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of the Theosophical Society till the
"Collapse of Koot Hoomi."

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MADAME BLAVATSKY: HER TRICKS AND HER DUPES.



MADAME BLAVATSKY.

From a Photo by Resta, Coburg Place, Bayswater.

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MADAME BLAVATSKY:

HER TRICKS AND HER DUPES.

INTRODUCTION.

In every age of the world there have been impostors and their dupes. There is no lack of them in India. The following is a case that occurred in Calcutta:

A man represented himself to a Hindu as a Mahatma who could, by his mantras, double bank notes. This was done with notes of small value, as an encouragement; but when the Mahatma got five notes, each of a thousand rupees, he decamped.

Another trick is pretending to be able to turn brass into gold. A family on the West Coast of India intrusted their brass vessels to a Mahatma, under the promise that they were to be changed into the precious metal; but he disappeared as soon as he received them!

There have been impostors among all ranks, from the prince to the peasant. Some have aspired to personate royalty. Smerdis succeeded in making himself for a short time Emperor of Persia. Some pretend to be prophets sent to proclaim a new religion. Others are quack doctors, claiming to cure all diseases.

Among impostors of recent times one of the most notorious is MADAME BLAVATSKY,—a Russian lady of whom an account is given in the following pages.

EARLY LIFE OF MADAME BLAVATSKY.

MADAME HELENA PETROVNA BLAVATSKY was born at Ekaterinoslav, in the south of Russia in 1831. Her father was Colonel Peter Hahn. She says, "For over six years, from the time I was eight or nine years old until I grew

to the age of fifteen, I had an old spirit who came every night to write through me ... In those days this was not called spiritualism, but *possession*." "I was weak and sickly. As I grew up and gained health and strength, all these phenomena ceased."

At the age of 17 she was married to General Blavatsky, for many years Governor of Erivan in America. He was 60 years of age, and she had no affection for him, but married him in a fit of girlish ill humour. She "bolted speedily, after a succession of stormy scenes, from his household never to return."

Subsequently Madame Blavatsky spent many years in travelling. She led Mr. Sinnett, one of her dupes, to believe that she had displayed her courage by fighting in man's dress, at the battle of Mentana in Italy. Another fiction is that she was several years in Tibet, studying under men of supernatural knowledge, called Mahâtmas, or "Great Souls."

In 1872 she was in Cairo in Egypt. She was known there as the Russian Spiritist, who called the dead and made them answer questions. A lady, who afterwards married a person named Coulomb, had recently lost a brother. She went to Madame Blavatsky and tried to get some information about him; but she neither saw nor heard anything except a few raps. When she mentioned her disappointment to the Secretary of the Society, he said that the spirits did not like to appear in a room which had not been purified; but if she came back in a few days, she would see wonders. A room was being prepared to be used solely for consulting spirits. When Madame Coulomb returned one day, she found the place filled with people abusing Madame Blavatsky for cheating them of their money, and showing them only a long glove stuffed with cotton, said to represent the hand and arm of some spirit.

MADAME BLAVATSKY IN AMERICA.

From Egypt Madame Blavatsky returned to Russia. After spending some time there, she went to America, where she became a naturalized American.

On October 14, 1874, Colonel Olcott first met Madame Blavatsky at Chittenden, in the house of the Eddy brothers, two farmers. The brothers were supposed to be able to communicate with spirits, and people wrote to them asking what lottery tickets they should buy, whether a certain enterprise would be successful, when some one would get married, and other questions like those put to astrologers in this country. By means probably of a magic lantern, they professed to show ghosts or spirits from another world.

Madame Blavatsky wished to start a Society. For this purpose she needed the help of a gentleman in good position to act as its President. For this purpose she selected Colonel Olcott. He had been a lawyer, an officer in the Army, Secretary of the National Insurance Conventions, Agricultural Editor of *The Tribune*, &c.

Although, he says, "I always took an active part in all that concerned my country and fellow-countrymen, and an especially active one during our late civil war, yet my heart was not set on worldly affairs." Before he met Madame Blavatsky in 1874, he had "ideas that had been the growth of 22 years' experiences, with mediums and circles." He also makes the following candid acknowledgment: "I was in 1874—a man of clubs, drinking parties, mistresses, a man absorbed in all sorts of worldly public and private undertakings and speculations."*

Madame Blavatsky, in collusion with the Eddy brothers, played tricks upon Colonel Olcott. He thus describes the first of the Russian lady's spirit visitors:—

"He was a person of middle height, well-shaped, dressed in a Georgian (Caucasian) jacket, with loose sleeves and long pointed over sleeves, an outer long coat, baggy trousers, leggings of yellow leather and white skull-cap or fez, with tassel. She recognised him at once as Michalko Guiegidze, late of Kutais." †

But on the evening of October 24th, there was a much more remarkable manifestation. When the light was

* *Esoteric Philosophy*, pp. 77, 78. † *People from the other World*, p. 298.

extinguished, the ghost of George Dix, a sailor who had been drowned, thus spoke to Madame Blavatsky :

“ Madame, I am now about to give you a test of the genuineness of the manifestations in this circle, which, I think, will satisfy not only you, but a sceptical world beside. I shall place in your hands the buckle of a medal of honour worn in life by your brave father, and buried with his body in Russia. This has been brought to you by your uncle, whom you have seen materialised this evening.”

Colonel Olcott says :

“ Presently I heard the lady utter an exclamation, and, a light being struck, we all saw Mme. de B. holding in her hand a silver buckle of a most curious shape which she regarded with speechless wonder.

“ Was there ever a ‘manifestation’ more wonderful than this? A token dug by unknown means from a father’s grave, and laid in his daughter’s hand, 5,000 miles away, across an ocean! a jewel from the breast of a warrior sleeping in his last sleep in Russian ground, sparkling in the candle light in a gloomy apartment of a Vermont farm-house!”*

The explanation is that the buckle was never in the grave. It had been given by Madame Blavatsky to the Eddy brothers to deceive Colonel Olcott.

Colonel Olcott saw another wonderful “manifestation :”

“ Hands of various sizes were shown. Among them one was too peculiar to be passed over. It was a left hand, and upon the lower bone of the thumb a bony excrescence was growing, which Madame de Blavatsky recognised and said was caused by a gun shot wound in one of Garibaldi’s battles.”†

Colonel Olcott candidly admits that when he saw the “spirits, or what purported to be such, in every imaginable variety of costume, the light has been dim—very dim—and I have not been able to recognise the lineaments of a single face. I could not even swear to the lineaments of certain of my personal friends who presented themselves.” “One cannot, with untrained eye, distinguish accurately between forms varying as much as six inches in height.”‡ Madame Blavatsky must have been gifted with acute sight to recognise the “bony excrescence on the lower bone of the thumb.”

* *People from the other World*, p. 355. † *Ibid*, p. 317. ‡ *Ibid*, pp. 163, 164

Servant girls personated spirits, and Colonel Olcott was fool enough to get one of "Howe's Best Standard Platform Scales" to weigh them! His experiments elicited the remarkable fact that spirits can vary their weight. "Honto" weighed successively, 88, 58, 58 and 65 lbs.; "Kati Brink," 77, 59, 52 lbs.*

Madame Blavatsky led Colonel Olcott to believe that she held intercourse with Mahatmas or "Brothers," Masters in magical art. One of them had been induced to accept Colonel Olcott as a pupil, and letters received through Madame Blavatsky were alleged to have been written by them. One day a woman, strangely dressed and veiled, brought a letter from the "Brothers," and handed it to Madame Blavatsky. It was discovered afterwards that this supposed Spirit Messenger was an Irish servant girl, to whom Madame Blavatsky had promised 5 dollars (about Rs. 10) for personating the Messenger. Having failed to get the money, she confessed the fraud.

On another occasion a person was dressed up as a Mahatma, and came to the room where the Colonel was sitting. As a proof of his visit, he left his turban, which the Colonel retains to this day.

Madame Blavatsky acquired such an influence over Colonel Olcott, that she wrote of him as a "psychologised baby," "who did not know his head from his heels."

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

Colonel Olcott, the "President-Founder" of the Society, says: "On the 17th November, 1875, I had the honor of delivering in the City of New York, my inaugural address as President of the Theosophical Society."

Theosophists have been sailing under false colours. The name *theosophy* is a misnomer. The word is derived from *theos*, God, and *sophos*, wise. The proper meaning is divine wisdom. It was originally used to express a more intimate knowledge of the relation of the soul with God. As will hereafter be shown, the Founders are avowed atheists.

* *People from the other World*, p. 487.

Their Theosophy is therefore ATHEOSOPHY, godless wisdom. But the *Chicago Religio-Philosophical Journal* suggests a still better name, BLAVATSKOSOPHY, Blavatsky Wisdom!

Theosophy is now explained to mean the WISDOM RELIGION. Its effects are just the reverse.

The course of the Society in America was by no means smooth. In his first Indian lecture, Colonel Olcott admits that during the Society's four years of activity in America, there were "foes all about, public sentiment hostile, the press scornful and relentless;" "the press has lampooned us in writing and pictorial caricature." (p. 1), Colonel Olcott was ridiculed as the "Hierophant;" Madame Blavatsky was called "the champion impostor of the age."* The *New York Sun* thus "chaffed" the "President-Founder":—

"While the 'Hierophant' was still a resident of the Eighth Avenue, he had full faith in the capacity of an industrious Theosophist to attain through contemplation, initiation, and a strictly virtuous life the power of defying and overcoming what are generally accepted as the laws of nature. He believed in levitation, for example, but when we invited him to illustrate his faith by stepping out of an upper window of the *Tribune* tall tower, he was fain to admit that this was a height of adept science which he had not yet attained and to master which a journey to the Himalayas was necessary."

