting relief, and was an avaricious person, well known for his closeness. Now, of all things that are disgusting to the occultist, money-greed is one of the chief: it is so low and ignoble a passion. My feelings underwent an instant change towards the patient. The Committee, at my suggestion, asked him how much he had decided to give towards the Buddhist National Fund for schools. He whined out that he was a poor man and had spent much on doctors, but he would give one rupee! That capped the climax. I told them to say to him that, although he had spent rs. 1500 in vain, he had now had his arm cured

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gratis, and he might now spend an equal sum, and see if the doctors would not cure his paralyzed leg, and he had better keep the rupee he had just offered for Buddhist schools, towards the doctors' fees. I told them to take the creature away and never let me see him again. But the Committee, with one accord, begged me to recall my order, as the mere mention of money would assuredly be misconstrued and misrepresented by our bitter opponents, who could not say that I had ever taken a cent for my healings, or that they had been made by the Buddhist Committee an excuse to influence subscriptions. So after a while I had the patient brought before me, and within another half hour had released his leg from its state of paralysis, and sent the man away walking as well as any one. My secretary took from him, it seems, a certificate of the cure, and I have it among the papers connected with that Ceylon tour.

The Committee in charge of my work had arranged a series of loop tours of about a fortnight each, which brought me around each time to Galle, the central point. When this particular one was finished I was asking one day how it had fared with a certain few patients whose cases had more particularly interested me than the rest, and among others, I mentioned this miser's. The reply surprised me very much: the arm, they said, remained cured, but *the leg had relapsed into the paralytic state*. Although I had read of no similar case in the books on Mesmerism, the reason suggested itself at once—I had felt no real sympathy for the man after hearing about his miserliness, and therefore my vital aura had not vibrated along his

nerves, as it had when applied to the nerves of his arm : there had been a momentary healthful stimulus followed by a return to the state of nerve-paralysis. In both cases I had had exactly the same knowledge of the science, and the same measure of vital force to transmit, but in the latter, none of that feeling of sympathy and benevolent intent which, in the case of the arm, resulted in a permanent cure. I am aware that some writers on Psychopathy—among them Younger, whose work\* appeared five years later than my Ceylon experience—have affirmed that “sympathy is the keynote of nearly all the phases of development of the mesmeric state” (*Op. cit.*, p. 28), but I do not recall an instance like the one above cited. The good M. Deleuze, formerly of the Jardin des Plantes, in Paris, whose *Practical Instructions in Animal Magnetism* is a classic, and who describes the proper methods of treatment in various diseases, notes no case like this, although he tells us that “Magnetism is effectual in all kinds of paralysis.” He says, however, that the sensitive operator will always recognize a change occurring in himself when he magnetizes. “This disposition is composed of a determined intention, which banishes all distraction [meaning mind-wandering, of course, a state absolutely obstructive to the working of cures of disease, as I know by much experience.—O.] without our making any effort, of a lively interest which the patient inspires in us and which draws us towards him, and of a confidence in our power, which leaves us in

\* *The Magnetic and Botanic Family Physician*. London, 1837. E. W. Allen, Pub.



no doubt as to our success in alleviating him" (*Op. cit.*, p. 203). But he quotes no example to prove the indispensableness of sympathetic benevolence of intent, and I am inclined to think my case almost unique. It is to be observed further, in reading up from the authorities, that although I felt no sympathy for my patient, I nevertheless did restore his leg to functional activity for the time being: I made him walk as well as he ever did. My will and skill were powerful enough for that, but not being moved by the third element, compassion, there was a relapse after the first effect of nerve stimulation had passed off. It seems to me that it also goes to prove that mesmeric healing is not necessarily attributable to the exercise of faith, but rather to the transfusion of vital aura to the patient, and its operation under varying conditions within his system.

Here was a patient who, if moved by faith in the case of his arm, must have been doubly so in the case of his leg, after the paralysis had been removed from the former; here were several bystanders whose minds and outward demonstrations of belief would follow the same rule; here, finally, was I, exercising the identical power and applying the same technical knowledge in both cases, and, if you choose to so regard it, silently making the self-same suggestion of possible cure, yet curing the arm and failing to permanently cure the leg. It is a most important bit of evidence in the question of psychopathic science, and well worth keeping in mind. I can conceive of no applicability of the theories of either the Salpêtrière or Nancy Schools of Hypnotism to cases like the foregoing; it stands apart and

is explicable only on the theory of a vital transfusion from operator to patient. The case becomes stronger when one reflects that I was operating upon and in the presence of Sinhalese, who knew nothing about our Western mesmeric and hypnotic theories and results, to whom the whole thing was a puzzling mystery, and who, consequently, were not in a condition of mind to hypnotically suggest anything to the patient. MM. Binet and Féré, in their academical work on *Animal Magnetism* (International Scientific Series, vol. lx. p. 178 *et seq.*), define hypnotic suggestion as of various forms, and specify that resulting from spoken words and that from gestures. For instance, in the first case one may convey the idea of an actual object by saying "There is a serpent at your feet," or that there is a cat or dog or bird in the room; the animal being instantly perceived by the subject through the influence of the mind-picture so evoked. In the other case the idea may be provoked by simply making gestures which indicate the motions or habits of the imaginary animal. But, they tell us, gestures are "a very inferior means . . . fairly successful in the case of subjects who have been long under treatment"; that is, often hypnotized and trained to accept suggestions of all kinds from the operator. What was there of this sort in the case of my patient? He had never been hypnotized; had never heard of such a thing; was not mesmerized by me, but in the full possession of his senses; could not understand a word of English or any other language which I knew, and as said above, if hypnotically sensitive, must have been doubly so to the fact that his leg could

be cured since the use of his arm had just been restored to him.

Finally—not to dwell too long on a subject whose importance well excuses my having given it so much space—the Ceylon case powerfully suggests the truth of the ancient teaching that kind thoughts sent out from one to another carry with them an almost magical power for good, while evil ones have the contrary effect. How much it behoves us, then, to guard ourselves from even thinking harm to our neighbors, and how easily we can grasp the idea that the old dread of sorcerers and workers of spells had a solid foundation of fact, and that the subtle powers of nature may be handled to the undoing as easily as to the blessing of men.

A case of the "Demon Lover" type was brought me at Galle by the Chief Priest of a (Buddhist) Vihara. A young monk, of perhaps twenty-seven years of age, had been haunted since two or three years by a Yakshini, or a female demon, who—the old monk told me—had been playing the part of spirit wife to him, but to such excess as to rather suggest a person afflicted by nymphomania. The poor fellow was thus obsessed seven or eight times a day and had become reduced to almost a skeleton. The Superior calmly asked me to work a cure. Fortunately, I had successfully treated a similar case in America some years before, the patient being a lady, so that I knew pretty well what to do. I put the monk on a course of mesmerized water, making him come to me every morning for a month, for the day's supply, after which time he was completely cured. I then sent for the Chief Priest and advised him to

disrobe his young friend and send him out to take up the ordinary life of the householder, which was done. The simple explanation is that the influence of the bad Elemental spirit upon its medium was nullified and destroyed by the power of my stronger human will, supplemented by the constant action of the vitalized water. Among the scientific practitioners of mesmerism there have never been two opinions, so far as I know, as to the efficacy of magnetized water as a therapeutic agent. Deleuze says "it is one of the most powerful and salutary agents that can be employed. . . . I have seen magnetized water produce effects so marvellous that I was afraid of having deceived myself, and could not be convinced until I had made a thousand experiments. Magnetizers in general have not made sufficient use of it." How long the water retains the aura has not—he says—been clearly determined, but "it certainly retains it for many days, and numerous facts seem to prove it not to have been lost after many weeks" (*Op. cit.*, pp. 216, 217).

My Southern tour rapidly approached its end. Lectures, followed by collections of subscribed sums for the National Fund, were given at Bussé, Ratgama, Dodanduwa, Kumara Vihara, Kittangoda, Hikkaduwe, Totagumva, Telwatte, Weeragoda, Kahawe, Madumpe, and Battipola, and my face was then turned towards Colombo; in all, there had been sixty-four public addresses made within the space of about three months, and visits to most of the larger villages in the Galle (Southern) Province. I must mention the fact that whenever I found myself at a village on the seashore I

would take a daily salt-water bath, as I found it wonderfully refreshing in the mesmeric sense; no matter how much I might have overdone my healings, a plunge into the sea would restore my vital force within a few minutes. It is a hint that should not be lost by those who follow psychopathy as a profession. I reached Colombo on the 25th October, and was present at the High Priest Sumangala's Widyodaya College, at the exhibition of some genuine relics of the Buddha, which had been excavated at Sopara, from an ancient stupa, or mound, and been presented to the High Priest by the Governor of Bombay, through the Governor of Ceylon. An immense crowd was present on the occasion, and a number of representatives of the Ceylon Government attended out of respect for Sumangala Maha Thera. At his request I lectured in the evening, and Megittuwatte, the great orator, followed in an eloquent discourse.

On the 1st November, in company with Mr. Thomas Perera, of Galle, a most excellent colleague of ours, I sailed for Bombay, which we reached after a smooth passage, on the third day. H. P. B. was away at Darjeeling with some of our members, having meetings in the flesh with two of our Masters. On the 8th I got from Messrs. Shroff and Pandurang Gopal, the suggestion to make the anniversary meetings of the T. S. into representative conventions of all our Indian Branches. I recollect that I felt rather dubious about the practicability of the scheme, but I passed it on to H. P. B., and when she returned, on the 25th of the month, she brought with her four Bengalis and S. Ramaswamier, of

Madras Presidency, as Delegates. Two more came from Bareilly, N.W.P., and two from Baroda; the next day, others came from other places, and when our Seventh Anniversary was celebrated, in Framji Cowasji Hall, on the 7th December, we had fifteen Delegates present and addresses from several of them. Mr. Sinnett had come from Allahabad and officiated as Chairman at my request. There was a very crowded audience, and the applause was hearty. Thus was inaugurated the system of Annual Branch Conventions which is now universal, and for the first time—to show the Bombay public how the Theosophical movement was spreading throughout the world—I hung around the hall as many shields as there were Branches of the Society, each inscribed with the name and charter date of a Branch.

We now set to work, packing our furniture, books, and personal effects for transfer to Madras; the lovely Adyar property having been bought at a merely nominal price. The Bombay Branch T. S. gave us a farewell reception, with nice speeches, no end of flowers, music, a collation, and the presentation of a large, artistic, and costly silver vase and platter, made specially by the clever silversmiths of the Province of Kutch. On the 17th we took train for Madras, the event being fixed in H. P. B.'s memory by the theft of her handsome Kashmir chudder, through an outside window of the railway carriage while we were occupied at the other side in giving and receiving compliments and salaams. Her remarks upon the incident, when it was discovered, will not bear repetition.

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We were welcomed to Madras at the station by a distinguished company of native gentlemen, and escorted in grand style to Adyar, which seemed to smile upon its future masters. The reader can hardly imagine our pleasure in settling into a home of our own, where we should be free from landlords, changes, and the other worries of the condition of tenancy. In my Diary I say "Our beautiful home seemed a fairy-place to us. Happy days are in store for us here." The bitter ones, alas! we did not foresee.

The remaining days of December were filled with the petty annoyances of getting servants, overseeing mechanics, making the first necessary repairs, and receiving and unpacking our furniture. The Teacher (M.) came daily to see H. P. B., and I have it recorded that on 29th December, she "made me promise that if she should die, no one but myself should be allowed to see her face. I am to sew her up in a cloth and have her cremated." That, you see, was nine years before her corpse was carried to the Woking Crematory, near London; hence the possibility of her sudden death was even then kept in mind.

The year 1882 went out with me working at my desk alone.





## CHAPTER XXVI.

### INCIDENTS OF HEALINGS.

THE year 1883 was one of the busiest, most interesting and successful, in the Society's history: certain of its features were very picturesque, as will duly appear. Forty-three new Branches were organized, the majority in India and by myself. My travels extended over seven thousand miles, which means much more than it would in the United States, where one has a railway train to take him to any desired place, and has not to shift to the backs of elephants or have his bones ground together in springless bullock-carts. My colleague and I were separated most of the time, she stopping at home to carry on the *Theosophist* and I wandering over the Great Peninsula to lecture on Theosophy, heal the sick, and found new Branches.

The first weeks of January were given to the settlement of our household in the new headquarters, and my Diary is full of details of the buying of furniture, the arrangement of the "Shrine Room," of now polluted memory, but which was to us, during the next two years, a spot hallowed



by frequent intercourse with the Masters and many palpable phenomenal proofs of their active interest in ourselves and in the great movement.

Marion Crawford's *Mr. Isaacs* was sent us at this time by his uncle, Mr. Sam. Ward, one of our most enthusiastic members, who also wrote me certain interesting particulars about its production. It was—he told us—inspired by the published accounts of Mahatma K. H., and the idea so took possession of Mr. Crawford that, having once begun writing, he gave himself no rest, scarcely even food, until it was finished. He wrote it in less than four weeks, and Mr. Ward says that it almost seemed as if his nephew had been under the influence of an outside power.

Mr. Crawford makes—as any true occultist will tell him—the mistake of having his ideal Eastern adept, Ram Lal, meddling in the love affairs of the hero and heroine, whereas this is inconsistent with the tendencies of a person who has evolved up to and lives mainly on the plane of spirituality. Bulwer was equally wrong, nay worse, in making his adept, Zanoni, abandon, after ages of spiritual striving and success, the fruits of his Yoga, and drop to the vulgar level of us weaklings, who are held in the bonds of the flesh and give and are given in marriage. Both Zanoni and Ram Lal are, as presented to us, practically impossibilities, save as aberrations of nature and the victims of overpowering conspiracies of brutish forces, which they must have vanquished over and over again as they mounted upward from the lower levels where passion reigns and the guiding light of wisdom is hidden. Sexual unions are perfectly

natural for the average human being, but perfectly unnatural for the evolved ideal man.

