



THE PRASNOTTARA.

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No. 4. }

APRIL 1901.

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PUBLISHED AT
THE HEAD QUARTERS OF THE INDIAN SECTION T. S.
BENARES.

PRASNOTTARA, THE GAZETTE OF THE INDIAN SECTION of the THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, containing notices of the movements of Theosophy in India and the workings of the Indian Section, is published at Benares, India, on or before the 15th of every month. Two-thirds of it is devoted to religious and philosophical subjects explained in the light of Theosophy and to Questions and Answers for the elucidation of the intricacies of religious customs and manners of the Hindus &c. A new volume begins with the January number.

Subscriptions for non-members of the Theosophical Society in advance:—
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Members of the Section paying their full annual dues will each get a copy free, in the case of a member attached to a Branch through its Secretary and in the case of one not attached to any branch, direct from the General Secretary. Each member is entitled to a copy from the month of the issue of diploma to him.

Back numbers:—when available are supplied to both members and non-members at annas 4. 4d or 12 c. each.

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Contributions:—All matters for the Prasnottara including Answers to Questions, should be in hand on the 20th of the previous month to ensure their appearance in the next issue. They should be written on one side of the paper only. When necessary, communications will be condensed by the Editors.

The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statements contained therein. For answers bearing no initials the Editors are personally liable.

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THE PRASNOTTARA.

Vol. XI }
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BENARES: APRIL, 1901.

{ Serial
No. 128.

DEPOSITS.

Members and Secretaries of Branches are requested to enquire immediately if any money sent or paid by them in the month of December has not yet been acknowledged in the Prasnottara. There is some money lying with me in deposit, but which I could not acknowledge as the advice was not forthcoming. I shall be much obliged by such enquiry.

DHANA KRISHNA BISWAS,

Assistant Secretary.

NEW BRANCHES.

We are glad to announce the formations of the following Branches :—

NAME	DATE	OFFICERS
Karkul	... 20-3-1901.	... M. Babu Rao, Sub-Registrar.
Pārvatipur	... 22-3-1901.	... O. V. Jagannath Sastry, Secretary.

Both the Branches were established at the exertions of Bro. K. Narayan Swamy Aiyar.

THE WHITE LOTUS DAY.

Secretaries of Branches are requested to note that the 8th of May is the day of demise of our revered H. P. B. That the anniversary is to be celebrated on that day by the Branches in the way they think best, and we also expect to have reports of such celebration from the Branches.

ANNUAL DUES.

Owing to our being short of hands for the present, we cannot issue the V. P. receipts for annual dues as intended. We therefore request our Secretaries and unattached members to send their annual dues as soon as possible.

HISTORY OF THE BRANCHES.

As we intend keeping in this office a complete record of the History of the Branches, the Secretaries are requested to supply us with a brief history of their Branches from the very beginning, noting the names of office-bearers, the progress made, and the strength of the Branch, during each year.

We are glad to welcome our dear Sister Miss Edger to our Benares home after her long and very effective tour in the Punjab and the Bombay Presidency ; she is a great acquisition to us.

THE HOT WEATHER.

The dull season is coming, the oppressive heat will slacken our energy and we cannot except even half the work from our officers here during the time.

Most of the active resident members are intending going up to the Hills, Mrs. Besant with the Joint General Secretary and Mrs. Lloyd intends going to Cashmere. Dr. Richardson, Mr. Banbery and Mr. Thirlwall also intend going to some Hill stations. So the Head-Quarters will be deprived of much of its activity.

FAMILY QUARTERS.

Two of our family quarters are ready, one is occupied by our steward and the other is let out to Babu Tridhara Charan Bhattacharjee who is occupying this house awaiting the completion of his own in the Head-Quarters ground, sanctioned by the Convention. These Family Quarters will be a great help to the members wishing to come here with their family, as well as, a source of income to the Section, by which the cost of repairs will be met.

THE PLAGUE.

Owing to prevalence of plague in these Quarters, the C. H. College was closed, but we are glad to inform our members, that by the grace of our Masters all the resident members in the Head Quarters ground are in perfect health and that they are not at all scared by the dreadful havoc made by the Plague all round.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONVENTION.

(Continued from Page 61.)

Mr. Keightley :—"I shall now ask our Provincial Secretary Rai Barodakānta Lahiri to say a few words of his work in the Punjab."

Rai Baroda K. Lahiri then said.

"Dear Brothers, we are in this hall, the hall of the Indian Section with H. P. B. the great spiritual teacher who gave us the light, who took us from darkness. There is that big portrait of her, and she hears every word that we speak and she knows every thought and therefore we stand before her august presence. Every brother should bear ever in mind that it is not a small thing to 'have that blessed portrait before his eyes. Yesterday I was so much pleased to hear the words of Brother Nārāyanaswāmy, that it struck my heart, that each and every one of us should take some energy from him and try to do our work with greater strength and force than we have been hitherto doing.

Owing to a mistaken idea that got into people's mind, connecting the T. S. with Buddhism, Theosophy has not made so much progress here as in the South. But the time has now come when we should show some self-sacrifice. Mere talk will not do now. We have had enough of this. Now the time has come, for real work with the revered teachers at our back and President-founder to help. We shall never get such opportunity again.

Now about Punjab. I tell you that Punjab is a very fine field for Theosophic progress. It is still somewhat backward in education, but we have got good materials there and I think we shall find that Punjab will not only progress very much in Theosophy, but that it will show practically what we have been thinking. Mrs. Besant's last visit to Jammu, Lahore and Faridkote created a good deal of interest there. My Brother and co-worker Dr. Bulkrishna Kaul has done much and is still doing much for the

cause. He has also done much for the College. He has sent about 50 thousand Rupees for it. Then we have got brother Jagannath who has devoted his life to the cause. He was working hard in the famine and was helping the dying, a work which very few persons would do. Then our Brother Sawan Mull, has taken as his duty to go round villages and spread Theosophy among the villagers. He has succeeded in creating sympathy for Theosophy among the villagers and the time will come when every village in the Punjab will hear the blessed name of Theosophy and H. P. B."