The Americans were too sharp for Theosophy to succeed. Colonel Olcott, at the anniversary address in Bombay, in November, 1879, says, "of the thirteen officers and councillors elected at the meeting (17th November 1875), only three remain; the rest having dropped off for one reason or another and left us to carry on our work with new associates who replaced them." (p. 18).

When a person plunges head foremost into the water and comes up again at a little distance, he is said to "take a header." Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky, as one of their associates expresses it, wisely "took a header," and turned up in Bombay on the 16th February, 1879.

* *The Occult World*, p. 152.

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN INDIA.

PREPAREDNESS OF INDIA FOR THEOSOPHY.

“Ghosts,” it has been said, “are almost the first guess of the savage, almost the last infirmity of the civilised imagination.”* But India is one of the countries where “occult phenomena” are likely to find most ready credence. The Hindus claim to have 64 arts and sciences. The following are some of them :—

12. The science of prognosticating by omens and augury.
14. Science of healing, which may include restoration to life of the dead, the reunion of severed limbs, &c.
15. Physiognomy, chiromancy, &c.
36. The art of summoning by enchantment.
37. Exorcism.
38. Exciting hatred between persons by magical spells.
41. The art of bringing one over to another’s side by enchantment.
42. Alchemy and chemistry.
44. The language of brute creatures from ants upwards.
47. Charms against poison.
48. Information respecting any lost thing obtained by astronomical calculations.
50. The art of becoming invisible.
51. The art of walking in the air.
52. The power of leaving one’s own body and entering another lifeless body or substance at pleasure.
56. Restraining the action of fire.
57. The art of walking upon water.
58. The art of restraining the power of wind.
62. The art of preventing the discovery of things concealed.
63. The art by which the power of the sword or any other weapon is nullified.
64. The power of stationing the soul at pleasure, in any of the five stages.*

The so-called “pandits” of India accept the above “sciences” as true : what, then, may be expected of the masses ? Lyall says, “It is probable that in no other time or country has witchcraft ever been so comfortably practised as it is now in India under British rule.”†

* *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vol. II.

† *Asiatic Studies*, p. 96.

The intellect of the people has been so dwarfed by Hinduism, that they believe the grossest absurdities. The wild fictions of the Ramayana are generally accepted as true. To obtain medicine, the monkey god Hanuman brought through the air a great mountain from the Himalayas; the sun was hidden by him in one of his armpits.

The field chosen was therefore peculiarly favourable to the growth of Theosophy.

HISTORY OF THE SOCIETY, 1879—1884.

Bombay.—The first Theosophist party landed at Bombay on the 16th February, 1879. It consisted of Colonel Olcott, Madame Blavatsky, Miss Bates and Mr. Wimbridge. The two latter were English by birth, who had become members only a few weeks before the party left America for India. Some time during the year, they were joined by M. and Madame Coulomb, old Egyptian acquaintances of Madame Blavatsky.

The Theosophists took up their abode in the part of Bombay called Girgaum, and apparently had not much intercourse with the European community. It was about the time of the "Russian scare." The police, ignorant of the new doctrine of Theosophy, supposed that the objects of its propagators were political, and for a time their movements were watched. When information was afforded, this surveillance ceased.

Colonel Olcott's first address, giving an account of the "Theosophical Society and its Aims," was delivered at the Framji Cowasji Hall on March 23. The first year seems to have been spent in Western India. "The Fourth Anniversary Address was delivered in November 1879." The Society's Monthly Periodical, *The Theosophist*, was started the previous month.

In concluding his second address, Colonel Olcott said :—

"There is one regret that comes to mar the pleasure of this evening, and somewhat dim the lustre of all these lamps—our Buddhist brothers of Ceylon are absent. And absent too, is that most beloved

Teacher of ours, that elder brother, so good, so erudite, so good, so courageous—Swamiji Dayánand Sarasvati.” (p. 28.)

First Visit to Ceylon.—The Theosophists paid their first visit to Ceylon in May, 1880. Colonel Olcott thus describes his welcome, and contrasts it with Indian experience :—

“During our visit of 1880, the Sinhalese people *en masse* gave us a princely reception. We moved through the Island from Galle to Kandy and back again, in almost a ‘royal progress.’ They exhausted their ingenuity to do us honour, as in the ancient days they had done to their kings. Triumphal arches, flags flying in every town, village and hamlet, roads lined with *olla* fringes for miles together; monster audiences gathered together to hear and see us. These evidences of exuberant joy and warm affection astounded us. In India we had been so reviled by Christians, so frowned upon by the authorities with chilling disdain, and so given the cold shoulder by the Natives, to stay with whom and work for whose welfare we had come so far, that this greeting of the Sinhalese profoundly moved us to gratitude.” (p. 121.)

There is no doubt that a white *gentleman*, and still more a white *lady*, avowing themselves Buddhists, created a great sensation among the Sinhalese.

North India.—Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky, after their return from Ceylon, went, about August, 1880, to North India. The former delivered a lecture on “Spiritualism and Theosophy” at Simla, on October 7th, and one on “India, Past, Present and Future” at Amritsar, on the 29th of the same month. They did not return to Bombay till the last day of the year.

During this visit the famous “brooch incident” happened, which will afterwards be described. Their reception seems to have been almost as enthusiastic as in Ceylon. Colonel Olcott, in a letter published in America, and dated Umballa, Punjab, Nov. 26th, writes :

“I am going to spend a week with the Maharajah of Benares and will then return to Bombay. . . . Things are booming along splendidly. It is a rare thing for us to be able to travel around as we do for nothing. It is a good thing that it is so, as I have not got a cent. Neither has Blavatsky.”

Mr. Judge gives further details in the *New York World* :—

“Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky have travelled from Bombay to Ceylon and to many parts of Northern India without its

costing them a cent. How they do it is one of the mysteries. There are no congregations of Theosophists and no collections are taken up. Nor is the deputation supported in any way by the American Society. When they want to go anywhere tickets for the railways are at once provided. They find conveyances waiting at their door or at stations ready to take them where they will, although they have sent no word, nor given any intimation to any one of their intentions or wishes. If they want to send a message, a messenger appears without being sent for. One day Colonel Olcott started from Bombay to go to a distant city to deliver a message he did not understand to a man he did not know even by name, and when he arrived there the man stepped up to him at once and asked for the message. All their wants are supplied in this, to others apparently mysterious, way, so they have no need for money. Occult phenomena, black and white magic and all that? Oh, yes; I understand there have been many wonderful manifestations. The Government organ at Allahabad, the *Pioneer*, tells on the authority of 'nine unimpeachable witnesses' the story of Madame Blavatsky returning to a Mrs. Hume, a long-lost brooch. Madame Blavatsky while in a trance saw the brooch fall in a flower-bed in the garden, and the party went out and found it. Recent issues of the *Theosophist* contain several accounts of occult occurrences resembling the feats of the famous Hindu jugglers, one of whose great annual feasts Colonel Olcott recently attended. Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky do not expect to return to this country for five years at least."

The Times of India, after quoting the above, adds, "We should think not, so long as 'this, to others mysterious, way' can be prolonged," Feb. 11, 1881. Mr. Judge, himself, was subsequently encouraged to come out to India to act as Treasurer.

During the absence of Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky, there had been dissensions at the Society's headquarters, Bombay. Miss Bates was expelled, and Mr. Wimbridge, who took her part, resigned. The former, a lady of some literary ability, maintained herself afterwards by her pen, while the latter, a skilled mechanic, established himself in business, and became the "Deschamps of Bombay."

Bombay in 1881.—On the 27th February, 1881, Colonel Olcott gave a lecture in Bombay on "Theosophy: its Friends and Enemies." On the 18th April, Madame Blavatsky, Acting Treasurer, presented a statement of the

Society's receipts from Dec. 1, 1878, to April 30, 1881. Initiation fees had been received from 108 persons in India, from 246 in Ceylon, and 30 in Europe, realising Rs. 3,900; various other sources yielded Rs. 2,973-3-4. The total expenditure, including passages from New York to Bombay, amounted to Rs. 26,419-6-5. The difference between the receipts and expenditure, amounting to Rs. 19,546-3-1, was "advanced as a loan without interest or security," by Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky.*

Second Visit to Ceylon.—Colonel Olcott proceeded to Ceylon in April, where he remained till mid-December, including a visit to Tinnevely in October. He thus describes the results:—

"During these 212 days I gave sixty public addresses at temples, school houses, colleges and in the open air; held two conventions, or councils of Buddhist priests, travelled hundreds of miles, within the Western Province; largely increased the membership of our Society; wrote, published, and distributed 12,000 copies of Buddhist Catechism; had translated into the Sinhalese language several free-thought tracts; and raised by national subscription the sum of about Rs. 17,000 as the nucleus of a National Buddhistic Fund, for the promotion of the Buddhist religion, and the establishment of schools." (pp-121-2).