Friendly letters came pouring in to us this month from Sweden, France, Uruguay, Russia, and America, thus showing how the interest in Theosophical ideas was spreading. At this time the covenants for purchase of the Adyar property were signed and exchanged, and I set to work to raise the money, heading the list with a donation of rs. 2000, or one-fifth of the sum needed, from H. P. B. and myself—the mention of which fact is, perhaps, pardonable in view of the cruel things said about our having exploited the Society for our personal gain.

On the 16th January a public reception was given us by the Madras (Native) public at Pachaiappa's Hall. It was a scene of great enthusiasm and excitement. The building was packed to the doors, its approaches crowded, and everything done to signify the pleasure felt in our change of home. Raja Gajapâti Row, a well-known personage in the Madras Presidency, took the chair on the occasion, and speeches were made by him and Judges P. Sreenevasa Row and G. Muttuswamy Chetty, of the Court of Small Causes. I observe that in the course of my response I broached the idea of making a sort of Hindu Sunday School Union, to open schools and publish catechisms for the religious education of Hindu youth, on their own lines, and that it was warmly supported by the leaders of the Hindu community and unanimously ratified by the cheering audience. At that time it might, perhaps, have been regarded as a fanciful scheme; but now, thirteen years later, we see in it

a fair way to being realized ; a number of Hindu boys' societies are fully at work, and the little magazine which represents their interests \* has a constantly growing circulation.

As our lives are made up of unconsidered trifles, and as I wish to give my narrative the seal of reality, I have mentioned many little incidents which help to fill in the picture and place us, pioneers, before the mind's eye as living beings, not as the absurd exaggerations which have been so often and so unfortunately indulged in. If H. P. B. wrote mighty books, she also ate her fried eggs swimming in grease every morning, and this narrative has to do with the actual personage instead of the ideal. So I record a little detail that interested me enough at the time to make me record it. The presence of a little river back of the house awakened in us the old love of swimming, and we all went in for it, H. P. B. with the rest of us. It must have astonished our European neighbors to see us four Europeans—for that was the time of the two Coulombs—bathing along with a half dozen darked-skinned Hindus, and splashing about and laughing together, exactly as though we did not believe we belonged to a superior race. I taught my "chum" to swim, or rather to flounder about after a fashion, and also dear Damodar, who was up to a certain point one of the greatest cowards I ever saw in the water. He would shiver and tremble if the water was half-knee high, and you may believe that neither H. P. B. nor I spared him our sarcasms. I remember well

\* *The Arya Bala Bodhini.*

how all that changed. "Fie!" said I. "A pretty adept you will make when you dare not even wet your knee." He said nothing then, but the next day when we went bathing *he plunged in and swam across the stream*: having taken my taunt as meant, and decided that he should swim or die. That's the way for people to grow into adepts. TRY, is the first, last, and eternal law of self-evolution. Fail fifty, five hundred times, if you must, but try on and try ever, and you will succeed at the end. "I cannot" never built a man or a planet.

It was in this same January that H. H. Daji Raj, the young reigning Thakur of the Kathiawar State of Wadhwan, and a member of our Society, paid us a visit. I had begged him to leave his royalty behind him and come as a private gentleman with the usual couple of servants. He said he would, but when I met him at the station he had a tail of nineteen followers, an allowance which he thought modest in the extreme. In fact, when I remonstrated on his descending upon us with such a rabble of valets, cooks, musicians, barbers, and men of the sword, he showed great astonishment at my unreasonableness, and said that, but for my having written him, he should have brought a hundred or more!

The Thakur Sahib stopped with us from the 30th January until the 8th February, spending his time in talks with us, visits to the theatre, a sail on the river, a nautch dance, and other distractions. On the evening of the 7th we had an evening party and reception for the Madras Branch members to meet the Raja. The Convention Hall was

fresh-carpeted, brightly lighted, and decorated prettily with flowers and potted plants. A number of addresses were made, and, by request, I gave experimental demonstrations of mesmeric control to illustrate a brief exposition of the science.

On the 17th February I was again on the move, embarking for Calcutta on the French mail steamer "Tibre." After a pleasant voyage, I reached my destination on the 20th, and was put up at the Guest Palace (Boitakhana) of the Maharajah Sir Jotendra Mohun Tagore. His house was virtually converted into a hospital, for the sick crowded in upon me for treatment and their friends to look on. One of my first cases was an epileptic boy who was having fifty to sixty fits every day. His disease, however, speedily succumbed to my mesmeric passes, and by the fourth day the convulsions had entirely ceased. Whether the cure was permanent I do not know: perhaps not, for it seems unlikely that deep-seated causes, so powerful as to produce such a great number of fits in a day, should be driven out by a few days' treatment; one would have to keep up the treatment for, possibly, weeks before one could say there was a complete restoration of health. Yet it may have been so for aught I know. Epilepsy, while one of the most fearful of diseases, is at the same time one of those which yield most surely to mesmeric treatment.

I had a number of equally interesting subjects. Among them a young Brahmin, of probably twenty-eight years, who had been suffering from face paralysis for two years, sleeping with his eyes open because unable to close the

eyelids, and incapable of projecting his tongue or using it for speech. When asked his name, he could only make a horrible sound in his throat, his tongue and lips being beyond his control. It was a large room where I was at work, and I was standing at one end of it when this patient was brought in. He was stopped just within the threshold by my committee, for examination. When they stated the case they drew back and left the sick man standing alone and looking at me with an eager expression. He indicated in dumb-show the nature of his affliction. I felt myself full of power that morning ; it seemed as if I might almost mesmerize an elephant. Raising my right arm and hand vertically, and fixing my eyes upon the patient, I pronounced in Bengali the words "Be healed !" At the same time bringing my arm into the horizontal position and pointing my hand towards him. It was as though he had received an electric shock. A tremor ran through his body, his eyes closed and re-opened, his tongue, so long paralyzed, was thrust out and withdrawn, and with a wild cry of joy he rushed forward and flung himself at my feet. He embraced my knees, he placed my foot on his head, he poured forth his gratitude in voluble sentences. The scene was so dramatic, the cure so instantaneous, that every person in the room partook of the young Brahmin's emotion, and there was not an eye unmoistened with tears. Not even mine, and that is saying a good deal.

A third case was the most interesting of all. One Babu Badrinath Banerji, of Bhagulpore, an enrolled pleader of the District Court, had lost his sight. He was completely

blind, and had to be led by a boy. He asked me to cure him—to restore sight, that is, to a man suffering from *glaucoma*, with atrophy of the optic disc, who had passed through the hands of the cleverest surgeons of Calcutta, and been discharged from the Hospital as incurable! Ask the nearest surgeon, and he will tell you what that means. Now I had never treated a blind man, and had no idea whatever as to the chances of my doing the patient any good; but in mesmerism one can do nothing if one has the least doubt of his power to do: self-confidence is the one thing indispensable. I first tested the man's sensitiveness to my mesmeric current, for these were not cures by hypnotic suggestion that I was making, but downright, honest, old-fashioned psychopathic, *i.e.*, mesmeric ones. I found, to my great satisfaction, that he was the most sensitive patient I had ever met with. Blind, unable even to distinguish day from night, and, therefore, unable to see my motions and take suggestions from them as to my purposes, he stood before me, and as I advanced my finger-tips to within a half-inch of his forehead, and concentrated my will upon my hand that it should be to his nerves as a strong magnet to the suspended needle, his head inclined forward towards my fingers. I moved them slowly away, but the head also moved, and so kept following them until his forehead was within a foot's distance from the floor. I then shifted the hand noiselessly to the back of his head, and at once he moved it upward and upward until I thus drew him backwards, so that he overbalanced, and I had to catch him in my arms to keep him from falling. This in

silence, without a word or a sound to give him the clue to my proceedings. My way being thus cleared, I held the thumb of my clenched right hand before one of his eyes, and that of the left over his neck, and willed a vital current to run from the one to the other, completing with my body a magnetic circuit, of which one glaucomic eye and the optic tract, to its seat of development in the brain, formed parts. This process was continued for about half an hour, the patient remaining fully conscious always and making remarks from time to time as he chose. At the end of the experiment he could see a reddish glimmer of light in that eye. The other eye was then operated upon similarly, with the same result. He returned the next day for further treatment, and this time the light lost its reddish color and became white. Persevering for ten days, I was finally rewarded by seeing him with restored sight, able to read with one eye the smallest type in a newspaper or book, to dispense with his leader, and go about like anybody else. A surgeon friend of mine pointing out to me the signs of glaucoma, I found the eye-balls as hard as nuts, and set myself to make them normally elastic, like my own, which I did by the third day, by simple passes and the holding of my thumbs, with "mesmeric intent," *i.e.*, with concentration of will upon the result aimed at, before the sightless orbs. This cure naturally created much talk, as the patient held every needed written proof of his malady having been pronounced incurable by the highest medical professionals; besides which, his blindness was well known to the whole com-



munity of Bhagalpore. Two medical men, graduates of the Calcutta Medical College, studied the eyes through an ophthalmoscope and wrote a report of their observations to the *Indian Mirror*, from which I think it was copied into the *Theosophist*. The sequel to the cure was most interesting and striking. His sight faded out twice and was twice restored by me; the first time after it had lasted six months, the second time after a whole twelvemonth. In each case I found him totally blind and restored his sight with half an hour's treatment. To cure him permanently I should need to have him by me, where I could give him daily treatments until the glaucomic tendency had been completely extirpated.

Somehow I was extremely lucky in curing deafness. An interesting case came before me on the 8th March. His brother was, and is, a high-grade functionary in the Government Telegraph Department, and he was so deaf that one had to shout in his ear to make oneself heard. In two treatments, on two successive mornings, I had got him to the point where—my Diary lies before me and I speak “by the book”—he could hear me talk in an ordinary conversational tone up to the (measured) distance of 52 feet 8 inches: he walking away from me so that I might know he did not “read my lips.” I shall cite one more case coming under my observation during the Calcutta visit in question, and this must be the last, as I must yield space for other writers.

One day, my dear colleague, Norendro Nath Sen, wrote to ask me to visit a Hindu lady, lying ill of a grievous

malady, and pronounce an opinion upon it. The lady's husband took me to his house and into the zenana, where I found his comely young wife lying on a mattress on the floor, in a hysteric spasm. She would lie thus six to eight hours daily, with her eyes convulsively closed, the eyeballs introverted, the jaws clenched with tetanus, and speechless. A transfer of the sense of sight had occurred; she could read a book with her finger-tips, and by copying the lines on a slate prove her abnormal faculty. I recalled the experiments which Dr. James Esdaile, Presidency Surgeon, had made and recorded in this same Calcutta forty years before, and I repeated them. I found that the hysteric could not only read with her finger-tips, but also with her elbow and the small toe of one foot, but with no other. She could not read at the pit of the stomach nor at the back of the head, as I had seen other patients do, and as other writers on mesmerism testify to having seen, but she could hear at the umbilicus, even while I had my fingers pressed tightly into her ears and her husband spoke to her in whispers. The case was, of course, curable by mesmerism, but I declined to take it, as I was leaving Calcutta on the second day following, and this case might need a course of treatment extending over days, if not weeks. It presented, as will be seen, features of deep interest to the psychologist, for here, if ever there were such a thing, we saw the transfer of the senses of sight and hearing to places in the body remote from their proper organs, and the fact could not be explained away on any reasonable hypothesis of a materialistic character. Here

was mind functioning at the extremities of the nervous system by an extension, as it were, of its organ, the brain. From this to the prodigy of clairvoyance, or the intelligent observation of facts at great distances from the observer's body, is but a single step. Once let the thinking faculty be displaced from its proper seat to one or more other points within the limits of the thinker's body, and there is no logical barrier to the extension of its active consciousness outside the body, save the limits of the power of the Finite to grasp the Infinite.





## CHAPTER XXVII.

### TOURING AND HEALING IN BENGAL.

**U**N**TIL** our contemporary men of science took up the serious study of mesmerism under its synonym of hypnotism, the stigma of charlatanry was, more or less justly, placed upon it. Its advocates were as culpably eager to claim too much for it as its opponents were to concede too little. The indisputable soundness of its basis is now proved beyond cavil by the results of recent hypnotic research. If such great points as the reality of clairvoyant vision, the transference of thought, and the existence of the mesmeric aura, or "fluid," are still in dispute, it is consoling to know that the evidence of their reality is daily accumulating. Before long, the materialists will be obliged to admit it, as they have had to do in the matter of the other phenomena of mesmerism.