Babu Purnendu Narain Sinha then spoke on behalf of Behar.

Dear Brothers, I do not think I have much to say as to the work in Behar. There have been several branches five of which were founded by Countess C. Wachtmeister and Rai B. K. Lahiri during their last year's tour. They visited Dumraon, Buxar, Bettia, Siwan and Mokhama, establishing new branches in each of them, and reviving the Branches at Monghyr and Jamalpur. Some of the branches are very active and some dormant. There are some sincere workers. Some of them do their work quietly, there is not much fuss in them and there are many devoted members. I might just name one or two—Babu Raghunandan Prasad who has been doing very useful work in the north side of Ganga and Babu Baijnath Singh who has been working in the south.

Rai Saheb Ishwari Prasad then spoke on behalf of the Central Provinces.

Brothers, I don't want to take much of your time to speak of the sad account of famine—most shocking and heart-rending in its character. In the Central Provinces, I want something to be done. In 1885 when our Colonel went there, some branches were formed at Nagpur, Sewan, Chapra, and Hyderabad. But they are practically all dormant. It is a good field indeed. I would ask your sympathy to help us, so that we may be able to do better for we are so very few workers there."

Rai Peare Lal, then read his report on the work in the N. W. Provinces

Then K. Narayanaswamy Iyer, taking the report for the Madras Presidency in his hand said :—

“I have got the report in my hand, which I submit to the General Secretary. I shall take from it one or two points. I have already told you that many new branches about 9 in number have sprung up last year and several dormant ones revived. Another point I want to make is this :—

There are some buildings built by the Theosophical Society. As for example two temples one at Madura and the other at Shivaganga and a library of 3000 books has been founded.

The speaker then added some other salient points from his report after which the President Founder who was obliged to leave for Adyar next morning early on his way to America took leave of the Convention in the following words :—

“Brothers! The time has now come for us to part. It is a joy to my heart to have seen all these dear and familiar old faces. I was delighted to have an opportunity of sitting with a group of veterans, in which the very oldest of the members of the Society should be perpetuated. There are constantly more and more people coming into the society and so I like to preserve the recollection of those who were the first on our side when I came here last. I felt great joy and emotion, because you are all associated in my mind with the presence of H. P. B. whose loss I still deplore. She was my companion and coadjuter, who made all sacrifices who bore the heaviest brunt of the battle. It is the greatest possible joy and comfort to think that I have been able to take a part in this work as an humble instrument. If I have done nothing better than this, still, I was at least her companion and still she stands out as a majestic figure which demands all our devotion. I have often protested against personal worship and hero worship; but still hers is a figure which requires always our devotion for the services she rendered to our race. I feel now at the thresh-hold of the second quarter of the century, that the Society was never so strong never so full of vitality as it is at the present moment. We have every prospect of success before us

during the coming century. It is possible, though not probable, that I shall be with you to preside again on that occasion the Jubilee of our movement. It is not an impossible thing, because we have men over a century old. We used to have in Madras one old gentleman who was more than a century old. It seems to me that I am going to be kept here. I am sorry I cannot vacate the place if any body wants it. I have tried three times to resign and retire, but I have been ordered to stop and work. So unless I am turned out I will not retire and then even I shall start another Theosophical Society as I shall have nothing else to do. So you will do better to persuade me to stop. You will never find a man who loves you more than myself. I feel towards you all and towards this Theosophical Society a peculiar sense of kinship, a relationship which is like blood-relationship. Every Theosophist is my brother and is near to my heart. I may say to you personally that throughout the whole of my tour I was followed by a current of good will and sympathy sent out by you which was of great use to me and the good wishes sent out to me by the members of the E. S. T. under the direction of the Head of the School helped me a great deal in my work. I have felt it everywhere. I am going now on a very very long tour of about 45 thousand miles round the world. I am no longer a young man. I am liable to accident. And it may be that my health may break down. There is nothing which could be more useful to me in this my journey than your good wishes and if you send them continually to me, I am quite sure that nothing untoward will befall me. Now as I realize it, there is no such thing as parting in this world. And I extend my hand to you as parting from one day to another. And we shall meet again and we shall work on from year to year. I wish every blessing may fall on you, as I am sure every blessing will follow me. Our Masters have no favourites. Their blessings fall on every one who deserves it. So I bid you farewell for the present."

Mrs. Annie Besant:—"Starting as you do to-morrow, on a long journey, we cannot let you go from Benares without voicing.

however feebly, our gratitude to you for five and twenty years of faithful service to the cause. And our earnest hope is that on your return to the land of your birth, you will meet with hearts there that will welcome you as heartily as we do here. It is a great thing to go back to your birthplace to stir again in American hearts the fire which you lighted there with H. P. B., five and twenty years ago. In bidding you farewell, we pray on you the blessings of the Great Ones, that they will give to you advice, insight to see what is best, courage to do what is best and that you may bring us back additions to the record of your services, when you return to us twelve months hence and when you greet us again at Adyar."

At 5 p. m. Mrs. Besant delivered her third lecture in the Central Hindu College on "Caste System."

At 8 p. m. Mr. Banbery, Head-Master of C. H. College, delivered an interesting lecture on "Visualisation as an art in teaching and in learning" which will appear hereafter in *Prasnottura*.

FIFTH DAY—29TH DECEMBER 1900.

Mrs. Annie Besant was elected unanimously to the chair.

Mrs. Annie Besant :—"Brother Upendranath is to lay before the meeting a subject of great importance. It needs your careful consideration.