Colonel Olcott and four Sinhalese members came over to Tinnevely in October, where they met with a grand welcome. The Sinhalese planted a cocoa-nut in a Hindu temple as a mark of respect. The temple was subsequently purified, as usual after visits by Europeans.

Sixth Anniversary.—Colonel Olcott's Sixth Anniversary Address was delivered at Bombay, on January 12th, 1882.

He spoke thus plainly:—

"We have got beyond the preliminary stage of polite phrases on both sides. You know just how we keep our promises, and we know what yours are worth. The scented garlands Bombay brought us in February 1879, withered long ago, its complimentary speeches of welcome long since died away the air." (p. 116).

The initiation fees from 1st May to 31st December 1881, amounted to Rs. 1,838, and a donation of Rs. 100 was received. The expenditure amounted to Rs. 6,529.

* Supplement to *The Theosophist*, May 1881.

The following month Colonel Olcott gave a lecture in the Bombay Town Hall, on "The Spirit of the Zoroastrian Religion."

Visit to Calcutta.—The late Babu Peary Chand Mittra, of Calcutta, had been a spiritualist for many years. Partly through his influence, Colonel Olcott, when he visited that city in March, 1882, met with a warm reception. At a *soiree* given by the Hon. Maharajah Jotendro Mohun Tagore, C. S. I., Babu Peary Chand Mittra thus addressed Colonel Olcott:—

"I welcome you most heartily and cordially as a brother. Although you are of American extraction, yet, in thought and feeling, in sympathy, aspirations, and spiritual conception, you are a *Hindu*; and we, therefore, look upon you as a brother in the true sense of the word It is for the promotion of the truly religious end that you, brother, and that most exalted lady, Madame Blavatsky, at whose feet I feel inclined to kneel down with grateful tears, have been working in the most saint-like manner, and your reward is from the God of all perfection."*

A Society was established, with Babu Peary Chand Mittra as President.

First Visit to Madras.—Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky landed at Madras from Calcutta on the 23rd April, 1882. An address of "*Welcome*" signed by several hundred influential native gentlemen was read, and the Hon. Humayun Jah Bahadoor, C. S. I., placed wreaths of flowers around their necks. A large villa at Mylapore, a suburb of Madras, was placed at their disposal. After visiting different parts of the Presidency, Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky left in June for Bombay. In his farewell address Colonel Olcott thus spoke of their reception:—

"We have learnt by experience what a Madras welcome means, and how much generous cordiality is included in the Madrassee's notion of hospitality to the stranger. I make no invidious comparisons when I say, that we, whom you have entertained like blood relations rather than like guests, will remember your attentions and your politeness as among the highest features of not only our Indian, but even of our whole experiences." (p. 205).

* Supplement to *The Theosophist*, May, 1882.

Third Visit to Ceylon.—Colonel Olcott landed in Ceylon for the third time, in July 1882. During his visit he delivered 64 lectures, and collected for the Sinhalese National Buddhistic Fund Rs. 6,807, for whose management a Board of Trustees was appointed. During his visit he is said to have “healed more than fifty paralytics, in each case using the name of Lord Buddha.”* He returned to Bombay about the end of October.

Seventh Anniversary.—This was celebrated at Bombay on the 7th December, 1882. “An unusual dignity was given to the occasion by the presence in the chair of Mr. A. P. Sinnett, author of ‘The Occult World.’ Around the Hall were suspended 39 metal shields, painted blue, upon which were inscribed the names of the branches of our Society, which have been founded in Asia. Behind the President-founder a sepoy held the beautiful banner which has just been worked for the Society by Madame Coulob.”†

The Treasurer’s Report from 1st January to 4th December, 1882, was submitted. The Admission Fees realised Rs. 4,163; Donations, Rs. 190. The chief items of Expenditure were Headquarter’s Maintenance, Rs. 4,571, Traveling Expenses, Rs. 3,417. The total Expenditure amounted to Rs. 8,906. The cash advanced by Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott, was Rs. 4,553.

Removal of Headquarters to Madras.—From Colonel Olcott’s reference to the “withered garlands” of Bombay, it would appear that the progress of the Society in Western India had not been very satisfactory. The Southern Presidency seemed to present a more hopeful field, and towards the close of 1882 a change was made. A house was selected in the Southern suburb, called Adyar, and it was hoped that sufficient funds would be raised to enable it to be purchased for the Society. How far this expectation was eventually realised, the writer does not know. In October the following appeared :—

“The Founders headed the list with a cash donation of Rs. 500,

* *The Theosophist*, April, 1883, p. 159.

† Supplement to *The Theosophist*, January, 1883.

highly approving of the project—although they expect to have to advance about Rs. 5,000 this year besides. Well, out of Rs. 8,520 (all necessary repairs excluded) hitherto only Rs. 3,200 are paid. The sacred fire of devotion and enthusiasm that burned so brightly at the beginning has flickered away, and the probable consequences are that we will have to pay the rest ourselves.”*

Bengal Tour.—This seems to have lasted from 23rd February to 19th May, 1883. It is remarkable for its “astounding cures.” Col. Olcott’s Acting Private Secretary reports 2,812 cases treated. Some details of them are given. Other incidents during 1883 were the “Open Letter” of Colonel Olcott to the Bishop of Madras, the “peremptory orders” from the ‘Paramaguru’ stopping Colonel Olcott’s healing; the doubling of a lady’s ring at Ootacamund, and the restoration by the “Brothers” of a broken China tray at Madras.

EXPOSURE OF THE PHENOMENA IN 1884.

Leading Events during 1884.—The Theosophist party had been joined by Dr. Hartmann, from California, and Mr. W. Q. Judge, of New York. Colonel Olcott, after appointing a Special Executive Committee to transact business during his absence, left Bombay for Marseilles, with Madame Blavatsky, on the 20th February, for the benefit of their health and to further the objects of the Society. Meetings were held in London and in different parts of the Continent of Europe.

While Madame Blavatsky was in Europe, the Theosophists at the Madras head-quarters quarrelled among themselves, and turned out two of their number, M. Coulomb and his wife. There is a proverb, “When rogues quarrel their knaveries come to light,” and so it happened in this case. Madame Coulomb had for several years been a great friend of Madame Blavatsky, and had a large number of letters written to her, some of them explaining how she was to assist Madame Blavatsky in her tricks.

Madame Coulomb gave all these letters to the Rev. George Patterson, Editor of the *Madras Christian College*

* Supplement to *The Theosophist*, October, 1883.

Magazine. As they proved unmistakably that Madame Blavatsky was a trickster, plagiarist,* forger, and liar, trying to deceive ignorant people in India, the Editor, after careful examination, published an account of the fraud. Dr. Miller and the other Professors of the Madras Christian College agreed with him. Madame Blavatsky asserted that the letters were, in whole or in part, forgeries; but when challenged to prove this in a court of law, she prudently declined.

There is a Society in England, called the "Psychical Research Society." *Psychical* comes from the Greek word *psychē*, the soul. It is intended to investigate questions connected with the mind, including mesmerism, &c. The President is Professor Sidgwick of Cambridge, author of the well known treatise, *The Method of Ethics*.

The Society had heard of the wonders attributed to Madame Blavatsky and of their exposure by the *Christian College Magazine*. To ascertain the truth, Mr. R. Hodgson, a Cambridge graduate, was sent out to India, where he spent three months in investigating the evidence for the so-called "phenomena" or wonders.

Mr. Hodgson carefully examined Madame Blavatsky's letters, which were also subsequently submitted to experts in London who considered them undoubtedly genuine. He questioned a number of witnesses. Among them was Mr. A. O. Hume, "Father of the National Congress," in whose house Madame Blavatsky had lived some months. Mr. Hume had found out Madame Blavatsky's trickery, and had given up all dealings with her.

Mr. Hodgson took Madame Blavatsky's letters to Europe, and wrote out a long account of his investigations. All were submitted to the Committee of the Society, and, after careful consideration, Professor Sidgwick wrote the Report in which the "phenomena" were said to be fraudulent, and Madame Blavatsky was characterised as a clever "impostor" or cheat.†

* One who claims other people's writings as his own.

† This Report is given in *Theosophy Exposed*. 8vo. 120 pp. 2½ As. Post-free, 3 As. Sold by Mr. A. T. SCOTT, Book Depôt, MADRAS.

Madame Blavatsky claimed to have lived several years in Tibet as the Chela, or disciple of a Mahatma, and to have partly acquired some of his magical powers. Careful inquiry showed that her pretended "phenomena" were mere tricks. An explanation of the manner in which they were performed will now be given.

EXPLANATION OF MADAME BLAVATSKY'S TRICKS.

DISCOVERY OF A BROOCH.

A brooch is an ornamental pin, worn by ladies, generally to fasten some article of dress. At a dinner party at Simla in the house of Mr. A. O. Hume, Madame Blavatsky asked Mrs. Hume whether there was anything she particularly wished for. She mentioned an old family brooch which had been lost. In the course of the evening Madame Blavatsky said that she had, by her occult power, seen the brooch fall into a bed of flowers in the garden. On search being made, the brooch was found, the fact being attested by nine witnesses.

The explanation of this is the following:

Mrs. Hume gave the brooch to her daughter, who gave it to a young gentleman whom she expected to marry. This gentleman resided for some time in Bombay in the same house with Madame Blavatsky. Needing money, he sold the brooch; Madame Blavatsky obtained it, took it with her to Simla, and hid it in the flower-bed where it was found.