The above thoughts are suggested to me by the record of my psychopathic experiences of the year 1883, which we are now recalling. I had wasted an enormous volume of my vital force in attempting the indiscriminate treat-

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ment of the patients presenting themselves to me. While I succeeded in curing hundreds, I had failed in hundreds of other cases and given but temporary relief in as many more, despite my having exerted my full will power and poured out my vitality as freely as in the successful cases. Nay, I may say that when I failed I had made double and sometimes ten times as much effort as when I effected cures of the most striking and sensational character. One day, when I felt myself very tired after my morning's work, I began thinking that I might spare my forces in the future by adopting a system of selection: could I not apply some test—some auric measure, or, say, an *aura metrum*—by which I might pick out the most sensitive patients and abstain from operating on the others? I postulated to myself the existence in each individual of a nerve-fluid which would be characteristic of himself, or herself, and unlike that of every other individual. This, being conducted by the nerves to the extremities from the source of its generation in the brain, spine, and other centres (the *sat chakrams*), would be conductible by another person's nervous system in which an identical state of vibratory thrills or pulsations of aura was occurring, and which might be brought into sympathetic relation with it, and by no other. Therefore a healer like myself could not cause his nerve-aura to enter the nerve-system of any patient which was out of sympathetic vibration with his own system, any more than an electric current could be made to run through a non-conductor. *Per contra*, the certainty and rapidity of his cure of any given patient would be in

proportion to the completeness of this sympathetic vibration. The charge of charlatanism would only lie where the healer would pretend that he possessed some divine influence which was able to cure any patient who had faith in the healer's powers, regardless of the question of nerve-sympathy between the two individuals. To proceed upon the latter hypothesis would be to bring psychopathy within the domain of positive science. Then, what test could be tried; how could one know and prove to bystanders, which were the most curable patients? The test must produce visible phenomena, such as the most illiterate might appreciate for themselves. The only one of that sort was the phenomenon of "mesmeric attraction," and it could be applied thus: The patient should be made to stand erect, out on the floor and leaning against nothing, with his hands (unless paralyzed, of course) hanging by his sides and his eyes shut, so as to prevent his being controlled by the "silent suggestion" of the movements of the healer's hands. Better yet, as regards that, if his back were turned to the healer. Then the latter, concentrating his thought and will upon the patient's head, raising his hand towards it and bringing his fingers together into a point, should silently will that his hand shall become an attractive magnet to draw the patient's head towards him. This to be kept up a few minutes until it should be seen whether or not the intended effect followed. If almost immediately the patient began swaying on his feet and his head moved towards the operator's hand, then the latter might be sure that he was dealing with a very sym-

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pathetic sensitive, and the cure of his disease would be virtually instantaneous. The case of the young Brahmin, whose facial and lingual paralysis were cured, illustrates my meaning, as does also that of Badrinath Babu, the blind man of Bhagalpore, who was marvellously sensitive. If a less extreme degree of attraction showed itself yet still a strong one, the patient would be curable after two, three, or more treatments. So on to the point where, after three or four minutes' testing, the patient's head and body gave no responsive movements. There is nothing original in this experiment so far as the act of attraction goes—for that has been known from Mesmer's time—the novelty was in the using of it as an *ærometer*, a gauge of psychopathic sensitiveness. I tried it the next day with the most gratifying results: my best patients proved to be the most easily effected, Badrinath Babu to such a degree that—as explained in the preceding chapter—I could thus draw his head down to the very floor, and then, shifting my hand to the back of his neck, draw him up and up and over backward, until he would fall into my extended arms. Thenceforward I had to waste no more nerve-force on rebellious nervous systems, while the confidence gained by being able to know just how sensitive my patient was helped me immensely in working cures. For my own guidance, I mentally grouped all patients into ten classes or degrees of sensitiveness and proceeded to handle them accordingly.

Among the intelligent Europeans who were drawn to the Maharajah's Guest-Palace to witness my cures was the Rev. Philip S. Smith, of the Oxford University

Mission; a pale little man, highly educated, of course, presenting the type of the religious ascetic, and clothed after the Romish fashion, in a white cassock and a hat of about the shape of an American pic. He was very pleasant towards me, and I gave him every chance to satisfy himself as to the reality of psychopathy: he watched every case, put many questions to the patients, and stopped until he and I were left alone towards dusk. Then we had a long talk together about the business, and case after case was dwelt upon and analyzed. He declared himself thoroughly satisfied, and said he could not have believed possible what he had seen, upon the testimony of third parties. Then the subject of the Bible miracles was introduced by him, and he had to confess that he had seen me do a number of the things ascribed to Jesus and the Apostles in the matter of healing—sight restored to the blind, hearing to the deaf, speech to the dumb, the use of limbs to paralytics, neuralgia, colic, epilepsy, and other ills removed. "Well, then, Mr. Smith, please tell me," I said, "how you would draw the line between these healings and the identical cures wrought in the Bible narratives. If I do the same things why should they not be given the same explanation? If the Bible cases were miraculous, why not mine: and if mine are not miraculous, but perfectly natural, perfectly easy to do by any one who has the right temperament and can pick out the right subjects, then why ask me to believe that what Paul and Peter did was proof of miraculous power? It seems to me quite illogical." The little man pondered deeply for several minutes while I quietly smoked



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in silence. Then he gave me an answer that was most original and one which I can never forget: "I grant you that the phenomena are the same in both cases; I cannot doubt that. The only way I can explain it is by assuming that the healings of our Lord were done *through the human side of His nature!*"

On the 9th March (1883) I dined at the house of the most learned Brahmin Pandit of Bengal, the late Taranath Tarka Vachaspati, author of the famed Sanskrit Dictionary. He cooked food for me and paid me the highest honor possible in India, by giving me the Brahminical sacred thread, adopted me into his gotra (the Sandilya) and gave me his mantra. This was a sort of brevet conferring of the caste of Brahmin, the first case, I fancy, in which the details of the ceremony had been gone through with a white man, although the thread itself was given to Warren Hastings in his time. The favor shown me was, I was given to understand, to mark the sense of gratitude felt for me by the Hindus for my services in the revival of Sanskrit literature and of religious interest among the Indian people. My deep appreciation of the honor has often been expressed by me since then, and, although an avowed and convinced Buddhist then and now, I have always worn the *poita* since the venerable Pandit placed the first one about my neck.

Our conscientious enemies have been good enough to say, quite recently, that we Founders have done nothing in India for the children, perhaps not caring to call to mind the boys' religious schools, libraries, and societies that we have formed throughout the land. I see by my Diary that

the first religious school opened by us in Calcutta was started on the 11th of the same month as the above, with Babu Mohini Mohun Chatterji as chief teacher and other members of our Calcutta Branch as helpers. Since then, society after society for the moral, religious, and intellectual benefit of the young, of both sexes, has sprung up in that metropolis, and at this day hundreds are being instructed in the principles of their hoary religion. A Ladies' T. S. was formed in 1883, with the lovely and gifted Mrs. Ghosal as its President, and the outcome of this movement was the founding of the *Bharati*, a magazine fit to be compared with the great London and New York periodicals.

My work in Calcutta having been finished, including several public lectures to overflowing audiences, I resumed travel on the 15th, and turned my face towards Krishnagar. I lectured there, healed the sick, and admitted seventeen new members into the local Branch. On the following day I gave mesmerized water to one hundred and seventy applicants. There lived in the town a common potter, who must have had the soul of some old sculptor re-born in his body, so skilful was he in the modelling of figures. A tiny statuette, the price of which was but one rupee, represented a Brahmin seated for his morning devotions, and I think I never saw more character put into clay: the face showed the most intense concentration of mind and introspection and was a *chef-d'œuvre*. I did my best, later on, to persuade my good friend Maharajah Sir Jotendro Mohun Tagore, K.C.S.I., to erect in some crowded native quarter of Calcutta a lifesize statue of an Aryan Rishi, after Ram

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Lal's design, with suitable inscription on the pedestal to remind the modern Hindu of his glorious forefathers. With the Maidan and other open spaces studded with conspicuous statues of successful foreign soldiers and cunning politicians, it seems a vast pity that no rich Hindu gentleman or group of gentlemen comes forward to erect these mementoes for generations yet unborn, of the mighty sages and saints whose world-wide renown casts a brilliant radiance upon the Aryan race.

To Dacca next, one of the historical centres of Indian history, and, for years past, of modern culture. My host here was Babu Parbati Charan Roy, a highly educated Government employé and a materialist. I met at his house very cultivated society, among them Babu P. C. Roy, Ph.D., of London University, subsequently Registrar of Calcutta University, and his educated wife, a representative of the highest culture among Brahma ladies. The time not needed for my lectures and other public duties was most pleasantly occupied in private discussions with these friends on philosophical and theosophical subjects. Parbati Babu was a man well worth winning over to our side, and I was glad to answer his questions and try to resolve his doubts on religious subjects. I remember his taking me into his library and showing me his fine collection of books, almost exclusively by Western authors, and when we came to the last book-case, I made as if searching for more. He asked what I was looking for. I told him I supposed he must have still another room where he kept his Sanskrit and other Indian works. "No," he said,

"this is all: is it not enough?" "Enough," I replied, "why, certainly not, for a Brahmin who wants to know what his religion can answer to the criticisms of foreign sceptics: it might do very well for an European, who neither knows nor cares what the Aryan Shastras teach." My host flushed a little, for I fancy this was the first time that a white man had reproached him for knowing only the opinions of white men. However that may have been, in the course of time this bright University graduate turned his attention most seriously to the studies of his Shastras, and but the other day published a book announcing his full acceptance of the views of his ancestral religion.\*

From Dacca to Darjeeling is a long stretch, even by rail. At Siliguri we were transferred from the ordinary train to the steam tram that rushes up the Himalayas by a most devious route, curving around the hills, doubling and twisting upon itself, once in a figure of eight; going through forests and wild jungle, past banks of wild flowers growing beside the track; meeting gangs of Bhooteah coolies and Bhootanese, faring along with loads carried on their backs in baskets like inverted cones, supported by straps passing across their foreheads; through small villages of hillmen and Bengali shopkeepers, whose wares were exposed at the doors of the ill-smelling and squalid dens that serve them as business and living quarters combined; up, ever up into the cold and thin air of the heights, where the lowering of the temperature compels a change of dress and the use of

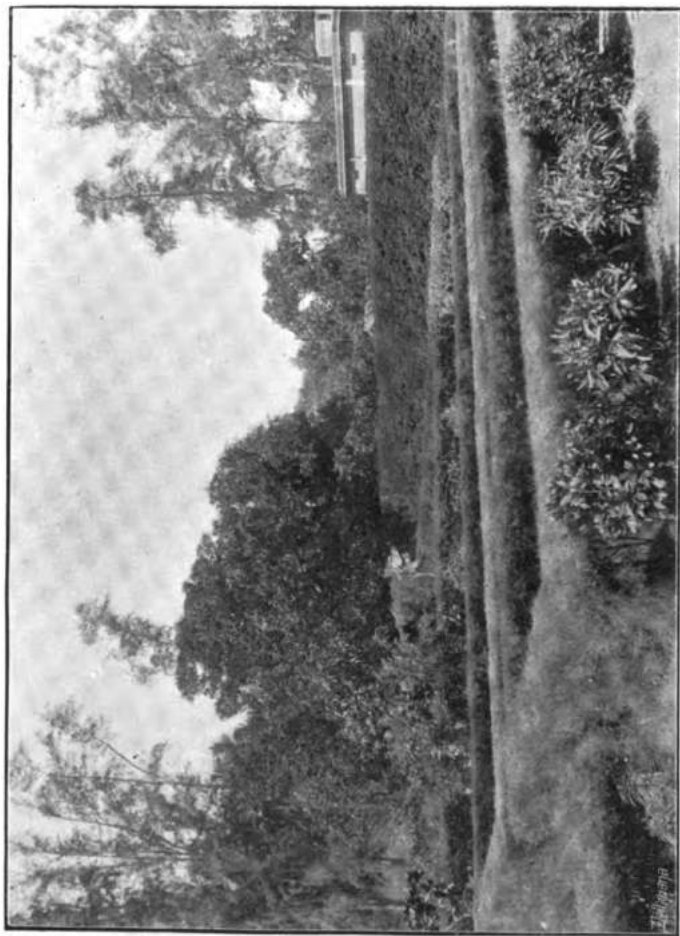
\* *From Hinduism to Hinduism.*

topcoats and rugs; new vistas of the hot, steamy plains opening out at every turn of the road, until rivers seem like glistening threads down below, houses like dolls' boxes, and moving animals and men like the figures of a toy Noah's ark. Then, finally, towards the end of the climb one finds oneself amid a confusion of mountain peaks crowned by the glittering pinnacles of Kanchanjunga, or Dhavalagiri, twice as far up in the sky as the crest of Mt. Blanc. On the station platform at Darjeeling I was met by my brothers of the local Branch, who gave me a warm welcome and took me to the mountain palace of the Maharajah of Burdwan, who had sent orders to place it at my disposal and give me hospitality.

Only one who has been living in the hot climate of the Indian plains can really know the inexpressible relief and charm it is to get up to this lofty hill-station where, at an elevation of about 8000 feet, one finds the climate of England, and the blazing fire in the chimney-place recalls the delights of home. Out-doors, especially in the bazaar or market-place, there is little to remind one of that, for one finds oneself in a crowd of people with Mongolian features, yellow skins, quaint headgear and costumes, jabbering away in a dozen strange tongues. Here is a trader selling Tibetan prayer-wheels, turquoise necklaces, charm-boxes to wear on the neck and arm; there, another offering the thick red sleeping-rugs of Tibet, or the pretty white and blue figured bedspreads of Bhutan, or the artistic woven woollen girdles with fringed ends, which every hill man and woman appears to wear for confining their loose

top-garments at the waist; and beyond him, a third who deals in the sweet-sounding cymbals and bells of L'hassa; dealers in ponies, cloths, grains, and every sort of merchandise which is in demand, throng the place, and the scene is full of movement and clamor. As I was working my way towards the Eastern side of the bazaar ground, I was brought to a sudden stop by seeing a man approaching with his splendid eyes fixed upon mine and a smile on his face. For a moment I could scarcely believe my eyes—so far away were my thoughts from the possibility of seeing him. It was one of the senior pupils of a Mahatma, with whom I had been brought into relations in a place far distant from there. I stood still, waiting for any advances he might choose to make, but just when he was quite near, he turned aside, with his smiling eyes fixed on mine, and was gone. I could find him nowhere.