Babu Upendranath :—"I have had several requests made to me by members of the Society to build houses for their own residence in the Society's compound. It is a matter very serious and important, so I don't think it proper to decide without this Convention. I think we might encourage building of that sort, but under conditions in which Society should not be the loser. I think if no proprietary right is claimed at all to the building and no hereditary interest is allowed, unless his son turns an useful Theosophist, the right may be given. If his son becomes a good Theosophist, he may live in the house built by his father or if not then the General Secretary might use it for any purpose he thinks proper

The first request came from Bro. Sris Chandra Basu, and the second from Bro. Tridhara Charau Bhutta, both of whom are working very hard for our sacred cause. Tridhara Babu has been working for the College and also for the Society. He is going to devote to Theosophy the rest of his life. He will be a very useful member. If his example is followed by Sris Babu so much the better. But certainly under such conditions, as I have stated. But I should like to propose that such sanction be granted and rights given by some lawyers who should be appointed for the purpose."

Carried *nem-con*.

The following resolution was put by Babu Upendra Nath Basu seconded by Mr K. Narayan Swami Iyer, carried unanimously.

Resolved that this Convention authorises the executive Committee to permit members desiring to do so to erect houses for themselves upon the Society's land, upon such terms as may be settled by a Committee to be appointed for that purpose provided always that no proprietary or heritable rights of any kind shall be acquired by any member so building a house and that the plans thereof shall be approved by the General Secretaries.

Proposed by Babu Upendra Nath Basu and seconded by Mr. K. Narayanaswamy Iyer that Brothers Purnendu Narain Sinha, Mr. Bertram Keightley, Babu Upendra Nath Basu, and Pt. Parmeshori Dass be appointed a Committee to draft the necessary undertaking to be executed by members desiring to build houses in the T. S. compound under conditions aforesaid.

MR. KEIGHTLEY :—

"During the last year's Convention there were appointed two Committees for vernacular publication for Southern India. I should like to suggest that we might re-appoint those committees for another year and I should like to add to the list, for other provinces also."

Proposed and seconded that last year's Committee for Telegu and Tamil be re-elected and T. Rama Chandra Row and K. Narayanaswamy Iyer be elected conveners respectively. Carried *nem-con*

Mr. Keightley said "It is a very important matter and you should have committee of this kind for Bengali, Hindi and Urdu also. Last year we had appointed such committee but they appear to have done very little work, because no one is responsible. So I should propose that last year's committees should be re-elected and conveners be appointed for each language." Seconded and carried *nem-con.*

Proposed and seconded that Babu Hirendra Nath Dutt be appointed convener for Bengali. Carried *nem-con.*

Proposed and seconded that Babu Raghu Nandan Prasad Sharma be appointed convener for Hindi in Behar. Carried *nem-con.*

Proposed and seconded that Ram Chandra Purushotham Kamat be appointed convener for Bombay. Carried *nem-con.*

Proposed and seconded that Professor Suraj Bhan, B. A. be elected convener for Punjab. Carried *nem-con.*

Mr. Keightley :—"I have one request to make, and that is when you return home, you will try and remind your friends, the writers of books, to kindly send us here any publication whether English or Vernacular, representing the work done by members. I find we have received practically only two or three publications while thirty or forty must have been published. So I request you each and all earnestly to be good enough to send us any new book so as to help us in keeping a record of T. S. publications. If local members will send us a copy of any publication which represents the activity of the Society and tell us what it deals with that will be of great help for us."

K. Narayanaswamy :—"I received a letter asking me what books to translate. I think it is better that statements should be shown in the Prasnottara as to the books that are being translated."

Mrs. Annie Besant :—"I am going to ask you to do your best during the coming year to spread among the young Indians around you the knowledge that we are publishing the Central Hindu College Magazine and that it would be a suitable Magazine for the boys to read. The subscription is only Rupee one, but we

have only 1350 subscribers. I know there are many who would like to have a magazine like that. If people will send us bright and short contributions they will be used. If those who are present here will take with them the notices and circulate them, then I think it will help much in making the magazine known. So I think of sending the Hand-bills by post to such Branches only as are not represented here. I wish to make it a really good, interesting and most widely-circulated magazine. The more help you give us in this, the better it is for the College."

K. Narayanaswamy:—"Will the members here undertake to take some copies?"

Mrs. Annie Besant:—"Well, this you should do judiciously and sensibly. Because the number of copies we shall print in future will depend on January sale. So whatever number of copies you take, you must take on yourself the responsibility of paying off of the whole year's subscription for so many copies."

After this appeal had been made, 530 copies of the Central Hindu College Magazine were subscribed for on the spot.

Mrs. Annie Besant:—"It is now my duty to close this meeting of the Indian Section, to congratulate you on the good work done, and to express the hope that you may carry to your brothers who are not present here, something of the enthusiasm and fervour you have shown in this meeting. The Convention is really useful as it vivifies all branches of the Society that gather here. You who have come as delegates and represent branches, are really channels as it were through which life will pass over the whole of India and just in proportion as you make yourself true channels of that life, will be the strength of the Society during the coming year. We united here shall offer earnest prayer to the Gods above us and the great Rishis who protect the movement that They will give us such devotion that we may be able to serve Them rightly and properly. And I express the hope that we may meet next year in the south of India and that Convention may be as harmonious, as fervent, as useful, as this Benares Convention which I now declare to be closed."

After this Mrs. Annie Besant (Col. Olcott. being obliged to leave Benares the same morning for his "tour round the world," nominating Mrs. Besant to preside in the next meetings) called upon Babu Jagadish Chandra Chatterji to deliver his lecture on "India in the West."

Babu Jagadish Chandra then delivered most interesting lecture.

At 5 P. M. Mrs. Besant delivered her invaluable last lecture on "Womanhood."

At 8 P. M. Mr. K. Narayanaswamy Iyer delivered his lecture on "From Saguna to Nirguna."

STRAY THOUGHTS ON THE BHAGAVAD GITA.

III.—THE REAL AND THE UNREAL.