The natives of India have long been familiar with feats akin to the "Brooch Incident." When an ingenious Brahman wishes to earn an easy livelihood, one expedient is to bury beforehand an image in the ground. He does not profess to be "clairvoyant," like Madame Blavatsky, but uses the more commonplace device of a dream. The god appears to him in a vision of the night, informs him that an image, miraculously produced, is to be found buried in such and such a field, and that a temple should

be built upon the spot. In the morning, he makes known the revelation he has received, and the principal men of the village are asked to go to the place. On digging, the image is found, of which a declaration might be made before any notary public. The temple is built, and the Brahman is installed as its officiating priest, entitled to the offerings made at the shrine.

CUP AND SAUCER.

One morning Madame Blavatsky accompanied a few friends on a picnic among the hills. There were originally to have been only six persons, but a seventh joined the party before starting. When they came to the place for breakfast, there were only six cups and saucers for seven people. One of the party suggested that Madame Blavatsky should create another cup. She said that it would be very difficult, but she would try. After wandering about a little, and pretending to speak to her Mahatma, she pointed out a place where they would be found. On digging, first a cup and then a saucer was found. The cup and saucer both corresponded exactly in pattern with those brought for the picnic.

The explanation is the same as the foregoing.

Madame Blavatsky was living in the house with the party giving the picnic. It was easy for her to obtain a cup and saucer of the same pattern. These were previously buried, and found when she pointed out the place.

DOUBLING OF A RING.

“Doubling,” or producing another thing of the same kind, is one of the “phenomena” which those skilled in occult science claim to perform. It has been mentioned how a Calcutta Mahatma professed to double bank notes.

One day a lady at Ootacamund and Madame Blavatsky, warm friends, were sitting together on a sofa. “A sapphire ring was taken from the finger of the lady and almost immediately—two minutes after—restored to her with another, the duplicate of the former, only a great

deal larger, and set with a sapphire of greater value than the original."

It should be observed that the cup and saucer corresponded exactly, while the ring did not, being larger and set with a stone of greater value than the original. Why should there be this difference? The explanation is that the former belonged to the same set, while Madame Blavatsky had got the ring made in Ceylon, so that, although like, it was not a complete match.

REPAIRING A BROKEN CHINA TRAY.

In the Occult Room* in the Madras head-quarters, there was what was called a Shrine. The Shrine was about 3 or 4 feet in width and height, and about a foot or 15 inches in depth, with a drawer below. The back was formed of three sliding pieces. This was placed against the wall of Madame Blavatsky's bedroom. By means of a hole in the wall, concealed by the shrine, Madame Blavatsky was able to put letters or anything else into the shrine. The opening in her bedroom was concealed by an almirah which could easily be shifted.

Madame Blavatsky wished wealthy people to join the Society that they might give money for its support. She sought to induce them to do so by the exhibition of some of her wonders. Among those whom she thus tried to influence was General Morgan.

General Morgan was invited to see a portrait of the Mahatma Koot Hoomi, contained in the shrine. When the doors were opened, a China tray, leaning against them, fell on the hard chunam floor and was broken. The pieces were carefully collected, tied in a cloth, placed within the shrine, and the doors locked. General Morgan remarked that the Mahatmas if they chose, could easily restore the broken article. After five minutes, the doors were unlocked, and on opening the cloth, the China tray was found whole and perfect without a trace of the breakage!

Madame Blavatsky was at Ootacamund, but she had

* *Occult* means hidden, secret.

made the arrangements beforehand with Madame Coulomb, and had sent a note professedly from the Mahatma Koot Hoomi, in which it was said that "the mischief is easily repaired. K. H."

Madame Coulomb was ordered to buy two China trays of the same pattern. The shopkeeper's bill was produced and examined by Mr. Hodgson. One tray was placed from behind leaning against the door, so that it fell when opened. It could not have been so placed in front. When the broken pieces were placed inside the cloth, they were removed through the hole in the wall, and the whole China tray was substituted.

BELL SOUNDS IN THE AIR.

Colonel Olcott refers to "sweet music coming from afar." A leading Madras Theosophist adduces "bell sounds in the air" as evidence of the truth of the system.

The sound is produced by a contrivance which Madame Blavatsky concealed under her clothing. When pressed by her arm against her side, the sound was produced, louder or fainter according to the pressure. It may be bought at any good shop in London where conjuring apparatus is sold.

SENDING CIGARETTES.

Madame Blavatsky was a great smoker. The cigarette papers she which always carried about with her, were supposed to be "impregnated with her personal magnetism." "The theory is that a current of what can only be called magnetism can be made to convey objects previously dissipated by the same force, to any distance, and in spite of the intervention of any amount of matter."*

One form of this "phenomenon" was to tear a cigarette in two, and mark each end with pencil lines. One end would be given to a person to hold, and shortly after the other would be found inside a piano or in some other part of the room. Mr. Sinnett himself makes the following admission:—

"Of course any one familiar with conjuring will be aware that

* *Occult World*, p. 62.

an imitation of this 'trick' can be arranged by a person gifted with a little sleight of hand. You take two pieces of papers, and tear off a corner of both together, so that the jags of both are the same. You make a cigarette with one piece, and put it in the place where you mean to have it ultimately found. You then hold the other piece underneath the one you tear in presence of the spectator, slip in one of the already torn corners into his hand instead of that he sees you tear, make your cigarette with the other part of the original piece, dispose of that anyhow you please and allow the prepared cigarette to be found.'*

But sometimes cigarettes were sent to great distances. Madame Coulomb explains how this was arranged. She placed them as directed by Madame Blavatsky, and lo! they were found in every case except one. The *fiasco* occurred at Bombay, where the former had been told to place a cigarette on the statue of the Prince of Wales, but failed. The explanation given was that the rain had washed away the cigarette.†

The above is confirmed by extracts from Madame Blavatsky's letters. She wrote thus to Madame Coulomb :

"I enclose an envelope with a cigarette paper in it. I will drop another *half* of a cigarette behind the Queen's head where I dropped my hair the same day or Saturday. Is the hair still there? and a cigarette still under the *cover*?"

Madame Blavatsky wrote on the fly-leaf of the letter from which this passage is taken :

"Make a half cigarette of this. *Take care of the edges.*"

And on a slip of paper said by Madame Coulomb to have accompanied the cigarette paper referred to :

"Roll a cigarette of this half and tie it with H. P. B.'s hair. Put it on the top of the cup-board made by Wimbridge to the farthest corner near the wall on the right. Do it quick."‡

THE SASSOON TELEGRAM.

Mr. Jacob Sassoon is a very wealthy citizen of Bombay. On this account Madame Blavatsky was very desirous that

* *Occult World*, p. 63.

† *Some Account*, &c. p. 16.

‡ *Proceedings of the Psychical Research Society*, p. 213.

he should become a Theosophist. He was willing to do so if he could obtain some proof of the existence of Mahatmas. Madame Blavatsky thought that a telegram received from a Mahatma would afford sufficient evidence. She therefore, when at Poona, arranged with Madame Coulomb in Madras as follows :

"Now dear, let us change the programme. Whether *something* succeeds or not I must try. Jacob Sassoon, the happy proprietor of a crore of rupees, with whose family I dined last night, is anxious to become a Theosophist. He is ready to give 10,000 rupees to buy and repair the headquarters; he said to Colonel (Ezekiel, his cousin, arranged all this) if only he saw a little phenomenon, got the assurance that the *Mahatmas* could hear what was said, or give him some *other sign of their existence* (!!!) Well, this letter will reach you the 26th, Friday; will you go up to the Shrine and ask K. H. (or Christofolo) to send me a telegram that would reach me about 4 or 5 in the afternoon, same day, worded thus:—

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

"RAMALINGA DEB."

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

"The envelope which Madame Coulomb shows as belonging to this letter bears the postmarks, Poona, October 24th; Madras, October 26th; 2nd delivery, Adyar, October 26th; (as to which Madame Blavatsky has written in the margin of my copy of Madame Coulomb's pamphlet) some Account of my Intercourse with Madame Blavatsky): 'cannot the cover have contained another letter? Funny evidence!') Madame Coulomb also shows in connection with this letter an official receipt for a telegram sent in the name of Ramalinga Deb from the St. Thomé Office, at Madras, to Madame Blavatsky, at Poona, on October 26th, which contained the same number of words as above."†

* The words in French are: I WILL DO THE REST. It will cost 4 or 5 rupees. *That is nothing.*"

† *Proceedings of the Psychical Research Society*, p. 211.

The above letter shows Madame Blavatsky's contempt for her dupes. "Give him *some other sign of their existence* (? ! !)"

MAHATMAS.

THE MEANING OF THE TERM.

Theosophy professes, not to have originated in Madame Blavatsky's brain, as its enemies insinuate, but in the revelations of Mahâtmas, "great souls," who found in her a fit channel for the propagation of 'Truth.' Who are these beings?

A *Mahatma*, or adept, as one of themselves puts it, "is the efflorescence of his age, and comparatively few ever appear in a single century."*

The Theosophist gives a fuller description of them :—

"A Mahatma is a personage, who, by special training and education, has evolved those higher faculties and has attained that spiritual knowledge which ordinary humanity will acquire after passing through numberless series of re-incarnations during the process of cosmic evolution, provided, of course, that they do not go, in the meanwhile, against the purposes of Nature, and thus bring on their own annihilation." July, 1884.