During the next two days I was kept as busy as possible, receiving visitors, discussing high topics, and treating sick persons. On the 24th I lectured at the Town Hall on "Theosophy a true science, not a delusion." That morning I had seen a sight that I shall never forget until my dying day. I saw Dhawalagiri in a clear sky, without a veil of mist between it and myself. It was like the uncovering of a world of gods and immortals, and language is almost too poor to do it justice. Before dawn I had gone out of the house and was waiting for the sunrise. There was no cloud in the steel-blue sky to dim the light of the stars. Facing the East I saw, of a sudden, a pinnacle of eternal snow come into view, as if born out of the breast of the



FLOWER GARDEN IN FRONT OF HEADQUARTERS' BUILDINGS AT ADYAR.





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night: a small, shining white mass, so far up in the heavens that I had to crane my neck to look at it. That was the only shining mass in the sky, all else was night and stars, while the mountains around and before me were shrouded in deep darkness. Anon, the glory burst out in another peak, and then it ran like a flash of molten silver from the one to the other: within the next few moments the whole rugged cap of the kingly mountain was a blaze of lighted snow. Towering 20,000 feet above Darjeeling and 7000 more from the plains, seen afar like a dream more than a reality, what wonder that the Hindu popular belief should make it the home of Rishis, those ideal embodiments of all human perfections!

On the 26th I left Darjeeling, retraced my route down to Siligoori, where I was once more subjected to the heat of the plains, the more awful by reason of the contrast of forty-odd degrees Fahrenheit. My objective point, Jessore, was reached on the 28th. I lectured as usual, and on the 29th formed a local Branch. Thence to Narail, where I was put up in a Travellers' Bungalow composed of bamboo tattas and having a thatched roof—a flimsy construction that, one would think, could not withstand the strain of a high wind. The mercury stood at 106° Fah. So my state of comfort may be imagined. I lectured to a large crowd from the steps of a school-house, for want of a room big enough for the purpose, and, as there was not a single European about, wore my muslin Hindu costume with much comfort. If Europeans in the Tropics had really good common-sense, they would discard their

clinging, cramping and stuffy dress for the roomy and thin garments and head-covering of the natives of those countries. But what can be expected from people who wear Piccadilly costumes, including the bell-topper, at garden-parties, and slavishly submit to the conventional custom of making calls in the very hottest part of the day, and the most inconvenient? At Narail a Branch T. S. was formed with fourteen members. By palanquin, country boat and dâk gharry (mail coach) I went *via* Jessore to Calcutta, travelling a night and a day with the thermometer at 101°. I had yearned for a little rest on reaching the Maharajah's Guest Palace, but got none, as patients had gathered and were persistent and clamorous. So I worked through the day as well as I could, and, naturally enough, at evening had nervous fever, high temperature, and exhaustion of my forces. So I put my foot down the next morning and took my needed rest. In the evening, however, I paid a visit to my dear friends, the Gordons, and, later, held a meeting of the Bengal T. S. for the admission of new members. The next morning (April 4) I left for Berhampore, in the Murshidabad District.

Our Jain members of Azimganj met me as last year, and after giving me the usual garlands, bouquets, perfumed sprinklings, and refreshments, conducted me in grand state to a flower-wreathed boat in which I was taken across the river to some showy carriages sent from Berhampore for my use, in charge of my tried and trusty friend Dinanath Ganguli, Government Pleader. The reception at

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Berhampore was as gaudy as that on my previous visit, and the enthusiasm and welcome equally hearty. Then were healings of the sick, a lecture in the open air of a large courtyard that was prettily illuminated for the occasion, and a large meeting of the local Branch with seven new members admitted. The third day I left, in charge of the Dewan and Private Secretary of the Nawab Nazim of the Lower Provinces, who had been sent to invite me to pass a night at his Highness' Palace at Murshidabad. My host and I had a long talk together that evening, and I passed a good night despite the luxurious surroundings, which offered so great a contrast to my quarters in the bamboo screen and grass-thatched hut and the other strange houses in which I had so recently been entertained. It was amusing to see the Nawab's gleeful astonishment when, the next morning, I relieved a huge Pathan, of his military establishment, of a severe attack of sciatica before resuming my journey towards Azimganj.

My next station was Bhagulpore, which I reached at 10 P.M., and received a very kind welcome. Of course, there were addresses to reply to and flowers to be crowned with in the usual fashion. Babu Tej Naraen, a most benevolent and public-spirited man, put me up in his sumptuous Guest Palace. I healed sick persons the next day, visited a school, or rather college, founded by the above-named gentleman under the auspices of the T. S., where above 300 Hindu boys were receiving instruction in the national religion, and Muslim pupils in the tenets of Islam. He had spent 20,000 rs. on the buildings and

made a monthly grant of 150 rs. towards current expense account, as a supplement to the 250 rs. per mensem derived from school fees. The able manager was Dr. Ladli Mohan Ghose, one of our old and staunch T. S. members. My cures the next day are recorded as, two Hysteria, one Lumbago, one Hemiplegia, and three Rheumatism. At the Branch meeting eight new members were admitted, among them a Jain gentleman holding a judicial appointment under Government and a man of the greatest merit. The next morning my usual clinique was held, and I see that I made a deaf man, after a half-hour's treatment, hear words spoken in an ordinary conversational tone at the distance of twenty feet. Four more candidates for membership were admitted, and I then took a goods train for Jamalpur, a great railway centre, where I was lodged in a most shabby little house near the Railway Station, the best that our poor members could afford, and so quite as good for me as a palace would have been. A Branch meeting followed and candidates were admitted.

Twenty patients were cured by me the next day, but the heat was so excessive that I was more than glad when the hour arrived for clearing my rooms of the crowd. I lectured that evening in a large, airy hall that was crowded in every part. An European, a pig-headed fellow of some Dissenting sect, undertook to heckle me in rough language at the close, but he got what he deserved, perhaps more than he expected. Gya, Buddha Gya, and Dumraon came next in order; and at each the same incidents of healings, lectures, Branch Meetings, and admissions to membership occurred.

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The temperature ranged from 100° to 106° day by day.

A most unpleasant and, to me as an European, mortifying thing happened at the Dumraon lecture. A drunken, foul-mouthed indigo-planter came with a bottle of brandy and a basket of soda water bottles, and while I was lecturing kept drinking pegs. Fancy what was the impression made upon the audience of sober, intelligent, and self-respectful Hindus by this misconduct! Can any one be surprised at the contempt in which they hold the dominant race whose social habits are so different from their own standard of propriety? I am glad to say, however, that no similar degrading exhibition of bad conduct has ever been made at my lectures throughout India, however much may have been seen by the Hindus among the soldiers and sailors of the British Army and Navy.

My blind patient, Badrinath Babu, was travelling with me for daily treatment, and there was constant improvement of his vision. It was at Dumraon that the ophthalmoscope was applied to his eyes, and, as this is a question of fact and science, not of fancy and superstition, I may as well quote a passage or two from the letter of the medical man who made the observation, which he addressed to the *Indian Mirror*, of Calcutta, from Arrah, 18th April 1883. The gentleman, Dr. Brojendra Nath Bannerji, L.M.S., is a graduate of the Calcutta Medical College, and was a favorite pupil of the ophthalmic surgeons on the College Staff. It is copied at length in the Supplement to the *Theosophist* for May 1883. He says:

"The word wonderful is scarcely strong enough to characterize the cures made by Colonel Olcott while on his present tour. . . . It is the simple fact that cases given up by learned European and Native physicians as hopeless and incurable have been *cured* by him as by magic. . . . There is nothing secret about his methods. On the contrary, he especially invites medical men to watch his processes and learn them, if so disposed, as scientific facts. He neither takes money, desires fame, nor expects even thanks; but does all for the instruction of his Society members and the relief of suffering. The waste of vital energy he makes to cure incurable cases is something tremendous, and how a man of his advanced age can stand it seems marvellous. I have seen him treat, perhaps, thirty or forty patients, but a few examples will suffice to give you an idea of all."

The doctor then enumerates cures of a fixed pain in the chest, of four years' standing, the result of a kick by a horse; two cases of deafness, one of twenty-seven years' standing; chronic dysentery; epilepsy; and then comes to the most instructive case of the blind Badrinath. I think I had better quote rather fully. "Boidya Nath (the Bengali provincial mispronunciation of Badrinath) Bannerji, an educated gentleman, a Pleader, Judge's Court, Bhaugulpore, had been suffering from glaucoma (chronic) and atrophy of both the optic discs for the last seven years. . . . The pupils did not respond to the stimulus of light. His case was pronounced incurable by two of the best oculists in India, viz., Drs. Cayley and R. C.

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Saunders. Boidya Nath Babu possesses certificates from Dr. Cayley to this effect. He has had fourteen treatments [from myself] only, and at intervals since 25th February last (about eight weeks). He has perfectly regained sight in his left eye, the right one is also getting better. This morning he could even discern with it the color of flowers growing at a distance of twenty yards. I and my friend, Babu Bepin Behary Gupta, assistant surgeon, Dumraon, examined his eyes yesterday with an ophthalmoscope. We found that the atrophied discs were becoming healthy, the shrivelled blood-vessels admitting blood to circulate in and nourish the discs. . . . He can easily walk about without anybody's help, and the glaucomic tension of the eye-ball is gone. . . . Our medical books report no such case, and every ophthalmic surgeon among your readers will admit this cure to be unprecedented. I put it to my professional brethren whether the cure of this one case should not induce them to look into this subject of mesmerism which, on purely scientific principles, effects such staggering marvels of healing. . . . I have mentioned the names of Drs. Cayley and Saunders in connection with this case, only because of my respect for the eminence of their authority and the importance which their unfavorable official certificate gives to the cure which Col. Olcott has made in this instance. I have written mainly for the eyes of my professional colleagues, and none know better than they how safe I am in challenging the medical world to produce the record of a duplicate to this case."

Generous enthusiast, to be so blinded by an unspoilt

heart as to imagine that his colleagues should be moved to look through even one volume of Braithwaite to satisfy themselves that I could teach them something worth knowing, and something that would relieve human suffering: he should have taken warning from the experience of that young assistant surgeon at Galle, who also ventured to tell the truth about the cures he had seen me make of "incurable" patients!

In the same supplement to the *Theosophist* (May 1883) the curious reader will see the medical certificate sent to the Editor of the *East*, a local journal, by Purna Chundra Sen, Practitioner of Homœopathic Medicine and Surgery, of Dacca, about my curing within twenty minutes two distressing cases of malarial fever, with enlargement of the spleen and functional derangement of the heart, resulting in acute hysteria. Then, in the June *Theosophist Supplement*, of 1883, one can see Dr. Ladli Mohun Ghose's report on ten marked cases which I had cured, among them his own, which was a case of blindness in the left eye which Drs. Cayley and Macnamara, of Calcutta, had, after examination, pronounced incurable and probably congenital. "But to-day," says Dr. Ladli Mohun, "after a few minutes of simple mesmeric treatment, by breathing through a small silver tube, Col. Olcott has restored my sight. He has made me close the right eye, and with my hitherto useless left one read ordinary print. My feelings may be better imagined than described." Yes, but fancy the feelings of those two great oculists and eye-surgeons who had pronounced the eye incurable!



I went on to Bankipur from Arrah, where I had been through the usual routine, and was received and treated throughout my visit in the most affectionate manner. My audiences at the College Hall were very large and demonstrative; the second, when I gave a special address to the pupils, excessively so. After speaking a full hour I wanted to stop, but the room rang with shouts of "Go on; please do go on!" so on I went for another hour, and the boys would have kept me at it all night, I suspect, if I had not told them I was hungry and should go straight away home for my dinner. Dear young fellows; what a limitless field of work there is among the school boys and college undergraduates of India for those whom they know and love! And this is the field which is incomparably the most important of all, for the boys are not yet spoiled, nor the sweetness of their young natures destroyed by contact with public life. I ask no better epitaph when I am dead and gone than to be called the Friend of Children.





## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### FLORID COMPLIMENTS.

IT is very distasteful to me to be obliged to give so much space to the story of my own journeyings and doings ; but how can I help it ? During all those early years I was, in my official capacity, the focus of all our executive activity : America was slumbering, with its work all in the future ; England had one group of friends, who shrank from publicity, and another (the Ionian T. S.) had no means of making it if they had so wished ; H. P. B. stopped at home to edit the *Theosophist* and write for pay to the Russian magazines ; and I had to be constantly in the field and on the platform, to compel public attention and to form local Branches. My healing of the sick had been forced upon me without premeditation, under circumstances beyond my control, and as the results aroused such wide and intense interest as to form the chief sensational feature of the Society's year's history, the reader must kindly excuse the continued use of the personal pronoun and absolve me from the charge of egotism. I want them to figure to

themselves that it was the P. T. S. at work, for the Society alone, and that it was to him, not to my poor personality, that all those kindnesses were shown and complimentary speeches made. As an example of the sort of thing I had to face, with unblushing cheek and an assumption of great interest, I have been counselled by an English friend, in whose good judgment I have confidence, to copy here, for amusement and instruction, a translation of the text of an address in Sanskrit which was read to me at Bhagalpur. Yet, really, even hiding myself behind the figure of my Presidential *carapace*, I cannot give certain of the most extravagant phrases, because these passages, which would be considered perfectly moderate here, will be read in many distant countries where the blood runs cooler and the imagination is less florid than in India. With these eliminations, indicated by the asterisks, here is the text of the paper drafted and read to me by these learned Pandits of Bengal.