The very first step in the path of occultism—the very preliminary requisite without which the steep "razor path" may not be trodden at all—nay the very gate-way to the Path that leads to life and power is the discrimination between the Real and the Unreal, the Substance and the Phenomenon—the cognition and realisation of the Self in man, the Individual as being the one reality in the midst of shifting surroundings and changing circumstances. This realisation of the nature of the human Self as being divine in its essence and as such unaffected by the changes in the various vehicles—as the unchanging spectator (साक्षी) of the workings of Prakriti—this notion, though dim, hazy, and undefined, at the outset, of the distinction between the indestructible, permanent, individualised self in man and its food, the pleasures and pains of the personality is necessary ere the path of Wisdom and Bliss can be safely trodden. Without this realisation, even though dim and unconscious, man would go on identifying himself with his vehicles and their workings, considering these as part of his being and essential to his existence and consciousness.

Action cannot avail. For, by action, the inner I-notion is brought out into manifestation. The physical law of action and reaction holds good in all the planes of being and the I-notion which prompts actions is only accentuated and thus all actions have the only effect directly of rivetting the fetters of ignorance on the Ego--of accentuating the initial idea which led to the actions, just as in the physical planes, a thing is not moved by a force acting on its plane, so too, the actions which a man does with the idea of the physical personality as the centre from which these actions emanate and to which they converge, go directly to develop and feed the physical personality in the first instance. All motives of self improvement thus, in order, to be effectual have their being in the knowledge of the Ego and the non-Ego, and it is only when there is an awakening of the inner life, though faint may be its pulsations and unrecognized by the brain-consciousness, that external aid comes to be recognised as useful. Teachings in the Shashtras are useless, if the basis upon which they are built, is not existent, and lectures, sermons and homilys fall flat on ears as yet unable to discriminate between the eternal and the transitory. True progress means always an unfoldment from within; it is the adaptation of the inner man to the world external--the harmony of the inner with the outer. How often do we hear lofty thoughts embodied in the Shashtras, fall glibly from curious lips without leaving any trace on the inner man? How often do we meet with Picksniffs and Micawbers and Malaprops in the field of religion with a good deal of text and authority yet reflecting nothing of these in the inner life?

The recognition of the phenomenal nature of things as opposed to the permanent centre of consciousness--of the permanent and unchanging ego as against the fleeting non-ego indicates to some measure the age of the soul. It is only when the Ego has exhausted to a large extent the pleasures and pains of the personality, when the Ego has realised that these pleasures and pains are evanescent in their nature like the Dead sea fruits beautiful to look at but ashes to the taste, when weary with the unceasing panorama of fleeting forces and ever-vanishing

forms, the soul pants for the reality within, when the strong vibrations of the external world have evolved the mind-body, now well stocked with experiences conflicting in their character and stimulating the Ego to find out the unchanging substance in which those experiences have their play, when the Ego wooed out to seek for itself existence, consciousness and bliss in the phenomenal forms, sees the hollowness of things, that, the realisation of the true life becomes a possibility. The Ego mocked every way in its ardent search after the peace and seeking for life takes up forms which crumble in the touch or at best, shut out the life within from mingling with the life without. Repeated thirst for sensation, repeated fiery unrest which comes of its cravings followed by the blank void of satiation, if not positive pain, make the Ego fall back upon itself as the last resort. A vague idea of the immensity of life with the pettiness and limited nature of sensations gradually impress the soul and the obstinate questionings of sense and outward things, the fallings from us and vanishings of things, impress the Ego moving in a world yet unrealised—the blank misgivings, the dull satiety stimulate the quest after the reality. The Ego dimly feels that the peace and *Ananda* which prompted it to activity cannot be got outside in things, that existence and self-consciousness depend not on things. The world of forms which attracted the Ego now appears as unsubstantial of their fabric of dreams. Pleasures and pains appear as passing shows; *Sravya* even fails, for its pleasures comes to be recognised as impermanent.

Religion helps not, for actuated by strong desire for possession the Ego tries by religion and worship, by rituals and ceremonies, to hold things in the name of God. It worships it, undergoes penances, for getting and possessing things belong to the Non-Ego. Its religion is but a masked representation of self-seeking, and its God too, the mere externalisation of its own inner nature, fails it in this crisis. Weary, tempest tossed, the sport of every devious wind, hammered on all sides the intellect quickens and the man now awakes and wants to know the why and wherefore of things.

The out going tendencies which bring out and express the life of the Ego in the terms of matter and form, the *Kāma* which stimulates the desire to seek itself in external *Upādhis*, helps however indirectly in the gradual manifestation of the Individual. The almost infinite expressions of this *Kāma* and attachment to forms, mistaking the broken images therein as the life, all help to feed the I-notion accentuating the duality of the Ego and Non-Ego *meum* and *tuum*. And as form after form perishes the inner life deprived of the strength and sustenance of the images created by the *Upādhis*, is thrown back upon itself into the darkness of apparent non-being. But the thirst after the "I" which prompted the desires, remains and the Ego is forced by the very laws of its being—the very desire of attaining to the realisation of its own existence and bliss, to seek for the expression of its life in the very darkness. The mirror being broken, the very broken fragments each of them reflect the image. Thus we see that when the object on which our heart is fixed is broken we find ourselves in the first places in a state of acute anguish in the darkness. But ere long we seek to people this darkness, this utter void, with beings of our own creation and in the place of the object we hug the memory of it, and oft times cherish the very anguish, the very bereavement and loss seeking there to reflect ourselves. So is it why a bereaved mother lovingly dwells on the very idea of the loss of her only child and the very idea of misery, the memory of loss and suffering the very void of despair, serve as a vehicle wherein the ego seeks itself reflected. Truly pleasure and pain touch not even the fringes of the life of the Ego. Verily there is a vitality in poison and "thus the heart will break and brokenly live on." (Child Harold III. 32) and in the process one thing is gained, instead of the physical object the ego learns to reflect itself in the abstract idea of pain, loss and bereavement.