Mrs. Besant, in her Kumbakonum lecture on Mahatmas, thus describes their work :

"They keep guard over 'Truth'; treasured up in sacred lore, giving it to the world when it is ripe for it and withdrawing it when it would likely be misused. She said that they kept watch on the world, waiting for an opportunity to redeem it from ruin and fall, if persons who would subject themselves to their guidance, make their appearance in this world."

In *Why I became a Theosophist*, Mrs. Besant volunteers a remark which shows the state of her own mind :

"'The Masters,' as the students in Theosophy call them, are not anxious for an introduction, and they are not, like the orthodox God, angry with any who deny their existence." p. 21.

Mr. Sinnett thus dedicates his "Occult World" to the best known of them :—

* *The Occult World*, p. 92.

“To one whose comprehension of Nature and Humanity ranges so far beyond the science and philosophy of Europe, that only the broadest minded representatives of either will be able to realise the existence of such powers in Man, as those he constantly exercises,—to

THE MAHATMA KOOT HOOMI,

whose gracious friendship has given the present writer his title to claim the attention of the European world, this little volume, with permission sought and obtained, is affectionately dedicated.”

It has been well said that the alleged existence of Mahatmas, or “Tibetan Brothers,” is the most “inexplicable phenomenon” connected with Theosophy. An ex-Theosophist remarked: “If the Brothers are a myth, the Society for me is moonshine.”

The proofs of their existence are threefold:

I. THEIR ALLEGED APPEARANCE.

Colonel Olcott claims to have made the acquaintance of no fewer than *fifteen* Mahatmas. He says in his Addresses:—

“Within the three years when I was waiting to come to India, I had other visits from the *Mahatmas*, and they were not all Hindus or Cashmeris. I know some fifteen in all, and among them Copts, Tibetans, Chinese, Japanese, Siamese, a Hungarian, and a Cypriote. But whatever they are, however much they may differ externally as to races, religion, and caste, they are in perfect agreement as to the fundamentals of occult science, and as to the scientific basis of religion.” p. 165.

Mrs. Besant claims to have seen at least *one*. When interviewed by the *Madras Mail's* correspondent at Tanjore, she was asked: “Have you seen a Mahatma?” To which the reply was, “I have.”*

No details are available of the above “Brothers:” even their names are not given. Some particulars, however, are afforded regarding two who favoured India with their manifestations.

Mr. Sinnett thus describes how M—, one of the Brothers, showed himself:

* *Madras Mail*, Dec. 2. 1893.

“But M—, as it happened, was enabled to show himself to one member of the Simla Eclectic Society, who happened to be at Bombay a day or two before my visit. The figure was clearly visible for a few moments, and the face distinctly recognized by my friend who had previously seen a portrait of M—. Then it passed across the open door of an inner room in which it had appeared in a direction where there was no exit: and when my friend, who had started forward in its pursuit, entered the inner room, it was no longer to be seen. On two or three occasions previously, M—had made his astral figure visible to other persons about the headquarters of the Society, where the constant presence of Madame Blavatsky and one or two other persons of highly sympathetic magnetism, the purity of life of all habitually resident there, and the constant influences poured in by the Brothers themselves, render the production of phenomena immeasurably easier than elsewhere.”*

A sight of one of the “Brothers” was ardently desired by some influential members of the Society. It was considered the one thing necessary to shut the mouths of gainsayers. Madame Blavatsky therefore tried to meet their wishes. Madame Coulomb gives the following account of the manner in which this was effected:—

“She cut a paper-pattern of the face I was to make, which I still have; on this I cut the precious lineaments of the beloved Master, but to my shame I must say that after all my trouble of cutting, sewing and stuffing, Madame said that it looked like an old Jew—I suppose she meant Shylock. Madame with a graceful touch here and there of her painting brush gave it a little better appearance, but this was only a head without bust and could not very well be used, so I made a jacket which I doubled and between the two cloths I placed stuffing to form the shoulders and chest. The arms were only up to the elbow, because when the thing was tried on we found the long arm would be in the way of him who had to carry it.”†

M. Coulomb, one moonlight night, appeared on the balcony of the house, wearing this mask, and leaning against the balustrade. At the same time he dropped a letter. Colonel Olcott and Damodar signed a certificate, testifying to the appearance of the “Illustrious” in his astral body. At an “entertainment,” given in the Old College Hall, Madras, Madame Coulomb produced the mask, which corresponded fairly well with Colonel Olcott’s account.

* *Occult World*, p. 126.

† *Some Account*, p. 31.

Colonel Olcott confesses to “a multitude of sickening exposures of the rascality of mediums :”

“Little by little a body of enthusiasts is forming, who would throw a halo of sanctity around the medium, and by doing away with test conditions, invite to the perpetration of gross frauds. Mediums actually caught red-handed in trickery, with their paraphernalia of traps, false panels, wigs and puppets about them, have been able to make their dupes, regard them as martyrs to the rage of sceptics, and the damning proofs of their guilt as having been secretly supplied by the unbelievers themselves to strike a blow at their holy cause ! The voracious credulity of a large body of Spiritualists has begotten nine-tenths of the dishonest tricks of mediums.”*

Colonel Olcott acknowledges that American mediums make use of “puppets.” The thing is conceivable that they might be employed by Madame Blavatsky. The manifestations of the “Brothers” were usually so fleeting, that those who saw them might very easily have been mistaken. They were not seen under “test conditions.” Damodar, indeed, claims to have conversed with one for hours, but from a statement made to the writer on good authority, his memory also seems to be so “impaired” that he sometimes forgets his own identity.

The Theosophists, like the Spiritualists mentioned by Colonel Olcott, consider that the mask was prepared “by the unbelievers themselves to strike a blow at their holy cause.”

II. THEIR LETTERS.

The Mahatmas have chiefly distinguished themselves by their replies to letters addressed to them. It is a reproduction of the old system of oracles, which may therefore be briefly noticed.

Oracles.—These date from the remotest antiquity, but gradually declined with the increase of knowledge. Many of the Egyptian temples were oracular. The following is a brief account of Greek oracles :—

“Ancient literature shows the Greeks as a people whose religion ran much into the consultation of oracle gods at many temples, of

* Addresses, pp. 58-60.

which the shrine of Apollo at Delphos was the chief. No rite could keep up more perfectly the habit of savage religion than their necromancy, or consulting ghosts for prophecy; there was a famous oracle of the dead near the river Acheron in Thesprotia, where the departing souls crossed on their way to Hades.”*

When the writer visited the temple of “Isis” “unveiled” at Pompeii, a secret entrance to the shrine was pointed out, by means of which responsive oracles were given to the “imbeciles” of those days.

The chief of the Mahatmas, Koot Hoomi, seems to have been first brought on the stage by means of Mr. Sinnett. Through a “happy inspiration,” he was led to address a letter “to the Unknown Brother.” From “that small beginning,” says Mr. S., “has arisen the most interesting correspondence in which I have ever been privileged to engage.”

The first Brother to whom Madame Blavatsky applied did not wish to be troubled; another was more obliging. Mr. Sinnett gives the following account of his new correspondent:—

“He was a native of the Panjab who was attached to occult studies from his earliest boyhood. He was sent to Europe whilst still a youth at the intervention of a relative—himself an occultist—to be educated in Western knowledge, and since then has been fully initiated in the greater knowledge of the East.

“My correspondent is known to me as Koot Hoomi Lal Sing. This is his ‘Thibetan mystic name’—occultists, it would seem, taking new names on initiation.”

The name is said to be “Thibetan.” An expert at the British Museum Library examined a recent Thibetan Dictionary, and found no such words as “Koot” and “Hoomi.” The most eminent Panjabi scholar of the day writes, “Koot Hoomi is a name, I believe, to be quite unknown in the Panjab. I have been here about fifty years and I have never heard anything like it.”

Mr. Lillie says:

“*The Occult World* (p. 65) tells us Koot Hoomi is a native of the Panjab, and, *Isis Unveiled* tells us he is a native of Kashmir (Vol. II.,

* *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vol. XV.

p. 609). We learn also that he is a Kutchi and the 'son of Katchi.' *Ibid.* Vol. II., p. 628."*

These accounts with regard to his nationality are rather conflicting. He has now been wisely placed in Tibet where he cannot be cross-examined.

Mr. Sinnett admits that there is "a foolish suspicion entertained by some sceptics" that the letters supposed to come from the Brothers were written by Madame Blavatsky. Mr. C. C. Massey, who in 1880 was one of the Society's Vice-Presidents, writing in 1882, mentions that it had been "maliciously suggested" that Koot Hoomi is an alias for Madame Blavatsky. He has since withdrawn from the Society, it is believed because he considers the "malicious" suggestion to be correct.

The following are some of the reasons for attributing the authorship of the letters to Madame Blavatsky, and not to an imaginary "Brother."

1. **Handwriting and Paper.**—Madame Blavatsky acknowledges that when young, she could write in a peculiar old-fashioned German hand.† Her acquaintance with Russian, French, &c., would also easily enable her to have different styles of penmanship.