“(1) O noble philanthropic Colonel Olcott : here are we, sons of old Aryavarta, come to bid you a hearty welcome,— we who have long coveted the blessing of your presence. It is our good fortune you should be here in this city of Bhagalpur.

“(2) Blessing and long life to you, noble-minded Founder of the Theosophical Society. Our worst evils fly before your noble presence. Your championship revives the dry-bones of Aryan Philosophy.

“(3) O \* \* \*, in the presence of your lotus-feet the people of this place find their tree of desire in blossom.

Our good deeds of a former birth have resulted in the long looked-for blessing of your presence among us.

“(4) O \* \* \*, the gloom that filled our hearts is dispelled by your coming. Passion, envy, hate, and the whole lot of *karmas* have given place to a profound calm in our minds, so fickle by nature. A mysterious charm has to-day wrought a sudden change and plunged us deep into a state of supreme blessedness.

“(5) The time-honored distinction of the Vipras vanishes in the air in your presence, which, in spite of your foreign birth, is felt as that of one of our own caste. This is the fruition of the Yoga you have practised. \* \* \*, you can make others having the benefit of your blessed company, like yourself.

“(6) Self-denial, purity, Vaidic learning, holy ritual, good manners, modesty, meditation, charity, piousness, reverence for the twice-born and the elders,—these and like qualities which once formed the life of the Hindu character, were alike nearly gone from our country. They have once more come into being because of your holy contact.

“(7) Those evil giants once destroyed by Rama and other heroes of hoary antiquity, that once more ran rampant under the ægis of Western civilization, have again been committed to the burning flames of a noble philosophy.

“(8) Many who having ceased to believe in the mighty word of the Rishis, had gone out of their path to work themselves harm and all manner of mischief by giving themselves up to foreign vices, have now returned to the flock they had strayed from.

“(9) How can we discharge the debt of gratitude we owe you for your exertions in every quarter of the world, to awake in the minds of men a holy reverence for the precious truths that lie stored up in the systems propounded by our Rishis of old, as the fruit of their long lives of profound meditation.

“(10) All honor to thee, O India, for no less a personage than the Colonel (*karnala* = all ear) himself has listened to the mighty Rishi-word. With his noble example staring us full in the face, we the twice-born of the great Arya race, feel ashamed of our present degeneracy.

“(11-12) O you, whose great soul regards the whole world as related, whose path is the path of the Brahmins of old, having taken leave of wealth, riches, and all earthly concerns, having broken asunder all those ties which bind oneself to one's birth-place, so dear to mankind, you have taken in hand a most difficult task, to do good to us in a far country.

“(13) Where is your own country in the far-off region of Patala, and where our own country of Aryavarta? Great and immeasurable is the distance between the two. Your coming to us proves the all-powerful attraction of love acting from a previous state of existence.

“(14) From the noble Lady whose motherly care for human weal, and the word of the Mahatmas have made her ‘lay all selfish cares aside’ for the good of us, fallen ones, and from yourself, O Colonel, age-stricken, decayed Theosophy, revived, receives its nourishment.

“(15) Countries once known as foreign have now become more than our own home; the future world supposed to

be next after this being, has come to be felt as our own world; the men once regarded of different stock have, through mutual love, become more than brothers. Thus, before the charm of your loving nature, everything loses its alien character.

"(16) What shall we ask of you, who have all our desires gratified by getting you into our midst?

"It now remains for us to pray with our whole heart for you a long life of continuous health and uninterrupted success.

*"9th April 1883."*

The above is a specimen of a very large number that the Founders received after coming to India. The custom is ancient, and generations must pass before it will be abandoned.

To return to our mesmeric healings: A fact important in its suggestiveness was to be noted in the case of our blind Badrinath. Supersensitive as I found him, he would nevertheless sit and let me treat him for a half-hour on end without ever losing his consciousness, but on one occasion, when the thought occurred to me that he should sleep, his head instantly fell back, his eyelids fluttered, his eyeballs rolled upward, and he was fast asleep; one moment he was wide awake, observant of his surroundings, and ready to talk with me or anyone else in the room, the next he was so oblivious to sounds that bystanders vainly tried to excite his attention by making loud noises, shouting in his ear, etc. This was as fine an example of thought-transference

as was ever recorded. The change was so sudden as to startle me for a moment. It was as though his life were hanging on my pleasure, and as if, in case I so willed it hard, he would drop dead from heart-failure. I got a valuable lesson from it, viz., to keep ever alert as to the workings of one's own mind while the brain of a subject was in close mesmeric subjection to one's will. To anticipate a theory that may suggest itself to some readers skilled in Hypnotism, I might put the question whether Badrinath Babu was not equally obeying my unuttered thought when consciously undergoing my healing treatment, as when he dropped asleep in obedience to my unspoken command. This may be so, but in that case it only gives us a still more convincing proof of thought-transference, for, whereas my thought now willed him to keep awake to be treated, it then willed him to fall into the mesmeric slumber. And how wonderfully sensitive must the subject be to exhibit these different and opposite phenomena !

Yet an entry in my Diary for 21st April raises the question whether the theory of absolute mental union between my patient Badrinath and myself will hold. On the day in question, while under treatment for his eyes, upon which business my thoughts were closely concentrated, he suddenly began describing a shining man whom he saw looking benevolently on him. His clairvoyant sight had, it seemed, become partially developed, and what he saw was through closed eyelids. From the minute description he then proceeded to give me, I could not fail to recognize the portrait of one of the most revered of our Masters,

a fact that was the more delightful in its being so unexpected and so independent of any mental direction on my own part. Granting, even, that Badrinath may have, by association of ideas, connected my presence with that of some such personage, it is to the last degree unlikely that he should have described to me an individual with blue eyes, light flowing hair, light beard, and European features and complexion, for surely I have not found among the Brahmins any legend of such an adept. Yet the description, as above said, fitted accurately a real personage, the Teacher of our Teachers, a *Parmamguru*, as one such is called in India, and who had given me a small colored sketch of himself in New York, before we left for Bombay. If Badrinath was reading my mind, he must have gone down deep into my subjective memory, for, since coming to India, I had had no occasion to keep the face of that Blessed One before my mind's eye.

The *Theosophist* Supplements for the year 1883 teem with signed certificates of the cures I was so happy as to make, in most parts of India, during my long journeys of the year. Out of these I shall copy one, not because of its being more striking than many others, but because I happen to have ready to hand the original paper which was drafted and signed at the time by the bystanders. The incident occurred at Bankipur, on the 22nd April 1883. The certificate reads thus:—

“BANKIPORE, 22/4/83.

“The undersigned certifies that he has just been restored to speech by Col. Olcott, after a mesmeric



treatment of not more than five minutes; and also had strength restored to his right arm, which, until then, was so powerless that he could not lift a pound's weight. He lost the power of articulating words in the month of March 1882.

“(Sd.) RAM KISHEN LAL.

“Witnessed by the cousin of the patient.

“(Sd.) RAMBILAS.

“The above wonderful cure was wrought in our presence, as above described.

“(Sd.) Soshi Bhooshan Moitra, Amjad Ali, Jogash Chandra Banerji, Govinda Cheran, M.A., B.L., Amir Haidar, Pleader, Mohas Narayan, Gaja Dhar Pershad, Pleader, Judge's Court, Sajivan Lal, Lal Vihari Bose, Haran Chandra Mittra, M.A., Purna Chandra Mukerji, Bani Nath Banerji, Giriya Sakhar Banerji, Hem Chandra Singh, Annada Charan Mukerji, Ishwar Chandra Ghose, Baldeo Lal, B.A., and Purnendu Narayan Singh, M.A., B.L.”

And it may be said, once and for all, that these healings were not done in private, without witnesses, and with some mystical paraphernalia or foolery, but openly, in the sight of all men; sometimes even in temples before crowds of people: so that my every narrative is capable of verification by living witnesses, to say nothing of the cured patients themselves, of whom many must have been radically benefited, like the Sinhalese jeweller, Don Abraham, about whom I have spoken above.

I slept that night on a bench at the railway station,

to be ready for a very early train and spare my friends the very disagreeable necessity of turning out before dawn to come and see me off. I reached my next point, Durbangha, at 1 P.M., and became the guest of the Maharajah, Lakshmiswar Singh, Bahadur, a well-educated Prince, who paid me every possible attention and became a member of the Society. There was a lecture on the second evening, before a large audience, and on the 25th a Branch T. S. was formed with ten members. This Maharajah is enormously rich and has a new Palace which contains a Durbar (audience) Hall that is splendid in its dimensions and architectural embellishments. In my innocence of what the future had in store for us, I wrote in my Diary the question, "Shall he be the Asoka of the T. S.?" Events have decidedly answered this in the negative, as will be shown at the proper time. On the present occasion, he could not have been more gracious or charming.

Ranegunge was my next stopping place. Here I was the guest of Kumar Dakshiniswar Malliah, owner of twenty-five coal mines, who put me up in his garden-villa, and was extremely kind. On the next day there were psychopathic treatments, and, in the evening, I organized the Searsole T. S., after which there was the usual conversazione, at which I had to answer innumerable questions, and at 1 A.M. I moved on towards Bankura. I got a snatch of sleep from 7 to 11.30 A.M., and then business began again. That evening there was a lecture; the next day, healings and the mesmerism-

tion of eight large pots of water for distribution among the sick ; in the evening a meeting of the Branch T. S., with admission of six new members. The next morning, at 5.30 A.M., I went by horse carriage back to Searsole, slept at the station until 3 A.M., when I took train for Burdwan. I was met by the Dewan Sahib (now Raja) Bun Behari Karpur, Dr. Mohindranath Lal Gupta, and Professor Dutt, of the Maharajah's College, and lodged at the beautiful residence of the Dewan. My audience at the College that evening was very large and enthusiastic, the Chair being taken by Mr. Beighton, the Sessions Judge. For three or four hours on the 3rd May, I healed the sick at the Dewan's house in presence of the Maharajah and his chief nobles, spent part of the day with him at the Palace, and in the evening formed a local Branch, of which the Dewan became one of the members. The Maharajah wanted to join, but I refused him on account of his dissipated habits. Like too many of our best young princes, he was being completely ruined in health and morals by the debauched courtiers who surrounded him. It is a pretty good proof of his innate goodness of heart that my decision seemed to increase rather than abate his respect for me, and I had more than one evidence of his goodwill before his untimely death, which occurred some little time afterwards.

At Chakdighi, my next station, I was lodged in the most tastefully and comfortably furnished garden-house I had ever seen up to that time. The Zemindar's name

was Lalit Mohan Sinha Ràya, and I thought him a very estimable young man. A Branch T. S. was organized that evening, and sundry mesmeric cures wrought the next morning. The next day saw me on the wing again, the station in view being Chinsurah, where a new Branch was also organized. My healings were made as usual, and a lecture given at the Barracks before a huge audience, whose welcome was expressed in the most demonstrative manner. Then on to Calcutta again, which I reached at 9.30 A.M. on the 8th May, tired enough; as may be imagined when one reflects that this was in the hottest season of the year, when the wind blew like the breath of a furnace and swirls of dust choked one, if one ventured out of doors before the going down of the sun.





## CHAPTER XXIX.

### HEALING OF THE DUMB MAN IN THE NELLIAPPA TEMPLE.

**W**HAT his Sunday is to the "slave of toil," my rare half-days of rest were to me on this 7000-mile circuit around India in the year 1883. I had one such, I see, on the 9th May, and up to the 14th I was, at least, settled in Calcutta, but then the ceaseless round had to be taken up again, and I left by steamboat for Midnapore, which transit the breaking down of a second boat on the Ooloobaria-Midnapore Canal lengthened out to a two-days' journey. There was a lecture on the evening of my arrival, healings of the sick on the 17th, and the formation of a local Branch with ten members, after which I returned to Calcutta. A lecture was given at Bhowanipore on the 20th, and the next day, at the Calcutta Town Hall, we celebrated, in presence of a huge audience, the first anniversary of the Bengal T. S. Babu Mohini Mohun Chatterji, Secretary of the Branch, read an interesting report, in which he said that the formation of the Branch was due to my first lecture in

the same hall in the preceding year ; the President, Babu Norendranath Sen, gave a lengthy and eloquent discourse ; Babu Dijendranath Tagore, the highly respected and cultured Acharya of the Adi Brahma Samaj, spoke on the subject of Brotherhood ; Dr. Leopold Salzer, on Protoplasm and Dr. Jaeger's discoveries in odorant matter ; and I wound up the proceedings with a historical retrospect of the doings of Dr. James Esdaile in Mesmeric Anæsthesia, as applied to surgical operations, at Calcutta, in the years 1846, '47, '48, '49, and '50. I see by the report (*Theosophist*, Supplement, July 1883) that I read, among other things bearing upon the subject of Mesmerism, the striking passage from the *Sariraka Sutra*, where it is said : "By the aura (*ushma*) of the inner man (*sukshma sarira*) is the aura (*ushma*) of the outer man (*sthula sarira*, or body) perceived."\* The statement of Mr. Leadbeater (*vide Theosophist*, Dec. 1895, art. "The Aura") that the aura extends, in the average man, to a distance of about eighteen inches or two feet from the body in all directions, is borne out by the warning in the ancient Atharva Veda, that if a healthy person comes within *two cubits*, *i.e.*, about three feet, of the body of one diseased, the malady is likely to be communicated to him ; the patient's aura transmitting its

\* The passage reads thus : *Aśyaiva chopapatte resha ushma*. In the dictionaries *ushma* is, I know, explained as heat, with the implication in some cases that *prāna* is meant. That it is not the animal heat of the body is clear enough from the fact that the *ushma* of the spiritual body is mentioned. Under the circumstances, then, I think that our word aura (Sans. *tejas*) more nearly explains the idea conveyed in the context than would any English synonym.

germs midway between the two, at the point where the spheres blend and the microbes are transferred from the emittent to the recipient aura. According to Susruta, "leprosy, fever, dropsy, eye-diseases, and some other abnormal conditions," are communicated from a patient to a healthy person by conversation (intercourse), contact, breath, sitting together at meals or on the same couch, use of the same clothes, garlands of flowers, and scented paste (*anulepan*). *A propos* of the now-raging bubonic plague of Bombay, Atharva Veda says that, "Even if a son born of one's own loins be attacked by . . . carbuncle . . . he is never to be touched:" a mandate which is not very closely observed in our time of brave, self-forgetful nursing of the sick. But to return from this digression. The above-mentioned occasion was my last public appearance of that year in that portion of India, as on the following day I sailed for Madras. It having been brought to my notice that some of the facts given in this narrative with respect to mesmerism and mesmeric healing have been rather widely commented upon by the press, it may perhaps interest the public to read a summary of the table of statistics which was published by my friend, Nivaran Chandra Mukerji, who accompanied me throughout the tour, and kindly acted as my private secretary: his report will be found in *Theosophist*, Supplement, June 1883. He says the table represents in one column "the number of patients (they were of both sexes, all ages, conditions of social life, and sects) upon whom he (I) actually laid his hands, and in another, that of the gifts of vitalized or mesmerized water made by him (me).