The multifariousness of the objects of desire have too similar effects. Directly they help in the development and enriching of mental and even higher bodies by furnishing them with materials of growth. Indirectly however their use is greater. The changing desires manifold as they are, "imprison the one I-notion within

their astramental forms" (Annie Besant's Karma) very often conflicting in their nature and object. Then conflicting forms share in the life of the ego and when rigid, shut out the reflection of the Ego—the life within—from the life without. They thus form semi-automatic lives, semi independent centres of consciousness in the field of consciousness of the one Ego. Thus every desire that a man seeks, confines a part of his life within its folds forming water light compartments in the consciousness of the divine man. These rigid subdivisions of one life, very often conflicting in their nature, disturb the one uniform stable harmonised I-notion. Let us take a concrete example; let us conceive a man in whom the higher impulse of generosity and self sacrifice exist with, say, desire for name and power. Naturally that man's notion of the "I" varies with the changes of circumstances. If there is an object which can arouse the higher nature, our man becomes, unconsciously and in spite of himself, a hero, sacrificing his pleasures for the sake of others. But if the lower impulses attract, he becomes, similarly for the time being at least, identified with the personality. The I-notion which manifests when he is generous, rigidly shuts out the I-notion which comes into being when he is dominated by the lower impulses. Each of these notions, sharing as they do in the life of the Ego, are hostile to each other and the result is disharmony and pain and what is more the break of the one uniform consciousness and the Ego is thus forced to harmonise these jarring reflections and synthesising them by resolving them to a higher form. Evolution is one tale of the synthesising process. He is the gradual sublimation of the tiger and the ape in us for the manifestation of the more divine in us. The cultivation of virtues is also an example. So also the development of the higher powers of abstraction and analysis. After a time these very higher forms conflict and Ego gradually develops higher and higher points of union and more real harmony until it reaches its own being.

 THE SAHA-MARAN SYSTEM OF THE HINDUS.

The word "Saha-maran" known in the west as immolation of the Satis, generally conveys to us a very horrid idea of burning alive of widows on the funeral pyre of their husbands' against their will, in order to get hold of the husbands property. It might be that before it was put a stop to by the generous Lord William Bentick, such an abuse might have become common, when the widows were either induced by religious hopes or were deceived or forced to be immolated with their dead husbands; and I fully believe that to have been the case. There is no doubt that it was a very cruel thing and for putting a stop to which, the Hindus are highly indebted to the British Government. But I think on that ground I cannot say that it was the sole motive which led the Hindus to adopt it; neither can I say that the practice was of a later introduction, for I see there are instances mentioned of it in the Mahābhārata; and from a perusal of the description of some of them I think I shall be able to convince my readers that the above is not the sole motive of the most honoured practice of the Hindus, and that the want of the true knowledge of the practice that prevailed in the earlier days and the association of the horrid practice that grew out of it in later days, made its name so horrid and detested, that to think of it or to utter its name even, seems shocking to us; considering however that these feelings should not be associated with the old practice I give below the description of a real fact described in Chapters 125, 126, 127, of the Adiparva of the Mahabharata, wherein is described the Saha-maran of Mādri with her Lord Pāndu. The story runs thus:—

According to the curse pronounced on Pāndu "That he should die whenever he should try to have sexual intercourse," while living in a state of Brahmachāri in the Satasringa, he once tried to approach Mādri, his younger wife, and thereby suddenly met with his foreboded death. On seeing this Mādri became very disconsolate and called for the eldest wife Kunti, while herself still in the embrace of her departed husband. When Kunti came and

saw this event she scolded Mādri for her imprudent act and said that she herself being the eldest wife, would follow her departed husband, and that Mādri should look after the children (Chap. CXXV. 25 and 26). To this Mādri said that she was still clasping their lord and had not allowed him to depart. Therefore she should follow him. Ibid. 27.

This "not allowing the king to depart," has reference to life in the Etheric body, not in the dense physical, where the life was certainly not. This no doubt implies a power which was possessed by Mādri but which is not known to us for the present. Then in the following slokās she gave her reasons why she herself should follow him in preference to Kunti. "The king came to her with the object of having intercourse. His desires were not satiated, she therefore must follow him."

She therefore confidently enquired "if she should not go to the kingdom of Yama to satisfy him (28), for if she survived she would not be able to rearer all their children with equality, for failure in which duty sin would touch her (29), whereas if Kunti remained behind she would be able to discharge that duty properly. The king having sought herself with desire, he was obliged to go to the region of the dead (30). Therefore she declared that her body should be burned with that of the king and entreated Kunti not to refuse her the permission for doing what was agreeable to her, and then giving her last directions to Kunti in Sloka (32,) she followed her lord who was placed on the funeral pyre."

From the last statement it would seem as if Mādri went into the burning pyre of her husband, but from what follows it would be clear that after arranging for the discharge of her remaining worldly duties, she left her body by her own will to follow her husband, when there was not yet any physical pyre to burn them. This sentence is not quite clear, it cannot mean physical pyre, but may mean something in the super-physical.

When this happened the great Rishis of the palace held a council and thought that Pāndu having left behind his wife and sons to their care, it was their duty to take charge of his wife.

sons and dead body and his kingdom and thereby they considered their duty to him would be fulfilled. CXXVI, 3 & 4.

This clearly showed that the dead body of Pandu was not yet burned.

They therefore resolving to give the wife and children and also the dead body over to Bhishma and Dhritarashtra, determined to lead the sons of Pāṇḍu to the city of Hastina. Then they immediately went with Pandu's wife, sons and the two dead bodies (of Pāṇḍu and Mādri-which were not yet burned as might have been supposed from Sloka CXXV, 33), and reached the palace where they were respectfully received by Bhishma. One of them older in age, said that "steadily adhering to the path of the wise and the virtuous and leaving behind him these children, Pāṇḍu went to the region of the Pitris. On the 17th day before this, the Pativratā Mādri seeing him on the Chitā or the funeral pyre (not a physical one) and being offered to the mouth of Vaishvānara, entered the same fire and went to the Pati loka." It is to be noted here that this Vaishvānara fire is not the funeral pyre but the Yoga fire. The Rishis said "Now their rites with respect to the next world should be done. (30, 31).