The writer has seen only one specimen of writing alleged to be by one of the "Brothers." It is in blue pencil. It is rather curious that Mr. Sinnett refers to Madame Blavatsky "fingering a blue pencil."‡ He also notices another coincidence. "The pink paper on which it was written (a letter from a Brother) appeared to be the same which Madame Blavatsky had taken blank from her pocket shortly before."§

2. **Style.**—Koot Hoomi was educated in England, but, like Webster's Dictionary, he spells "scepticism" with a *k*. Madame Blavatsky assured Mr. Sinnett that this "was not an Americanism in his case, but due to a philological whim of his"!¶

The language of good American writers, like Washing-

* *Koot Hoomi Unveiled*, p. 14.

† *Occult World*, p. 95.

‡ *Esoteric Philosophy*, No. 1, p. 87.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

¶ *Ibid.*, p. 78.

ton Irving, is as pure and chaste as that of English authors. In the United States, however, where political struggles are very keen, there is a style of mock eloquence, called "stump oratory." Referring to this, *The Saturday Review* characterises Koot Hoomi's letters as "Choice American." *The Bombay Gazette* expresses a similar opinion :

"As yet the sage has unfortunately only revealed himself to his worshippers in a series of letters whose vulgar and inflated style makes us shudder at the prospect before us, if Occultism is destined to become the world's religion. The new revelation, so far, is like nothing so much as a series of leading articles from a third-rate American paper." *Sept. 24, 1881.*

The above remarks apply largely to Colonel Olcott's lectures, although young Indian students may think differently, and adopt them as a model in their addresses to himself.

3. **Subject Matter.**—This is of more importance. A correspondent in *Esoteric Philosophy* says :—

"The style and purport of the letters received, which, while some of them were good enough, were many of them below the level of what so clever a woman as Madame Blavatsky might be expected to write, and not one of them indicative, to my mind, of exceptionally high intellectual powers." p. 8.

Their apologist, in the same pamphlet, is obliged to make the following admissions :—

"As to exceptionally high intellectual power, they would be the last to claim anything of the kind." p. 57.

"Their letters are what we should call ill-argued, because they know nothing of argument." p. 59.

Like the ancient oracles and the spiritualistic replies received by Dr. Hartmann, the letters of the Brothers are generally very vague. A clever fortune-teller can often worm out secrets from her dupes, so as to lead them to suppose that she possesses preternatural knowledge. Madame Blavatsky knew well the persons who sought to communicate with the Brothers, and could easily prepare letters suited to their cases.

From the "priceless treasures of their researches,"* the

* *Occult World*, p. 5.

Brothers have not communicated a single jewel worthy of preservation. Old time-worn platitudes are simply presented in a "Brummagem" setting. *The Bombay Gazette* gives the following examples :—

"Koot Hoomi Lal Singh, from the depths of Tibetan snows, discourses of 'the inexorable shadow which follows all human innovations' (p. 95), as also of the 'deific powers of man and the possibilities contained in nature' (p. 97). The 'narrow vase of dogmatism and intolerance' (p. 96) is his very commonplace figure for the evils from which he comes to deliver man. He warns Mr. Sinnett that if he begins to attempt to convert the world he 'will have to go on ever *crescendo*!' (p. 98.) He contemplates, and would have his disciples contemplate, the future life as 'an objective reality, built upon the rock of knowledge, not of faith' (p. 103.) He has the good taste to ask us to observe with him 'what is going on to-day among the catholics who are breeding miracles as fast as the white-ants do their young' (p. 138.) It seems almost a cruelty to call attention to what is after all only of a piece with the whole imposture." *Sept.* 24, 1881.

4. **Koot Hoomi's Plagiarism.**—Mr. Kiddle, an American professor, on reading "The Occult World," says :

"I was greatly surprised to find in one of the letters presented to Mr. Sinnett as having been transmitted to him by Koot Hoomi in the mysterious manner described, a passage taken almost *verbatim* from an address on Spiritualism by me at Lake Pleasant in August, 1880, and published the same month by the *Banner of Light*. As Mr. Sinnett's book did not appear till a considerable time afterwards (about a year, I think), it is certain that I did not quote, consciously or consciously from its pages. How, then, did it get into Koot Hoomi's mysterious letter?"

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

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

"My friends, *ideas* rule the world, and as men's minds receive new ideas, laying aside the old and effete, the world ad-

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

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

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

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

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

"HENRY KIDDLE.

"New York, August 11th, 1883."

If the papers of two students at a University examination contained passages corresponding so closely as the above, it would certainly be concluded that one copied from the other or that both copied from the same original.

5. **Koot Hoomi's Excuses.**—A liar often tries to support one falsehood by another. One of the best means of convicting him is to examine his supposed evidence.

Koot Hoomi's first excuse is,

"I was physically very tired by a ride of forty-eight hours consecutively, and (physically again) half asleep."*

If Koot Hoomi could come in his "astral body" from Thibet to Bombay, how was the poor man obliged to be "48 hours consecutively" in the saddle?

The second reason alleged is as follows:—

"It was dictated mentally in the direction of and precipitated by a young chela not yet expert in this branch of psychic chemistry, and who had to transcribe it from the hardly visible imprint. Half of it, therefore, was omitted, and the other half more or less distorted by the 'artist.' "*"

If the "young chela" had written something different from Mr. Kiddle's remarks, it could easily be understood, but that he should copy sentences almost *verbatim* is certainly an "occult phenomenon."

Koot Hoomi afterwards admitted that the extracts given were quotations; but even this is unsatisfactory. The Report of the Psychical Research Society says:—

"More lately (in *Light*, September 20th 1884), Mr. Kiddle has shown that the passage thus restored by no means comprises the whole of the unacknowledged quotations; and, moreover, that these newly-indicated quotations are antecedent to those already admitted by Koot Hoomi, and described as forming the introduction to a fresh topic of criticism. The proof of a deliberate plagiarism aggravated by a fictitious defence is therefore irresistible."

Koot Hoomi himself affords the true explanation. "I was not then anticipating its publication." He thought that his plagiarism would never be detected.

6. **Channel of Communication.**—This was through Madame Blavatsky. Two leading Theosophists, who thought that the Society might be better managed, wished to write straight to the "Brothers." One of the latter says:—

* *Occult World*, p. 145.

"Your desire is to be brought to communicate with one of us directly, without the agency of Madame Blavatsky or any medium."*

As might be expected, this audacious proposal was condemned by Koot Hoomi, in a long letter, as "*selfish!*"† All letters through the astral post must go through the recognised postmistress. Any other course would have been "unreasonable."

7. **Place of Reception.**—Such phenomena *usually* took place at the headquarters. Dr. Hartmann says:—

"Many of the 'occult letters' that were received,—but by no means all—were received either in that cupboard or in Madame Blavatsky's rooms. The cupboard was a sort of post-office, to mail and receive letters from the Masters."‡

For the first two or three months after Madame Blavatsky left for Europe, a few letters were received about the same time as the overland mails, but afterwards they seem to have entirely ceased. Enemies of the cause derided the oracle as dumb; Koot Hoomi was accused of deserting his friends when his help was most required. A more charitable conjecture was that he had himself been "precipitated" down some Himalayan *khud*. Such accidents are not unusual on the mountains, and might easily happen to a man half asleep and exhausted with a 48 hours' ride.

8. **Manner of Reception.**—This is an important element.

Letters were usually dropped, but at Madras a "shrine" was specially made for them by Deschamps.

Mr. Judge, in his lecture delivered at the request of some Madras students, says:

"They held meetings in closed rooms, and yet objects would come through the ceiling. Tyndall, Huxley and others might say that such a thing was impossible, but the lecturer said he had seen such things happen. . . . The lecturer had seen letters drop."

When Mr. Sinnett was at the Society's headquarters, Bombay, a letter dropped suddenly on the table in the middle of the room. Why had a shrine to be made at Madras? Mr. Judge notwithstanding, it would appear that Tyndall

* *Occult World*, p. 70. † *Ibid*, pp. 71-74.

‡ *Report of Observations*. p. 13.

and Huxley were right in thinking that letters could not come through a thick Madras ceiling, composed of brick and mortar. In Bombay, houses have usually boarded floors and cloth ceiling. Letters could easily be made to drop through a Bombay floor, while such a course was impossible at Madras. Madame Coulomb gives an account of a trap which was fixed on the floor of the garret above Mr. Sinnett's room; the floor was a boarded one, and between the boards was a space sufficiently wide to permit a thick letter to slip through easily. By pulling a string attached to the trap, the letter could be disengaged at any moment.*

The Madras shrine stood in the "Occult Room," which was next to Madame Blavatsky's bed-room.

Dr. Hartmann bears witness to the following :—

"Besides this hole in the wall there were found to be three secret openings or sliding panels in various places. One into the occult room, opening into the back of another cupboard or book-case, whose front was covered by a mirror and which was made accessible from the hall."†

The explanation given by the Theosophists is that "all these tricks, holes, and trap-doors" were the work of M. Coulomb and his wife after Madame Blavatsky left in order to criminate her. M. Coulomb asserts that they were made by her orders, and her enemies say that she used them to put letters in the shrine. As *The Christian College Magazine* puts it: "*primâ facie*, it is more likely that letters and saucers should be pushed through sliding panels and secret passages than through stout teak wood planks and solid masonry walls."‡

When "Koot Hoomi" is "Unveiled," the form disclosed is that of Madame Blavatsky.

3. ALLEGED ASSISTANCE OF THE MAHATMAS IN WRITING ISIS UNVEILED.

ISIS UNVEILED is a work in two thick octavo volumes. It professes to be "A MASTER-KEY TO THE MYSTERIES OF ANCIENT AND MODERN SCIENCE AND THEOLOGY."