I have reduced vessels of all capacities—*gharras, lotaks,* jars, bottles, etc., to an uniform standard of the pint bottle." In the first column are enumerated the twenty stations where I healed the sick, and it is reported that I dealt with 557 patients; in the other column it is shown that I gave 2255 pint bottles of mesmerized water, and Nivaran Babu, assuming that each bottle represented but a single patient—a too moderate estimate, I fancy—makes a grand total of 2812 sick persons treated by me in the circuit of fifty-seven days. Additional facts, of interest to my colleagues at least, are that within the time I travelled "2000 miles by rail, steamboat, budgerow (canal boat), horse-garry, elephant, horseback, and palanquin, the travel being sometimes by night, sometimes by day." I gave, it seems, "twenty-seven lectures, organized twelve new Branches, visited thirteen old ones, and held daily discussions on philosophy and science with hundreds of the ablest men in Bengal and Behar." Nivaran even describes my diet with liberal praise, and tells how many potatoes, ounces of green vegetables, macaroni, vermicelli, slices of bread and butter, and cups of tea and coffee I took, and how well I thrived on non-flesh diet. That the vegetarians may not claim me as an indiscriminating convert, I must say that if Nivaran had gone the tour of 1887 with me, he would have seen me so weakened by this diet that I was peremptorily ordered to resume my usual food, and apparently saved my life by not being so fanatical as poor Powell, who lost his life through asceticism. I think it will be found true that any special diet may be a man's "meat" at



one time, and his "poison" at another. I have no sympathy with indiscriminating fanatics. At this very time of preparing this volume for the press, I am practising vegetarianism again as a preventive of hereditary gout, and find it most efficacious. To compare pigmies with giants, it seems that my case was, in this, like that of the Buddha who fainted at the end of a long fast and saved his life by eating the rich food brought him by the sweet-souled Sujata, daughter of a nobleman. I recollect that when Mrs. C. Leigh-Hunt Wallace, the authoress of a standard work on Mesmerism, saw the statistics of my year's total score of treatments, she wrote me that there was not a mesmerizer in Europe who would dream of touching with mesmeric intent half that number of patients. She meant, of course, professional healers like herself, not prodigies like Schlatter, Newton, the Curé d'Ars, Zouave Jacob, and others who have professed to have been working under an overshadowing spiritual control. So far as that is concerned, I frankly confess my belief that I could not have gone through such a great and sustained outpouring of my vitality, unless I had been helped by our Teachers, although I was never so told by them. What I am forced to realize is that I have not had so phenomenal a healing power since I got my order to stop the work, *i.e.*, towards the close of 1883; and I am convinced that, though I should try ever so hard, I should fail to cure those desperate cases which I would then dispose of with the greatest ease within a half-hour or even less.

I had a hearty welcome home from H. P. B. and the

rest, and a series of phenomena were done, chiefly for my benefit, among which I shall only mention the one noted in my entry for June 6th. I say that "not being able to decide whether to accept the invitation to Colombo or that to Allahabad, I placed A. C. B.'s letter in the shrine, locked the door, instantly reopened it, and got the written order of ∴ through . . . (a second Adept) in French. It was done while I stood there, and not a half minute had elapsed." So far as it goes, that pretty effectually disposes of the pretence that these communications were fabricated in advance and passed through a sliding panel at the back of the shrine. A whole month of homely desk work at Adyar was a delightful episode, varied with healings of patients, reception of visitors, and metaphysical discussions with H. P. B. I restored speech to one patient, cured paralytics, deafness, etc. One case is interesting as showing a progressive cure of loss of hearing. A young man who could not hear the ticking of a clock held against his ear, was at the first treatment made to hear it at the distance of 4 ft. 6 inches; at the second, at 6 feet; at the third, at 15 feet: at the second he could hear conversation at the distance of 13 feet. On the 24th June a boy who had long been paralyzed in his legs was, in one treatment, made to walk about the room.

On the 27th June I sailed for Colombo, arrived on the third day, and plunged into the business cut out for me, viz., the grievances of the Buddhists in the matter of a riotous attack made on them by the Catholics, without their getting redress from Government. The next fortnight or so was

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taken up with this affair, and with personal interviews with the Governor of Ceylon, the Colonial Secretary, Inspector General of Police, Government Agent for the Western Province, the leading Buddhists, the chief priests, and counsel. I drafted petitions, remonstrances, instructions to counsel, appeals to the Home Government and the House of Commons, had many consultations and discussions, presided at Branch meetings, and, generally, was kept busy. All having been got into trim, I crossed over to Tuticorin on the 14-15 July, and began a long tour through Southern India, which was full of variety, excitement, and picturesque episodes.

Let us begin with my arrival on the 17th July, at Tinnevely, the station where our Colombo Buddhist committee and I planted the cocoanut amid the tumultuous rejoicings described in a former chapter. We reached the station at 6 P.M., and found a huge crowd waiting. Five thick ropes of flowers, rather than garlands, were put about my neck and mounted to the top of my head; my hands, arms, and pockets were filled with ripe limes—the fruit of welcome and respect; I was put into a canopied sedan-chair; the chief local and governmental officials walked beside, in front and behind me along the dusty road; a young Brahmin threw loose flowers on and about me and tossed them into the air, strewing the road with an odorous carpet; the temple Brahmins came and handed me the flower-wreathed silver lotah and the tray on which lay a broken cocoanut, some red powder, limes, and camphor. The procession moved on with waving flags and banners; two bands of

musicians—one from the temple—clanged their wild music, and so we proceeded until the flower-and-plant-festooned bungalow assigned to me was reached, and I was allowed to get in from the heat of the road and enjoy its coolness. A welcome was here spoken by an ex-judge of Travancore, a learned and estimable gentleman, to which I responded, of course. Does it not seem as if all this gave the lie to the inimical Missionary tale of 1881, that the orthodox Brahmins had felt so outraged with the pollution of the temple by our cocoanut-planting party that they had uprooted the nut and purified the premises to get rid of our unholy taint! But why waste time or “spoil one’s blood,” as the Russians say, in refuting the numberless calumnies that have ever been circulated against us, when they refute themselves all in good time?

The next day I lectured on the lawn outside my bungalow to an audience which included all the leading men of the place. At the close I made an earnest appeal for the supply of a good theological library for Hindu boys, and got a very handsome sum subscribed on the spot. This, if my memory serves me, was the first of a long series of successes in the same direction, and down to the present moment I have continued to press the claims of Indian youth upon their elders for the means of proper religious culture. I hope that, when I leave the scene, somebody among my colleagues will thoroughly cultivate this best, most fertile of all mental and moral fields in India. There is no other to be compared with it.

As the publicity given by the Ceylon press to my early

healings created an importunate demand for repetitions on the Bengal tour, so the exciting narratives of the North Indian papers caused me to be urged with equal pertinacity to exercise the power for the benefit of the sick in South India. They besieged me at Tinnevely, as at all the other stations, and some marvellous cures were wrought. An entry of a few words in my Diary for 20th July recalls to memory one of the most dramatic experiences of my life. I had gone to the Pagoda to sprinkle the "Tree of Friendship" with some refined rosewater, and was followed by at least 1000 idlers, who, for lack of better amusement, watched my every step and exchanged opinions on my personal appearance. A young man of twenty-five or thirty was brought me through the press, by his father, with a prayer that I would restore his speech, which he had lost three years before. Having neither elbow-room nor breathing-space, I climbed up on the continuous pedestal or basement that supports a long line of monolithic carved figures of Hindu deities, drew the patient up after me, called for silence, and made the father tell the people about the case. What then happened may as well be quoted from the printed contemporary record—a letter from the well-known late S. Ramaswamier, F.T.S., in *Theosophist Supplement*, August 1883. "Amidst a great crowd," says he, "right in front of the Nelliappa temple, the Colonel laid his hands on the unfortunate dumb man. Seven circular passes on the head and seven long passes, all occupying less than five minutes, and speech was restored to the no more silent man! The Colonel, amidst deafening shouts

of applause and thundering clapping of hands, made him pronounce the names of S'iva, Gôpâla, Râma, Râmachandra and other deities as glibly as any other bystander [could]. The news of this restoration of speech spread at once throughout the town and created a great sensation." And no wonder, for when I made the patient shout the sacred names at the top of his voice, half the crowd rushed out into the street in mad excitement, waving their arms over their heads, and crying, in Indian fashion, *Wah! Wah! Wah!* Recollecting the mean tricks the Missionaries had played on me at my first visit, in circulating a scurrilous pamphlet against H. P. B. and myself, to which, in contravention of law, no publisher's or printer's name was attached, and in putting afloat the falsehood about the cocoanut tree having been uprooted by indignant Brahmins, I planned a little deserved punishment on them. I told the patient's father to take his son to the chief Missionaries at Palamcottah—a suburb of Tinnevely—tell them about the cure, quote to them the 17th and 18th verses of St. Mark's XVIth Chapter, and demand, on behalf of the Hindu community, that, in proof of their divine commission, they should restore speech to somebody as I had done in the Pagoda. Their reply to be communicated to the Hindu public. Several days later he came and reported to me the result. I had expected some amusement, but fancy my surprise when he told me that one of the chief *padris* had declared his story a lie, and not one would believe that his son had ever been speechless! The subterfuge was so ingenious that it excited my profound admiration,

and I had a good laugh over their astuteness. More than they had, I imagine, since the man was known to the whole town, and the cure had been made with the greatest publicity.\*

I went on to Trevandrum, the capital of Travancore, by bullock cart, and was banged and bruised all over; the distance being about a hundred miles and the road a trying one. Trevandrum was reached on the second morning, and the principal nobles and officials came to present their compliments and welcomes. I made ceremonial calls on H. H. the Maharajah, a cultured man, well known for his magazine articles on the Vedānta and other serious subjects, and on the British Resident, the Eliyah Rajah (Heir Apparent), the Dewan (Prime Minister), and other important personages. His Highness, the Maharajah, had up his Palace pandits to meet me, and started a discussion between them and myself on the subject of Yoga, he himself serving as interpreter. At my lecture that afternoon

\* First-hand proof of these strange cures being best of all, it will be as well to copy here the certificates which were printed in the *Theosophist* Supplement for August 1883. They read thus: "We hereby certify that in our presence Col. Olcott has just restored speech to Oomayorubagam Pillay, son of Utheravasagam Pillay, of Palamcottah, after a treatment of less than ten minutes. For three years he has not been able to pronounce any word, except the first syllable of the name of Rāmā, and that but indistinctly. He can now articulate many words plainly and in a loud voice. (Sd.) Utheravasagam Pillay (father of the patient); Soccalingam Pillay (his uncle); Sonachellum Pillay (his father-in-law); N. Padmanabha Aiyer, F.T.S.; Vallinayagam Pillay. The above is strictly true. (Sd.) Oomayorubagam Pillay (the patient). Tinnevely, 21st July 1883."