This is another misleading passage which seems to imply that their dead bodies had been burned. But the doubt would be removed if we read the following:--The Rishis again said "Let these two dead bodies and the wife (Kuntī) and the sons of Pandu, be received with the honour." (32)

It must be noted here that the translators, unable to reconcile the seemingly contradictory statements in (CXXV, 33, CXXVI, 32) have interpreted the "two dead bodies" as the "unburned portions of the bodies," quite overlooking the fact that no such ceremony had yet taken place, and that this was yet to be done; of course their mistake arose out of Sloka CXXV, 33. True there is a custom with the Hindus to take a portion of the unburnt body and to deposit it in some holy place, but in that case the portions are not called "dead body" but "Asthi" and that is never reburied. Hence if we read the following, the misconception will be removed.

ed. Dhritarāshtra told Vidur to perform the funeral ceremonies of the King Pāndu and Mādri in proper form. CXXVII, 1. He gave orders for making arrangements also for the performance of the last rites of Mādri by Kunti in such a way as would please her. He ordered Mādri's body to be carefully covered that neither the sun nor the wind might see it. The priests went out of the city carrying with them the *Jātaqui* of Pandu, fragrant with the scent of Homa-sacrifice for burning his body. Friends relatives and adherents wrapping it up with cloth, decked the body of the king with flowers of the season and sprinkled it over with various perfumes. They decked the hearse also with garlands and rich hangings. Then placing the bodies of the king and queen on a beautiful bier, decked out very brightly, they caused it to be carried out on the shoulders of men.

At last Bhishma and Vidura came to a charming and holy wood on the Bank of the Ganges (16). There they laid down the hearse on which the truthful the lion-hearted and the pious king and his wife lay. Then they besmeared the bodies with all kinds of perfumes, and dressed them with country-made white cloth. With the new dress on, the king appeared like a living man, as if he were only sleeping on a costly bed. This clearly disproves the assumption that the Rishis brought only the unburnt portion of the dead bodies to Bhishma and Dhritarashtra. The priests having finished the prescribed Pret karma, Vidura and Bhishma burned the king with Mādri. (22 and 23).

From the above we gather that the following events took

1. Mādri detained her husband after his death. CXXV, 27.
2. She wanted permission to follow him; this permission was necessary, that her remaining duties might be done by others.
3. She handed over her duties with respect to her children to Kunti. The king being dead and gone her duty as a wife was gone. Having given her charge to Kunti she was free, if she could, to leave the body which had no duty to perform in this world.
4. Her object of leaving this body was not to relieve herself of the earthly sorrow, nor to enjoy any pleasure in the next world

but to serve her husband in the next world where he went with unsatiated desire ; and to satisfy him in Kāmaloka, the wife was willing to follow him even there. It is to be noted that this object may differ with different individuals, it may vary from company to Kāmloka to that to the Devachān.

5. How was this to be done—by self-immolation ? This is called Saha-maran which means dying together *i. e.* to die when the other person is dead. It does not mean Saha-Dāha or burning together, which takes place much later with respect to the dead bodies but not with respect to the person who dies voluntarily by her will power.

6. The burning of the dead bodies by the relatives according to the rites.

Hence the later and recent idea of Sati-Dāha has little connection with the old Hindu idea of Saha-marana. From the story above quoted it is clear that Saha-maran means the leaving of the body voluntarily by will power, and it cannot mean the burning of a living body, nor of a dead body, which is not a part of the duty of the Sati herself, but of her relatives after she has left off her body

In order that a Sati may have Saha-maran or die together, she shall have do the following : -

1. The determination of the motive of the act.
2. Detention of the life of the departed in the Etheric body.
3. Getting permission of her superiors.
4. Disposal of her remaining duties.
5. Saha-maran, or dying at her will.

Now if the practice stopped here, there would have been no need of a legislation to put a stop to it, and there would have been none to blame such a practice but on the contrary if we could see one or two such occurrences at present, as a wife voluntarily leaving her body, to follow her husband, the civilized world have been struck with amazement at the devotion of the Hindu wife and could have formed a slight idea of the sacredness of Hindu

marriage, and we should not have been at all ashamed of such a noble self-sacrifice, the sacrifice not of any earthly thing but of the life itself to serve the dead husband in *Kamaloka*. But the glory of the Hindus seems to have set for ever, gradually one by one her spiritual powers are lost, and when wives could not leave their bodies in the manner described above, yet eager to win for themselves the honour of the Sati they tried (1) to make their body insensible to the touch of fire (2) to go on the funeral pyre (3) to invoke the fire to burn themselves with their husbands. This "invoking of the fire" is also a mysterious power unknown in the present. Subsequently when the above power was gone too, the body was made insensible by means of some drugs and then the ordinary fire was used. Lastly when there was neither the power nor the will to earn the renown, the covetous relatives induced and sometimes forced the child widows to enter the fire, to enable them to get hold of their property. And it was this last kind of horrid brutality which led the generous Lord Bentinck to put a stop to this Sati *Dāha*, the burning of a (supposed) Sati which had no manner of resemblance to the Saha-marana the "dying together" of a Sati, the most heroic glorious and spiritual climax of the career of a Hindu wife.

Such is the old fact. Can any one, realizing in the least, the motive that impelled the wife to follow her husband, thinking of the power that was at the command of the Hindu Sati, and of the moral effect of such an act, can any one in his senses, find fault with the Hindus for their Saha-maran system? If we cannot form any idea of it we are at liberty, like the king of Siam to deny "Ice in frozen water." But here I have narrated a fact of Hindu history for the benefit of those who may be able to appreciate it and for the purpose of vindicating the old Saha-maran system of the Hindus. It is for the thoughtful readers to think what it was.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH 1901.