* Some Account, p. 33. † Report, p. 43. ‡ Oct. 1884.

Madame Blavatsky gives the following account of its preparation.

“It is but too true that ‘the material sadly needs reducing to order,’ but it never was *my* province to do so, as I gave out one detached chapter after the other and was quite ignorant as Mr. Sinnett correctly states in the *Occult World*, whether I had started upon a series of articles, one book or two books... Most of the doctrines given had to be translated from an Asiatic language... Most if not all the quotations from and references to, other works,—some of them out of print, and many inaccessible but to the few—and which the author personally had never read or seen, though the passages quoted were proved in each instance minutely correct.”*

Mr. Sinnett gives further details :—

“In the production of this book she was so largely helped by the Brothers, that great portions of it are not really her work at all. In the morning she would sometimes get up and find as much as thirty slips added to the manuscript she had left on her table over-night.

“The book was written—as regards its physical production—at New York, where Madame Blavatsky was utterly unprovided with books of reference. It teems, however, with references to books of all sorts, including many of a very unusual character, and with quotations the exactitude of which may easily be verified at the great European libraries, as foot-notes supply the number of the pages, from which the passages taken or quoted.”†

If the above account is correct, Mr. Sinnett rightly terms the book a “great phenomenon.” It may justly compete with Bacon’s treatise to be called *maximus partus temporis*, the greatest birth of time !

Mr. Arthur Lillie, in “Koot Hoomi Unveiled,” gives a very different account. According to him, it is largely translated from *Dogme et Rituel de la Haute Magie*, written, by Louis Constant, a French ex-priest, under the name of Eliphas Lévi. The geological part of it is said to be derived from Donnelly’s *Atlantis*. A clue is thus afforded to what astonished Mr. Sinnett. Any one may make a show of learning by copying references to works which he “had never read or seen,” and they may be “proved in each instance minutely correct.” What is novel in this case, is that the prodigy is attributed to the aid of Mahatmas.

* *The Theosophist*, Vol. II, p. 258.

† *The Occult World*, pp. 80, 109.

Colonel Olcott, in one of his lectures, dwells upon the power of the "WORD" :—

"All the ancient authorities affirm that there is a certain word of power by pronouncing which the adept subjugates all the forces of Nature to his will. The efficacy of all words used as charms and spells lies in what the Aryans call the Vach, a certain latent power residing in Akasa." pp. 151, 152.

Mr. Lillie, referring to Madame Blavatsky's work, says :—

"Page after page of 'Isis Unveiled' is devoted to this INEFFABLE NAME; and it is patiently discussed whether this was 'Macroprosopos,' 'Jehovah,' or 'Ferho' or 'Fo.'

"If there is no God, some may ask, how can He have an INEFFABLE NAME? My explanation is that the Atheism of this system was taken from Dr. Rhys David's 'Buddhism,'* and the disquisitions about Macroprosopos, and so on, are certainly borrowed from Eliphas Lévi, whose book was based on the Theism of the Kabbalah. Some not very logical person has tried to blend two contradictory dogmatisms." p. 4.

The Saturday Review, one of the first literary journals in England, characterises *Isis Unveiled* as a "mystical jumble." In a review of the work which appeared in the *St. James's Gazette*, July 30th, 1884, Madame Blavatsky's ignorance is represented as astounding. "Almost every page shows this ignorance."

The gross ignorance of Madame Blavatsky and the Mahatmas who assisted her is shown by Mr. W. E. Coleman in a series of Papers which appeared in the *Chicago Religio-Philosophical Journal* in 1889. The following is an extract from the issue of August 31st :—

"The Bhagavad Gita is the gem of Sanskrit literature One would think that if there was any Sanskrit book with which Madame Blavatsky would be familiar, not in the original, for she was and is no Sanskritist, but in translation, it would be the Gita. But when she wrote *Isis* she did not even know the name of the book, and was in ignorance of its contents. In a large number of places in *Isis* she speaks of this book which she calls the *Bagaved gitta*. Note the difference in spelling between this and *Bhagavad Gita*. None but a Sanskrit ignoramus would omit the 'h' after

* More probably from Burnouf or Saint Hilaire.

the initial 'B,' or spell Gita, with two 't's.' There are no such words in Sanskrit as Bagaved and Gitta, (See *Isis Unveiled*, ii. 199, 257, 275, 277, 405) So much for the name; now for the contents of the book. *I. U.* ii. 199, states that the whole story of the massacre of the children at the birth of Jesus in Matthew was 'bodily taken' from the Bagaved gitta. There is not a word in the Bhagavad Gita about the slaughter of children at the birth of Krishna, to which she refers. *I. U.* ii. 257, states that the Bagaved gitta contains an account of Vishnu assuming the form of a fish to reclaim the Vedas lost during the deluge, and in ii. 405 is found a purported quotation from the Bagaved gitta concerning the deluge. Nothing of this, in any form or manner, is in the Gita. The truth is that Madame Blavatsky has confounded two very different books, the Bhagavad Gita and the Bhagavad Purana. The things which she claims to be in the Gita are in the Purana. In another place she twice speaks of the Bhagavatta (ii. 260), the name of which she spells wrongly, using two 't's' in it instead of one. It is plain that Madame Blavatsky had never seen either of these books, the Gita or Purana. Her information concerning and quotations from them were copied from Lewis Jacolliot's writings. He was her standard authority. As is well known, Jacolliot's works are full of forgeries and blunders, utterly worthless productions; and yet he is Madame Blavatsky's principal authority on Hinduism and Sanskrit literature in *Isis*. That work is full of forgeries from Sanskrit works, adopted and copied as truth from Jacolliot.

"A woman who does not know the difference between the Bhagavad Gita and the Bhagavata Purana, and who cannot spell the name of either correctly, and who adopts Jacolliot as her principal authority, is indeed a reliable writer on Hinduism and Sanskrit literature!!"

Numerous other illustrations are given of her ignorance of Hinduism. The following is a similar example so far as Buddhism is concerned:—

"We read in *I. U.* i. 92 that Maha Maya, or Maha Deva, the mother of Gautama Bhudda (*sic*) had the birth of her son announced to her by Bhôdisât (*sic*) The name Maha Deva is so common in Hindu literature, as an appellation of Shiva, the third member of the Hindu triad or trimurti, that it would seem that the veriest smatterer in Hinduism should know better than to call Buddha's mother Maha-Deva. Moreover, no woman could be called Maha-deva in Sanskrit. Deva in Sanskrit is masculine; the feminine is Devi; and Gautama's mother Maya is sometimes called Maha-Devi; but never Deva."

The above opinion is supported by the high authority of

Professor Max Müller, Editor of the *Rig-Veda* and of the *Sacred Books of the East*.

“There is nothing that cannot be traced back to generally accessible Brahmanic or Buddhistic sources, only everything is muddled or misunderstood. If I were asked what Madame Blavatsky’s Esoteric Buddhism really is, I should say it was Buddhism misunderstood, distorted, caricatured. There is nothing in it beyond what was known already, chiefly from books that are now antiquated. The most ordinary terms are misspelt and misinterpreted.” *The Nineteenth Century*. May, 1893, p. 775.

ADDITIONAL PROOFS THAT MADAME BLAVATSKY IS AN IMPOSTOR, AND NOT THE WORLD’S “GREAT TEACHER,” AS CLAIMED BY MRS. BESANT.

The foregoing explanations of the “phenomena” show that Madame Blavatsky was a TRICKSTER, PLAGIARIST, FORGER, LIAR. These are amply sufficient to disprove her claims; but some additional evidence may be given.

1. HER CONTEMPT FOR HER DUPES.

Madame Blavatsky secretly ridiculed those whom she deceived. They were characterised as “domestic imbeciles,” “familiar muffs.”

Mr. Leadbeater, an English clergyman, became a Theosophist. When coming out in the “Navarino,” she said to him; “Is it true that the passengers say that I sit upon you? because, if so, you would then be a great deal FLATTER than you are; wouldn’t you? “Flatter” here means a greater fool. It is said that the poor dupe never saw the point of the remark.*

But Madame Blavatsky’s greatest scorn is reserved for Colonel Olcott, who so much assisted her in establishing the Society. As already mentioned, he has been called a “psychologised baby,” who “did not know his head from his heels;” “flapdoodle (food for fools) Olcott,” “an idiot.”

* *Theosophy the New Religion*, p. 8.

Only a person of a base disposition would act in such a way.

It would be interesting to know what she thought of Mrs. Besant. Very probably, *mutatis mutandis* (with the necessary changes), what she wrote about Colonel Olcott :

“The Yankees thought themselves very smart, and Colonel Olcott thought he was particularly smart, even for a Yankee, but he would have to get up much earlier in the morning to be as smart as she was.”*

2. HER IRASCIBILITY AND OUTRAGEOUS ABUSE.

Colonel Olcott says for himself and Madame Blavatsky:—

“We two Founders profess a religion of tolerance, charity, kindness, altruism, or love of one’s fellows; a religion that does not try to discern all that is bad in our neighbour’s creed, but all that is good, and to make him live up to the best code of morals and piety he can find in it.” pp. 202-203.

Madame Blavatsky professed to be a follower of the “Great Master, Sakya Muni.” One of the distinguishing features of Buddha is said to have been his imperturbable gentleness; he had thoroughly conquered the passion of “anger.”