most of the Royal Princes were present, and as one of them was notoriously intemperate, I took occasion to draw a picture of what was the ancient ideal of an Indian Prince, and compared it with the sad contrast presented in most of the Indian Courts at the present day: of course, not mentioning its special applicability in the present instance, since that—as the French say—*sautait aux yeux*. Many patients presented themselves for treatment, and I see that on the first day all but one were more or less benefited. On the second morning the Royal Family were present at my rooms to watch operations, and among other cures recorded is that of an old woman to whom I restored speech in their presence. Before leaving town I admitted a number of respectable candidates into our membership. The ordeal by bullock-cart thumping had to be faced again and in due time I got back to Tinnevely, with a rather realizing sense of my anatomy at the end of the journey. *En route*, I lectured at Nagercoil to a big audience. Further additions to our membership were made at Tinnevely, and I then passed on to Srivilliputtur, where I formed a local Branch, thence to Sattur, and then onwards to Madura, one of the largest, most prosperous, and enlightened towns in Madras Presidency. The Meenakshi Temple is, I think, the finest Hindu religious structure in India—it is 847 × 744 feet in area, and full of giant monolithic statues; it was once the seat of Tamil learning, the statuettes of forty of its most renowned pandits being kept in a closed room which, probably, few foreigners visit, and which is the sad memento of glorious days of ancient learning, now almost



forgotten. There was, when I visited the town—and is now—a brilliant local bar, whose then leader, Mr. S. Subramaniam, F.T.S., is now creating for himself a permanent renown as a Justice of the High Court of Madras. I was put up in his garden-house and soon became acquainted with every man in the town worth knowing. The next evening my lecture was given in the noble palace of Tirumala Nayak (the Pandyan king of the seventeenth century), under difficulties. The Palace is built and paved with stone, and the effect of the presence of a crowd within the building is to create a roar and confusion of sound quite unmanageable. I was first placed to speak on the place under the dome in the Rotunda, where the Prince of Wales had held his Durbar, but the mere rubbing of the unshod feet of 3000 people on the pavement and the murmur of their friendly voices prevented my making myself heard, even by friends a few feet off. They craned their necks forward, curved their hands behind their ears, bored me to the centre with their anxious glances, as though their eyes had been drills, and half opened their mouths, as the deaf instinctively do, to catch the air vibrations within the cavity of the mouth as well as those of the tympanum. But it was useless, I was only shouting myself dumb for nothing; so I stopped and made signs of despair and regret. A shouted confab then ensued between the Committee and myself, which ended in my going into the majestic sculptured hall where the District Court now sits. A strong guard was placed at the door of entrance, to admit only those who knew English, and from the bench on the raised

dais, where British justice is dispensed, but where, formerly, the Indian Sovereign received in state, I spoke for more than an hour to a listening crowd of perhaps 800 to 1000, including all the highest in birth, position, and influence and the brightest in intellect.\*

The next day and the following my services as healer were in great demand, and each palpable cure added to the excitement. I had to put myself in the hands of the Committee and let them select the patients to be treated, out of the pushing mob about the door. Mr. V. Coopposawmy Iyer's report to the *Theosophist* says that I laid hands on twenty-seven persons, and that "the most remarkable cures were three cases of deafness, one obstinate case of chronic rheumatism of the spinal column, of nine years' standing, that had long defied the skill of the medical faculty, and two cases of paralysis—one of the middle finger of the left hand, and the other of the whole of the left hand. In the last case the cure was effected within five minutes." In short, a very respectable stock of "miracles," enough, if they had been exploited by an enterprising priest of any religion, to go far towards proving to outsiders his holding of a special Divine Commission: such ignorant fools are the credulous public of every country. I hope the

\* Hunter's *Gazetteer*, describing the Palace, says it is "the most perfect relic of secular architecture in the Madras Presidency." The main structure consists of two parts, an open court and a lofty hall. The style is a mixture of Hindu and Saracenic. The courtyard is about 100 yards square, with high walls of brick, forming long galleries surmounted by domes. One side is constituted a hall and its lofty domed roof is supported by circular pillars of granite.

intelligent reader has come to see long before now, that if the two Founders of the Theosophical Society had been the speculative tricksters they have often been said to be, they could have rolled together immense sums of money and been worshipped as superhuman personages, instead of having had such meagre revenues as the Society's yearly financial reports exhibit. It isn't as if we had never had the chance, for if ever any religious reformers in India had it, we have had. In this epoch of shrunken faith and debauched priests, whose animalized aspect is sometimes enough to turn one's stomach, H. P. B.'s unchallengeable phenomena and my healings caught hold of the popular imagination in such fashion that magnates literally laid their treasure-bags at our feet, and fabulous sums were offered us to show our various powers.\* That we rejected all their offers with evident sincerity is the secret of much of the loyal friendship shown us throughout India, from the beginning until now. If we had ever taken a present for ourselves, the whole Indian public would have abandoned us in the Coulomb crisis, and we should have been looked upon as religious humbugs; whereas, as it is, all the Missionaries combined, of all the societies of the world, cannot rob us of our place in the hearts of India's children, degenerate, alas! as they are.

The cure of the hand-paralysis had an amusing sequel.

\* A Muslim in Bengal once offered me rs. 10,000 to turn aside for a few hours and cure his wife's paralysis, which, of course, I did not do, as I might have done, if he had been a pauper, and no friend of his had pronounced the word money to me.

The patient was of a good Brahmin family, the brother of a B.A., and vakil (pleader), who was impulsive by nature and not morally strong. He was eating his dinner when the lad returned from my rooms, his paralytic hand glowing and burning like fire with the restored rush of vitality through it. The vakil, a religious sceptic, too lofty in self-conceit to admit that soul is a reality, no sooner took in the fact of his brother's cure by the mere imposition of my hands, than his scepticism was swept away as by a flood; he left his meal unfinished, hurried over to me, thanked me extravagantly for the cure, hung about me all the day, became a member of the Society, and when I left for Negapatam and other stations, went with me, to serve or fight for me as I might choose. He took no change of clothes, if I remember aright, but just came as he was, like one who jumps into a boat as it is just shoving off from a foundering ship, without thinking of food, water, or luggage. Such dry-grass-burning zeal as this could not last long; despite his vows of loyalty shouted to the four quarters of the sky, my wild vakil has proved one of the shallowest friends I have met in India, broken fifty times his promises, and finally let me into paying out of my own pocket a quite large sum for building supplies which he asked me to get for headquarters as his own gift, but never refunded the money for. Quite a different sort of character was the other Brahmin vakil who accompanied me to Negapatam. He has been staunch all the way through, is a Trustee of the T. S., and has been chosen by me as one of the executors under my own Will. *Tot homines, quot sententia.*

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At Negapatam things were much the same as at Madura. A great crowd met me on arrival, covered me with flowers, formed in procession with a band of musicians, and led me to a decorated bungalow, where I replied to addresses, held conversations with roomfuls of questioners, formed a new Branch with twenty-seven members, lectured to one educated (*i.e.*, English-knowing) and one popular audience: the first was at my bungalow, the second in the Pagoda, through interpreters, to 3000 persons. On the 5th August I slept at the railway station and took an early train the next morning for Trichinopoli, where more hero-worship awaited me, with the thermometer at over 100° Fahr. in the shade. A warm welcome, truly!





## CHAPTER XXX.

### SOUTH INDIAN WONDERS.

POPULARITY, beyond a certain point, is very burdensome—as I found throughout the South Indian Tour of 1883. When, on the 7th of August, I got to the Trichinopoly Town Hall, where I was to speak, it was practically impossible for me to reach the door; a vast surging crowd occupied every foot of the approaches, and, instead of making room for me, hustled each other into a compact mass of perspiring flesh to get a look at the object of momentary curiosity. In vain my Committee pleaded, scolded, shouted, and pushed; I was brought to a standstill. So, then, I did the most natural thing, by climbing to the solid roof of a palanquin carriage where all could see me. If one wants to manage a crowd, one must never get excited nor precipitate; give the right initial impulse and let it gradually increase of itself. I knew perfectly well that not one man in perhaps a dozen there could understand English or really knew anything more about me than the fact that I was the friend and

defender of their religion, and had a way of curing the sick that people called miraculous. So in standing quite still up there until they had had their fill of gazing, I was really preparing the close-wedged throng to segregate into units. At first they shouted to each other and counter-cried to make order, to a degree that no voice could have made itself heard, so I kept silence. At last, however, as there came a partial lull, and as the sun beat upon me so as to make me want to get in-doors, I raised my arms above my head and in silence held them there. Now a crowd is often like a crying baby whose attention can be caught by showing it some bright or strange object that excites its curiosity. I knew that and so kept silent. If I had begun speaking fifty people would have instantly shouted to another hundred to keep quiet, and there would have been a sibilation of "hists" and "pssts" on every side; but seeing me stopping in the same attitude, and wondering what I *was* going to say, the result was that I soon was able to have my intended word or two through my interpreter, who had climbed up after me. This reminds me of a trick that was played by the late Prof. James J. Mapes on a sleepy audience at one of his public lectures. I studied Scientific Agriculture under him forty-three years ago, and he told me the story himself in his inimitably comic way. Finding that his audience of tired farmers were dropping asleep in the middle of his learned discourse, he silently turned to the black-board behind him, wiped it with the cloth, stood looking at it as if meditating some great problem, drew one thick vertical

line through the middle, laid down the chalk, dusted his fingers, thought a minute, then turned back towards the audience—now thoroughly aroused and wondering what it was all about—and proceeded with his lecture to the end. He never made the slightest reference to that perpendicular chalk line on the board. The farmers kept awake in the belief that he would!

When I had pacified the outside crowd at Trichinopoly, I slipped through the other sweltering crowd inside the building into a large back enclosure where, my audience following me, I gave my lecture without interruption; I standing with my back to the house wall so as to make it a sounding-board. Many a fiasco has befallen a speaker from neglect of this precaution: his voice being lost in the crowd.

The healings of the sick went on here daily, as at every other station, and on the 8th (August), it appears from the record, I treated seventy cases with more or less success. Of course, no one can foretell whether either of these healings, however effectual it may seem at the moment when the patient leaves the healer's hands, will prove radical cures or not: all depends upon the present state of his constitution. However, there were various cases of apparently perfect cure of the disease.

On the same evening I figured in a scene hard to surpass for picturesqueness and impressiveness. A lecture was to be given in one of the large squares of the venerable Vaishnava Srirangam Temple, known to all travellers as the largest religious structure in India. It comprises



a central shrine surrounded by five enclosures, each including the next smaller, until the wall of the outer one is nearly a half mile long on each side. This is the place where Rāmanuja, the founder of the Visishtādvaita school of Brahmanic Philosophy, thought out his system in the eleventh century and began his preaching mission throughout Southern India. The lecturing place assigned me was in the inner square in front of the Hall of the Thousand Columns, a structure of 450 feet by 130 feet in size, and of one story. Fancy the scene which opened out before me as I turned the angle of the enclosure and came in sight of the giant hall and the open square. Under the canopy of the starlit sky there was a multitude of dark-faced, white-turbaned and white-robed Hindus, numbering perhaps 5000, standing and squatting on the ground and covering the front portion of the roof-terrace of the thousand-columned structure. Many young fellows had climbed up by the carvings on the pyramidal *gopuram*, or gateway on the right, and sat on the pedestal-cornice. A small platform of planks, bedecked with flowers and greenery, had been constructed for me over the porch at the foot of the staircase leading to the roof-terrace in question, and I had to use some agility to get up to it. When I did, however, the whole picture burst into view, and by its weirdness deeply impressed my imagination. The only light, save that of the twinkling stars, came from flickering torches held by many peons stationed against the walls, and from a half dozen on my platform which were so disposed as to bring my figure out into high light against

the sombre background of the pyramid beside me. The silent crowd, half hidden in shadow, was diversified here and there by some standing figure of a Brahmin, naked to the waist, whose sacred thread showed against his bronze skin like a trickle of milk; and there on the platform, ten feet above their heads, the speaker, also clad in white, standing with his interpreter and one or two of the committee-men, the centre of observation, while the air of night refreshed us and the throng listened in complete silence to the elaboration of the discourse upon Hinduism and the necessity for the religious education of the young. The cheers, long restrained, broke out at the close, the torch-bearers waved their flambeaux, the sitters sprang to their feet, the boys dropped down from their perches on the *goparam*, and, laden with garlands and hemmed in by surging thousands, I slowly worked my way to the outer enclosure where the carriage waited for me. As elsewhere, a local Branch of the T. S. was formed, and the next day I passed on to Tanjore, the capital of one of the greatest of the ancient Hindu dynasties of Southern India, and in all ages one of the chief political, literary, and religious centres of the South (Hunter's *Gas. Ind.*, xiii. 195). What a pity it is that the stream of visitors to India hardly flows at all through the South, but all start at Bombay, and, after loafing through the towns of the North, where the seal of Muslim conquest is set on everything, empties out at Calcutta or turns back on itself to Bombay. The traveller managed by Messrs. Cook sees hardly anything at all of the India

of the most ancient Indian dynasties, nor gets sight of the incomparable Hindu temples that embellish Southern India : it is like visiting Scotland and Ireland to see Great Britain, and omitting to visit London and other centres of English national development !

On arrival at the Tanjore railway station at 5 A.M., I found a crowd awaiting me, and the train steamed up to the accompaniment of a band of musicians. The notables of the place welcomed me with floral wreaths, and at a table placed on the platform I was served with coffee, and received and replied to the usual complimentary address. They put me up at the 'Travellers' Bungalow, and kindly let me enjoy my privacy until evening, when I was driven about the town and taken to the magnificent temple which, as Fergusson says, is known throughout the world. It consists of two courts and the great courtyard in which stands the shrine, a structure having a base of two stories in height, surmounted by a pyramid rising in thirteen stories, to the summit, which is 190 feet above the ground-level, and said to be composed of a single huge stone. Between it and the gateway lies, on a stone pedestal, the bull-colossus of Nandi, the Vâhan of Siva. The huge animal is carved, if I remember aright, out of one block of granite, and measures, though in the recumbent posture, some ten or twelve feet in height at the shoulder. The pedestal is covered by a stone canopy supported on carved square columns. My lecture was given from that pedestal, the multitude sitting on the flagged pavement of the courtyard. Directly in front of

me was a huge stone lingam, the distinctive Sivaite emblem of the generative force in nature, and beyond that towered the grand pyramid, each of whose stories is enriched with huge carved figures in high relief. I spoke through an interpreter, and in the pauses while he was speaking, as I looked about me, I was struck with the romantic experience that I, an American, representative of the youngest and most feverish civilization of the world, should be standing there, beside the huge bull, surrounded by the chiselled emblems of the oldest of the world faiths, and talking to its living votaries about the truths embodied in the hoary teachings of their half-forgotten sages and rishis.