	Balance of last month.		Receipts.		Total.		Expenditure.		Balance.	
	Rs.	As. P.	Rs.	As. P.	Rs.	As. P.	Rs.	As. P.	Rs.	As. P.
General Fund ...	6499	4 11½	2171	0 6	8670	5 5½	351	2 4	8319	3 1½
Building „ ...	378	8 4½	752	0 0	1130	8 4½	964	12 2½	165	12 2
Suspense { Deposit	1319	15 0	42	0 0	1361	15 0	201	8 0	1160	7 0
Accts. { Advance.	425	3 0	13	0 0	412	3 0	25	0 0	437	3 0
E. S. T. Fund ...	55	8 0	70	0 0	125	8 0	117	8 0	8	0 0
C. H. College ...	239	8 0	124	0 0	363	8 0	352	8 0	11	0 0
C. H. C. Magazine	18	0 0	46	0 0	64	0 0	62	0 0	2	0 0
Total ...	8085	9 4	3218	0 6	11303	9 10	2074	6 6½	9229	3 3½

J. N. BANERJEE,
Accountant.

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GENERAL FUND ACCOUNT FOR MARCH 1901.

CASH ACCOUNT.

1. Annual dues from		Salary	... 193 13 8
Branc	... 295 0 0	Vernacular Work	... 20 0 0
2. do. from Unattached		Travelling Expenses	... 50 0 0
members	... 48 0 0	Postage, Telegrams &c.	62 12 9
3. Entrance fees from		Stationery	... 3 0 6
Branches	... 626 8 0	Printing	... 100 0 0
4. do. from unattached		Furniture	... 386 8 6
members	... 53 0 0	Boarding Expenses	... 35 11 0
5. V. P. Commission	... 0 2 0	Garden	... 32 8 0
6. Donation to the Sec-		Contribution to C. H.	
tion	... 818 0 0	College	... 50 0 0
7. do. to the Conven-		Books and Publications.	135 8 0
tion	... 200 0 0	Miscellaneous	... 1 10 5
8. Subscription to and		House Tax	... 52 10 6
sale of Prasnottara.	15 4 6		
9. Boarding Charges	... 13 11 0		
10. Sale proceeds of Gar-			
den produce	... 0 4 0		
11. Miscellaneous	... 1 0 0		
12. Contribution to Tra-			
velling expenses of			
Mrs. Besant	... 100 0 0		

Total Rs	... 2171 0 6	Total Rs.	... 351 2 4
Balance of last month...	6,499 4 11	Balance in hand Rs.	... 8319 3 1½
Grand Total Rs.	... 8,670 5 5½	Grand Total Rs.	... 8670 5 5½

1. ANNUAL DUES FROM BRANCHES.

Amraoti	...	24	0	0	Midnapore	...	2	0	0
Anantapur	...	10	0	0	Namukul	...	2	0	0
Bombay--The Dharma-					Parvatipore	...	7	0	0
haya T. S.	...	2	0	0	Patukota	...	14	0	0
Calcutta	...	4	0	0	Rangoon	...	20	0	0
Chicacole	...	22	0	0	Rayadrug	...	2	0	0
Dharanipore	...	26	0	0	Surat	...	12	0	0
Harrur	...	10	0	0	Tindivanam	...	12	0	0
Jullundhur	...	22	0	0	Tirukoilur	...	2	0	0
Karkul	...	26	0	0	Vizagapatam	...	24	0	0
Madras	...	10	0	0					
Malegaon	...	42	0	0	Total	...	295	0	0

2. ANNUAL DUES FROM UNATTACHED MEMBERS.

Babu Abniash Chandra				Sajawal for 1902 & 1903	6	0	0
Bose, Pingla for 1901	3	0	0	Mr. C. Subramainaiyar,			
Mr. Kai Khusro Sorabji,				Proddatur for 1900			
for 1901	3	0	0	and 1901	6	0	0
Mr. Raja Gopala Charia,				Babu Shyamalal, Etawah			
for 1901	3	0	0	for Do.	6	0	0
Babu Tincori Mukerjee,				Mrs. Edith O. Curtes for			
Rishra for 1901	3	0	0	1901	3	0	0
Mr. Raja Gopalaiyar,				Mr. S. Sher Singh for			
South Travancore for				1901	3	0	0
1900 and 1901	6	0	0	Dr. Chanan Singh for			
Mr. N. Venkatanarayana				1901	3	0	0
Swami, for 1901	3	0	0	Total	48	0	0
Mr. Tokarsi Tric an ji							

3. ENTRANCE FEES FROM BRANCHES.

Amraoti	...	10	0	0	Parvatipore	...	120	0	0
Benares	...	10	0	0	Surat	...	10	0	0
Calcutta	...	40	0	0	Tirupati	...	15	0	0
Chicacole	...	20	0	0	Tumlook	...	20	0	0
The Dharanulala T. S.,					Vizagapatam	...	134	0	0
Bombay	...	10	0	0	Yellamanchli	...	15	0	0
Karkul	...	130	0	0					
Kurnool	...	10	0	0					
Palghat	...	12	8	0					

4. ENTRANCE FEES FROM UNATTACHED MEMBERS.

Mr. K. K. Sorabji	...	10	0	0	Mrs. Edith O. Curtes	...	10	0	0
Babu Tincori Mukerjee,					Mr. Sher Singh	...	10	0	0
Rishra	...	3	0	0	Dr. Chanan Singh	...	10	0	0
Mr. N. Venkatanarayana					Total	...	53	0	0
Swami	...	10	0	0					

5. V. P. Commission 0 2 0

6. DONATION TO THE GENERAL FUND.

Mr. N. H. Cama, Nander	10	0	0	royalty on H. P. B.'s			
" A. Nilkantha Sartry	20	0	0	Books, I. Section	...	273	0 0
Babu Monohar Lal,				A Friend	...	500	0 0
Sangrur	...	5	0 0				
Krishnarpan	...	10	0 0				
Mrs. A. Besant, one third				Total	...	818	0 0

7. DONATION TO CONVENTION.

Sirdar Umrao Singh, Lahore	...	...	...	100	0	0
Mr. D. Gostling, Bombay	...	...	...	100	0	0
			Total Rs.	...	200	0 0

8. SUBSCRIPTION TO AND SALE OF PRASNOTTARA.

Dr. Marshal Enfield, Clarinda	...	...	...	3	0	0
Mrs. Laura Raudel Chicago	...	...	...	6	0	0
Sale Proceeds	...	...	...	6	4	6
			Total Rs.	...	15	4 6

9. BOARDING CHARGES.

Mr. R. P. Varma	...	0	12	0	Mr. V. Venkatanaragana.	3	0	0
Babu Aghor Chandra Chat- terjee	...	10	2	0	Total Rs.	...	13	14 0

10. SALE PROCEEDS OF GARDEN PRODUCE.

Sale of Kanchan flower	0	4	0
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11. MISCELLANEOUS.