Mr. A. O. Hume wrote a letter to *The Theosophist*, signed, *Aletheia*, of which the following is an abridgment :

“We all realise that, suddenly attacked, the best may, on the spur of the moment, stung by some shameful calumny, some biting falsehood, reply in angry terms. But what defence can be offered for the deliberate publication, in cold blood, of expressions, nay sentences, nay entire articles, redolent with hatred, malice and all uncharitableness ?

“Think, now, if the Blessed Buddha, assailed, as he passed, with a handful of dirt by some naughty little urchin wallowing in a gutter, had turned and cursed, or kicked the miserable little imp, where would have been the religion of Love and Peace ?

“But this is the kind of demonstration of Buddha’s precepts that the Founders of our Society persist in giving to the world. Let any poor creature, ignorant of the higher truths, blind to the brighter light, abuse or insult, nay, even find fault with them,—and lo, in place of loving pity, in lieu of returning good for evil, straightway they fume and rage, and hurl back imprecations and

* *Proceedings of Psychical Research Society*, Dec. 1885, p. 310.

anathemas, which even the majority of educated gentlemen, however worldly, however ignorant of spiritual truths, would shrink from employing." June, 1882.

3. THE DOCTRINES OF THEOSOPHY.

Theosophy should be rejected for its following doctrines :

1. **Its Virtual Atheism.**—Madame Blavatsky admitted that she did "not at all believe in the existence of God."*

The pantheistic "Divine Principle" in which the Founders profess to believe is thus explained :—

"The Founders maintain that they *do* believe in the very Divine PRINCIPLE taught in the Vedas ; in that *Principle* which is 'neither entity nor non-entity,' but an ABSTRACT ENTITY, which is *no* entity, liable to be described by either words or attributes."†

There is the more recent explanation, given in *Secret Doctrine*, and accepted by Mrs. Besant :—

"It is that which is dissolved, or the illusionary dual aspect of That, the essence of which is eternally One, that we call eternal, matter or substance, formless, sexless, inconceivable, even to our sixth sense, or mind, in which, therefore, we refuse to see that which Monotheists call a personal, anthropomorphic God." i. p. 545.

What idea can be attached to a "Principle" which is "neither entity nor non-entity"? As stated above, it is *virtual* atheism.

2. **No Prayer.**—Colonel Olcott says in his *Addresses* : "The Founders of the Theosophical Society do not pray." (p. 119). They are not illustrations, either intellectually or otherwise, of the advantages of such a course. It must however, be admitted that they are carrying out their principles logically, for it is useless to pray to a Being who does not exist or to an Entity who is practically a non-entity.

In opposition to this, Nature herself teaches us to pray. The wisest and best men in all ages have been prayerful. The Bible says : "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God." No part of the "Wisdom Religion" has been

* *The Theosophist*, June 1882, Sup. p. 7.

† *Ibid* June 1882.

derived from this source, and it deserves rather to be called atheistic folly.

3. **No Pardon of Sin.**—Theosophists have adopted the Buddhist doctrine of *Karma*, which teaches that neither in heaven nor in earth can man escape from the consequences of his acts.

Karma, according to Buddhists and Theosophists, is somewhat like fate, an unintelligent force to which there is no appeal. There is no Father's heart to listen to the cry, "God, be merciful to me a sinner." But it is different if the world is governed by God.

Men instinctively believe in the forgiveableness of sin, and instinctively pray for pardon. An earthly king can pardon an offender; why should this prerogative be denied to the King of kings?

It is admitted that the great problem is how to combine mercy and justice. Christianity sees the difficulty, and points out the solution. Space does not permit details. The reader is referred to *Short Papers for Seekers after Truth*, pp. 70—77.

4. **No helps to Holiness.**—Every one who has sincerely tried to overcome his evil desires and to purify his life, knows the great difficulty he has had to encounter. A Hindu writer makes the confession :

"This powerful devil of a deceitful heart is fiercer than fire, more impassable than the mountains, and harder than adamant, sooner might the ocean be emptied than the mind be restrained."

In this struggle with sin, Theosophy affords no Divine aid. "Be your own saviour," is its only response to the cry for help.

5. **Its doctrines are a baseless fiction.**—Its "seven Kosmic planes of manifestation," "its seven globes in a planetary chain," "its seven races on each planet," &c. are all *pure speculation*. They are accepted on the authority of imaginary Mahatmas, proved to be plagiarists and liars.

A bitter fountain cannot send forth sweet water; a wicked woman cannot be the source of a pure and true religion.

Theosophists themselves admit that if the "phenomena" of Madame Blavatsky were not real, then she was in the words of Mrs. Besant:

"This miserable impostor, this accomplice of tricksters, this foul and loathsome deceiver, this conjurer with trap-doors and sliding panels."*

That she was an impostor is proved by what Professor Sidgwick considers "irresistible evidence."†

MADAME BLAVATSKY'S DUPES.

All who parade F. T. S., after their names, as if it were a university degree, may be considered her dupes; but only the three principal will be noticed.

1. COLONEL OLCOTT.—This gentleman calls himself the "President Founder" of the Society. Page 3 contains a short account of his previous career, and some of his "experiences" have been described.

The "Wisdom Religion" may not have affected his honesty; but it seems to have seriously impaired his understanding. Mr. Hodgson thus writes of him:—

"The testimony of Colonel Olcott himself I found to be fundamentally at variance with fact in so many important points that it became impossible for me to place the slightest value upon the evidence he offered. But in saying this I do not mean to suggest any doubt as to Colonel Olcott's honesty of purpose."‡

2. MR. A. P. SINNETT.—This gentleman, formerly Editor of the *Pioneer*, was the most important of Madame Blavatsky's converts in India. By his *Occult World*, *Esoteric Buddhism*, and other works, he was mainly instrumental in bringing Theosophy before the English Public.

His faith in his Guru seems unlimited. He swallowed all the "phenomena," and her statement regarding the joint authorship of *Isis Unveiled*.

The New York Herald says of Mr. Sinnett, that he "brays

* *Borderland*, October, 1893, p. 175.

† See *Theosophy Exposed*, p. 20.

‡ *Proceedings of the Psychical Research Society*, December 1885, p. 210.

with a fatuous ingenuousness and with a good faith that are charming and purely asinine. There is nothing occult about Mr. Sinnett; he writes himself down clearly as Dogberry."

3. MRS. BESANT.—This lady is an eloquent speaker, with a fine imagination; but wanting in the logical faculty. She asks for her epitaph only the words, "SHE TRIED TO FOLLOW TRUTH;" but it has been her unhappy lot to be employed nearly the whole of her adult life in zealously propagating deadly error. Her character is well described in Dryden's words:

**"Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong,
Every thing by starts, and nothing long."**

An account of her is given in *Who is Mrs. Besant? and Why has she come to India?* (Price 1 Anna).

It may be remarked that the three believers in Madame Blavatsky's "phenomena" are all atheists in the proper sense of the word.

The *Bombay Gazette*, reviewing *The Occult World* says:—

"The first act of faith required of the disciple of Occult Philosophy is to purge his mind of belief in an imaginary personal God (p. 135) and all similar 'current superstitions,' (p. 139). This, we may say in passing, is not in all cases so difficult as one might suppose. Our author, at least, as we shall see, had so loose a hold on these venerable beliefs, that a trick with a clock shade was enough to dislodge them, one and all, from his mind." Sept. 24, 1881.

The combination of scepticism and "voracious credulity" is nothing new. They have often been united. A person who can believe that the universe had no intelligent Author, can believe anything. Lecky, in his *History of European Morals*, says that about the beginning of the Christian era:

"The notions, too, of magic and astrology, were detached from all theological belief, and might be found among many who were absolute atheists." Vol. I. p. 393.

THE TRUE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

Mrs. Besant has written her autobiography, in which she expresses the hope that

“The tale of one soul that went out alone into the darkness and on the other side found light, that struggled through the Storm and found Peace, may bring some ray of light and peace into the darkness and storm of other lives.”

Instead of being a guiding light, in her changeable course she has rather been an *ignis fatuus* (foolish fire), a faint flickering light, sometimes seen in marshy places.

In contrast, let the reader ponder the claims of Him who said, “I am the Light of the World.” Let him read the wondrous record of the life of the Lord Jesus Christ as contained in the New Testament.

Instead of advocating belief in a “*Principle*, which is neither entity nor non-entity,” we are taught to regard the great Creator of the Universe as our “Father in heaven,” willing to listen to the cry of His children.

Instead of declaring that for sin there is no expiation and for the sinner no pardon, we are assured that God has provided One “mighty to save.” The Lord Jesus Christ invites every sin-burdened soul to come unto Him, with the assurance of relief.

We are not left to struggle with sin merely in our own strength. Divine help is offered: “If ye being evil know how to give good gifts to your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him.”

Let the reader say: “I will arise and go unto my Father, and will say, ‘Father, I have sinned, and am no more worthy to be called Thy son.’ I take refuge in the Saviour Thou hast graciously provided; forgive me for His sake, and grant me Thy Holy Spirit to purify my heart, and fit me to dwell with Thee for ever.

For further information the reader is referred to *Short Papers for Seekers after Truth* (1 Anna), or to *Elements of Christian Truth*, lectures to educated Hindus by the Rev. Dr. Murray Mitchell; but above all to the *New Testament*.

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