I was able to personally declare the falsity of a current superstitious story that the great pyramid casts no shadow. At 5 P.M., when I first saw it, there was a great black shadow stretching half across the courtyard. The Brahmin to whom I mentioned it said that the popular rumour is based upon the fact that it casts no shadow *at noon*! There was another lecture at the Reading Room in the town, and I greatly enjoyed a visit to the world-renowned Sanskrit Library in the Royal Palace, which was catalogued by Dr. Burnell, and found to contain some 35,000 palm-leaf and other MSS., and 7000 bound volumes, among the former many very rare and valuable ones. Before leaving the town I treated many patients and made some interesting cures.

Kumbakonam, my next station—the “Oxford of Southern India”—is a famous educational centre, and the

Indian professors at the College will compare favorably for learning and intellectual gifts with any in this country. At the same time their mental bias is towards Materialism, and at the time of my first visit they exercised a strong anti-religious influence upon the undergraduates, and, indirectly, on the boys in all the schools. I was warned of this in advance, so when I lectured in the Sarangapani (Vaishnava) Temple, to an audience of 2000 to 3000, which filled the Eastern Prakara (side), and which—says the contemporary newspaper report—embraced “Vakils, professors, school-masters, mirassidars, ryots, merchants, and schoolboys”—I discussed Religion from the view-point of Science. The next day's lecture, at the same place, was of a more popular character, and treated largely of the duty of Hindu parents to their children. The practical results of the visit and discourses were—despite the sceptical professors and teachers—the formation of the now well-known local Branch, the turning of public interest into Hindu religious channels, and the collection of a handsome fund for a local general library. This, let it be remembered, was the year when what is now called the Hindu Revival began to spread all over India, when forty-three new Branches of the Society sprang into being, and when the backbone of the Indian movement towards Materialism was broken. And that was ten years before the Chicago Parliament of Religions assembled.

I see recorded among the psychopathic cures wrought by me at Kumbakonam, another of those marvellous

cases of deafness. The patient was a pleader of Nega-patam, I think, who had come over on the chance of getting me to treat him. He could hear sounds with difficulty from a distance of a yard, but after a half hour's treatment—on the verandah of the Travellers' Bungalow—I made him walk slowly away from me, listening to my voice, raised only to the ordinary pitch of conversation, and with orders to stop the moment he lost it. I made my servant walk beside him, holding one end of a tape-measure of which I held the other extremity. When the lawyer stopped, the tape showed that he could hear me to the distance of 70 feet 6 inches, and I tested him by carrying on some conversation with him at that distance, his back turned towards me so that he might not deceive himself and me by reading my lips. I do not know what was the sequel of the case.

The reception given me at Mayaveram, my next station, was enthusiastic to a degree that could not be excelled, matching those of Tinnevely, Trichy, and Guntur. I reached there at 7.30 A.M., was honorably received at the station, put up in the decorated rest-house, received visitors all day, and in the evening, after dark, was taken, in an open palanquin, in torchlight procession to the Mayuranathasami Temple to lecture. The newspaper report says that the procession was led by the temple elephant, bell-bearing camels, and a band of musicians. Seven thousand people were crowded into the building, and—as I was told—every man and woman in the town, not confined to bed, took part in the pageant. From a

technical report of the cures, published by Mr. D. S. Amirthasamy Pillay, Civil Apothecary (a Government medical officer), it appears that some good ones were made. They included cases of paraplegia, deafness, neuralgia, and epilepsy. At this station Damodar arrived from Madras on Society's business, and brought me a new volunteer to act as my Private Secretary, viz., Mr. T. Vijiaraghava Charlu, now for many years known as Manager of the *Theosophist*. He had resigned his appointment under the Post Office Department, to work with us, and most faithfully has he done it ever since. Lacking the suave manner by which more than one worthless fellow among our associates has won wide temporary popularity, he has stuck to his work with the stern perseverance of an old Covenanter, and is best appreciated by those who know him most intimately.

A Branch being formed, I moved on to Cuddalore, where the same thing was repeated. My first lecture was in English, my second in the Pataleswaraswami Temple, to clustering thousands, when the services of an interpreter were availed of. Here an unusual compliment was paid me, as appeared from the published report of Mr. A. Rama Row. He says:

"As soon as he arrived there, he was carried in procession, followed by a large crowd, with Hindu music playing and flags flying. He was taken round the temple, inside the enclosure, which act, according to Hindu religious belief, forms the sacred *pradakshana*—a cere-

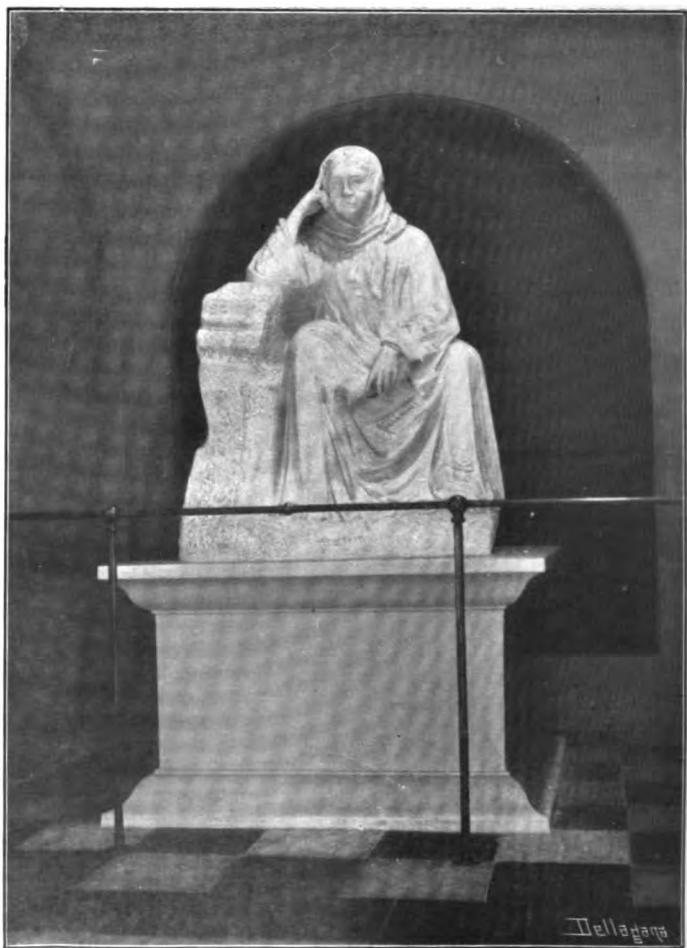
mony which hitherto only a Hindu has been allowed to perform. He was then taken to the gate of the temple, near the image of Nandi (the sacred bull of Siva). The *Arati* ceremony was then performed by the High Priest and the blazing camphor offered to the Colonel, and a flower garland placed about his neck. Then he went on the platform. The whole temple was crowded to suffocation."

What makes this act of respect and love the more significant is that I was not only a white man but also a declared Buddhist, which impediments, however, did not prevent my being accepted as the chief officer of a Society which is committed to no particular religion but befriends all alike, and which was as loyally working with Indians to promote Hinduism as it had been with the Sinhalese Buddhists to revive Buddhism. They took me as the friend of their Mother India, hence as their soul-brother. As such I accepted it.

A visit to Chingleput finished up this part of the year's tour, and I went thence to Ootacamund to rejoin my dear colleague H. P. B., at the hospitable home of Major-General and Mrs. Morgan. The railway ends at Metapaliyam, at the foot of the Nilgiri Hills, and the traveller proceeds up the well-metalled mountain road in a horse tonga, or two-wheeled mail cart drawn by a pair of galloping ponies. The ride up is simply charming, and passing through forests, by banks of flowers, and past swarms of lovely painted butterflies, the air grows cooler







STATUE OF H. P. BLAVATSKY AT ADYAR.

and cooler, until midway one is obliged to stop at the rest-house and change one's light tropical costume for heavy woollens and even put on a topcoat. At almost every turn in the winding road splendid panoramas of scenery present themselves to view, while one finds Ootacamund a lovely village of picturesque houses, spreading over the foot-slopes of the grassy and forest-covered adjacent hills, the roads lined with roses, the enclosures joyous with lilies, verbenas, heliotropes, and other "floral smiles of God." At the toll-gate on the Coonnoor Road, H. P. B. met me in company with our dear Mrs. Morgan, Mrs. Batchelor and others of the family, the General being absent from home temporarily. My old "chum" seemed really overjoyed to see me and rattled on in her affectionate way like one who greets a long-absent relative. She was looking well; the champagne-like mountain air set her blood to leaping through her body, and she was in the highest spirits about the civilities that were being shown her by some of the high officials and their families. She worked off some of her excitement that same night by keeping me up until 2 A.M. to read proofs and correct her MS. What an amusing creature she was when in the mood; how she would make a roomful of people hang on her lips as she would tell stories of her travels and adventures in search of the wonder-workers in Magic and Sorcery; and their eyes open in amazement when she would, now and again, ring some astral bell, or make some raps, or do some other minor phenomenon! And then, when they

were gone and we two were at our desks working, how she used to laugh at their surprise and at their often stupid attempts to account for the remarkable facts which, up to that moment, had had no parallel in their experience! A self-satisfied ignoramus in society, giving out infantile explanations of psychical phenomena, and trying to show off his cleverness at her expense, was her detestation, and she used to collar and crush him, metaphorically speaking, with fierce wrath. And how she hated the smug matron who, while absolutely unqualified to pronounce an opinion on these high subjects, and unblest with Christian charitableness (1), would regard her as a horror not to be mentioned in respectable circles! It was better than a play to hear her go on about them. She used to say that the Russian, Austrian, and French women might be very bad in their conduct, but were far more honest than the British and American women of like social standing, since they did their wicked things in the eyes of the whole world, while the others did their equally bad things behind doors and in hiding-places of all sorts. Undoubtedly, her rough ways, her daring eccentricities, her profanity, and other peculiarities, were simply her passionate protest against the shams and hypocrisy of society. A pretty woman, with her brains, would never have dreamt of making herself so talked about: being the reverse of pretty, both in face and form, she instinctively let herself make a splash all around her, as one having no admirers to lose, hence no reason to put her feelings under restraint. I

am now talking, of course, about the woman, not about the sage.

To introduce our ideas to the notice of the European community of our Presidency of Madras, she and our friends were arranging for me to give two public lectures, and some of the chief officials were kindly interesting themselves in the affair. As a necessary preliminary I had to call upon them and their families, and the next two or three days were devoted to this. Out of hours our joint desk work went on and the hard labour was diversified with her bright talk and frequent grumblings at the cold. Certainly with cause, for the mercury marked forty degrees more of cold than we feel on the plains, the houses are heated with wood fires in open fire-places, the winds blow in gusts down the open-throated chimneys, filling the rooms with smoke and dusting one's paper and books with fine ashes. H. B. P. wrote in a fur coat, with a woollen shawl on her head and her feet wrapped in a travelling rug—a funny sight. Part of her work was the taking from dictation, from her invisible teacher, of the "Replies to an English F. T. S.," which contained among other things the now oft-quoted prophecy of the direful things and many cataclysms that would happen in the near future, when the cycle should close. That she was taking down from dictation was fully apparent to one who was familiar with her ways. My first lecture was given at the Brecks Memorial School, to a full audience, despite a pouring rain. The plan was tried which had been adopted at Bombay by the

Rev. Joseph Cook, that of having at the door a basket, with slips of paper and a pencil for the audience, as they passed in, to write the subjects on which the lecture was to be given. The slips were subsequently read out by the Chairman, Maj.-Gen. Morgan, and the subject of "Occult Science" being voted for almost unanimously, I proceeded to enlarge upon it. At the end of an hour I wanted to stop, but the demand being made for me to continue, I did so for another half hour. The second lecture was equally a success. To "keep out the rabble," as it was said, a charge had been made for admission, and on the proceeds being handed me, I sent them with a kind letter to the Treasurer of the local Hospital. He was a petty-minded, prejudiced military officer who actually refused at first to accept the gift on the score of its being "devil money"—H. P. B. and I being regarded by him as emissaries of the King of Hell! Of course, he made himself the laughing-stock of the sensible portion of the community, and his colleagues on the Hospital Board forced him to reconsider his stupid decision. The Hon. Mr. Carmichael, a Secretary to Government, did a plucky thing in having us to dinner to meet his chief colleagues, on top of a wicked paragraph in the leading Madras paper which insinuated that we were secret political agents: this was intended and declared as his personal protest against the injustice. We were very thankful to him, it may be believed, and this repetition of the stale and

baseless calumny caused me to address an official protest to the Government of Madras, upon certain petty tyrannies that had been exercised upon some of our Hindu associates in the Districts by their official superiors, because of their being members of the Society. I sent in copies of the correspondence between myself and the Government of India and its ruling in our favour, and asked the Government of Madras for protection. The question was circulated to the Governor and Members of Council, and, at the Council meeting of 12th September, full protection was officially guaranteed us so long as we infringed no law and abstained from meddling with things outside our declared field of activity. This was all that was needed to relieve us from annoyance, and since that time we have not been molested in any way.





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