President-Periyakulam T. S., A. Telegraph Pass	1	0	0
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12. CONTRIBUTION TO TRAVELLING EXPENSES OF MRS. ANNIE BESANT.							
Mr. D. Gostling, Bombay	Rs.	100	0	0	

BUILDING ACCOUNT FOR MARCH 1901.

Donation	...	752	0	0	Messrs N. Dass & Co., Benares, part-payment for constructing the Delegates' quarters ...	200	0	0
					Jagannath Mistry for Messrs Crown & Co., Benares, for wood work of the Head-Quarters Building ...	539	12	6
					Purchase of Bricks for the Delegates' quarters	82	1	0
					Do. of wood, Stones &c., for Do.	69	10	3
					Labour	72	1	7½
					Miscellaneous	1	2	10

DONATION.

Babu Girishchandra Kundu, Benares ...	2	0	0	Hoshangabad ...	200	0	0
Prof. J. N. Unwalla, Bhavanagar ...	25	0	0	Dr. Balkrishna Kaul, Lahore ...	100	0	0
Babu Asutosh Banerjee, Sambalpur ...	25	0	0	Kashi Tatwa Sabha, T.S., Benares ...	100	0	0
Mr. D. Gosling, Bombay	250	0	0	Babu Devi Prosad, C. H. C. Boarding ...	20	0	0
Pandit Adityaram Bhat-tacharjee, Allahabad.	10	0	0	Mr. R. H. Mehta Do. ...	2	0	0
Mr. Munipat Das, Benares	10	0	0				
Vizagapatam T. S. ...	8	0	0	Total ...	752	0	0
Rai Sahib Iswari Prosad.							

ACCOUNT OF DEPOSIT.

Babu P. C. Mukerjee ...	4	0	0	Tirupeti T. S. ...	3	0	0
Durbhanga T. S. ...	1	0	0	Parvatipore ..	10	0	0
Vizagapatam ..	22	0	0				
Vizianagaram ..	2	0	0	Total ...	42	0	0

J. N. B

* Since adjusted

— not —

QUESTIONS.

1. It is said that the Desire Body also perishes within sometime after death. Is it to be assumed that the desires also perish with the Desire Body? If so, what then remains to cause rebirth or return to earth? If not, what is the difference between desires and Desire Body?

2. It is said that Genius is the effect of the occasional flashes of the Higher Manas on Buddhi into the Lower Manas. It is also said that in all persons Buddhi Tatva is the same, pure and divine, and does not vary according to personalities. Why are there different sorts of Genius manifested in the world?

3. Reason, intellect &c. are said to be the properties of the Lower Manas illumined of course, by the rays of the Higher. Is there no reason or intellect in the Higher Manas? What are the distinctive attributes of the Higher Manas?

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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

—:—

The Theosophical Society was formed at New York, November 17th. 1875. The Society as a body eschews politics and all subjects outside its declared sphere of work. The rules stringently forbid members to compromise its strict neutrality in these matters.

The simplest expression of the objects of the Society are :—

FIRST :—To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.

SECOND :—To encourage the study of comparative religions, philosophy and science.

THIRD :—To investigate unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in Man.

From the objects of the Society, it will be observed that its programme offers attractions chiefly to such persons as are imbued with (a) an unselfish desire to promote the spread of kindly and tolerant feelings between man and man (b) a decided interest in the study of ancient literature and Aryan intellectual achievements, (c) a longing to know something about the mysterious department of our human nature and of the universe about us.

The act of joining the society carries with it no obligation whatever to profess belief in either the practicability of organising a brotherhood of mankind or the superior value of Aryan over modern science, or the existence of occult powers latent in man. The Society may be truly said to appeal to the sympathies of any one who wishes to do what lies in his power to make the world better and happier than it is now, by awakening in mankind a greater love of all that is noble, good and true.

Whatever may be a member's religious views, he is at perfect liberty to enjoy them unmolested, but in return he is expected to show equal forbearance towards his fellow members and carefully avoid insulting them for their creed, their colour or their nationality. If he belongs to a caste, he will not be asked to leave it nor to break its rules.

The promoters of the Society's objects hope and mean at least to induce a large body of the most reasonable and best educated persons of all extant races and religious groups to accept and put into practice the theory that, by mutual help and a generous tolerance of each other's preconceptions, mankind will be largely benefitted and the chances of discovering hidden truth immensely increased.

TRANSLATIONS OF THEOSOPHICAL BOOKS.

Ready for Sale.

Kaled Theosophy,	Do.	By A. C. Biswas, Ludhiana.
(Key to Theosophy)		
Gul Dustā Khayāl,	Do.	By Rai Bishamber Nath, Ludhiana.
Makhzan Israr Theosophy,		Ludhiana.
(Seven Principles of man)	Do.	By A. C. Biswas, Ludhiana.

TRANSLATION UNDERTAKEN.

“Ancient Wisdom” in Tamil, by R. Sundra Rajam Esq.,
of Periyakulam.

UNPAID LETTERS.

Col. Olcott is extremely annoyed at being obliged to pay exorbitant double charges on letters sent him to America during the present tour, by persons who do not take the pains to find out what is the rate of letter postage between India and the United States. On such a letter, which contained a request for an entirely personal favour, there was a stamp of 1 anna, which was the proper postage for Great Britain, but to America it should have been $2\frac{1}{2}$ annas, and he had to pay on it 10 cents American money, or nearly 8 annas. When letters are thus addressed to persons who cannot afford to squander money a great injustice is done, and he asks friends in India who wish to write to him, or any other person in America, to put on a $2\frac{1}{2}$ annas stamp.