



H. P. Blavatsky
on
Yoga



H.P. BLAVATSKY ON YOGA

COMPILED BY
ERICA GEORGLADES

H. P. Blavatsky on Yoga

Compilation of texts by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky
Compiled by Erica Georgiades

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Erica Georgiades

FOREWORD

The present compilation is divided into two parts: Occultism and Yoga. The majority of the articles presented here are extracted from the magazines *Lucifer* and *The Theosophist*. When H.P.B. was the editor of these magazines, she included her own comments in footnote format. Although these footnotes are in later compilations, they are not published with the respective articles. As a result, that separation alters the context of H.P.B.'s commentaries. I have, therefore, embedded them with their original articles. This format gives the reader the impression of a dialogue between H.P.B. and the author. I hope the readers will find this approach useful.

This work also includes a very rare article entitled *A Treatise on the Yoga Philosophy* written in 1850 by N.C. Paul., and preserved at the British Museum in London. This article was re-printed in *The Theosophist* by H.P.B. and now is fully reproduced here with her commentaries. Some of the other articles do not have any comments by H.P.B., but they were published during the time H.P.B. was the editor of the magazines, so they are relevant. The present compilation is not presented in chronological order, because I have attempted to organize it in a way that gradually introduces the reader into the realms of Yoga and Occultism as depicted by H.P.B.

I express my gratitude to Jerry Hejka-Ekins (Alexandria West) and David Wittersen (TS-Pasadena) for providing me with the scanned copies of the articles reproduced here. Special thanks to Anton Rozman for his unswerving and committed work to design this online edition.

This online version is partial, as all the articles from the original compilation are not included.

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Athens, 2012
Erica Georgiades

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Pertinent Questions

[A letter from H. N. Vakil, comments by H.P.B.]

Will you or any of your readers enlighten me on the following points:

1. What is a Yogi?
2. Can he be classed with a Mahatma?
3. Can Viśvamisra, Valmiki, Vasistha and other Rishis be classed with the Yogis and the Mahatmas?
4. Or with the Mahatmas only?
5. Or with the Yogis only?
6. Did the Yogis know Occult Science?
7. Is vegetarianism necessary for the study and development of Occult Science?
8. Did our Rishis know Occult sciences?

By throwing some light on the above questions you will oblige.

Yours truly,
H. N. VAKIL.

Bombay, 30th April, 1883,
161, Malabar Hill.

H.P.B.'s comment - A Yogi in India is a very elastic word. It now serves generally to designate a very dirty, dung-covered and naked individual, who never cuts nor combs his hair, covers himself from forehead to heels with wet ashes, performs *Pranayama*, without realizing its true meaning, and lives upon

alms. It is only occasionally that the name is applied to one who is worthy of the appellation. The real meaning, however, of the word when analysed etymologically, will show that its root is "yug" - to join - and thus will yield its real significance. A real Yogi is a person who, having entirely divorced himself from the world, its attractions and pleasures, has succeeded after a more or less long period of training, to reunite his soul with the "Universal Soul" or to "join" with ParaBrahmām. If by the word "Yogi" our correspondent means the latter individual, viz., one who has linked his 7th and 8th principles or Atmān and Buddhi and placed thereby his lower principles or Manas (the animal soul and the *personal ego*) *en rapport* with the Universal Principle, then -

2. He may be classed with the Mahatmas, since this word means simply a "great soul." Therefore query -

3. is an idle question to make. The Rishis - at any rate those who can be proved to have actually lived (since many of those who are mentioned under the above designation are more or less mythical) were of course "Mahatmas," in the broad sense of the word. The three Rishis named by our questioner were historical personages and were very high adepts entitled to be called Mahatmas.

4. They may be *Mahatmas* (whenever worthy of the appellation), and whether married or celibates, while they can be called -

5. "Yogis" - only when remaining single, viz., after devoting their lives to religious contemplation, asceticism and - celibacy.

6. Theoretically every *real* Yogi knows more or less the Occult sciences; that is to say, he must understand the secret and symbolical meaning of every prescribed rite, as the correct significance of the allegories contained in the Vedas and other sacred books. Practically, nowadays very few, if any, of those

Yogis whom one meets with occasionally are familiar with occultism. It depends upon their degree of intellectual development and religious bigotry. A very saintly, sincere, yet ignorantly pious ascetic, who has not penetrated far beyond the husks of his philosophical doctrine would tell you that no one in *Kali-Yuga* is permitted to become a *practical* occultist; while an initiated Yogi has to be an occultist; at any rate, he has to be sufficiently powerful to produce all the *minor* phenomena (the ignorant would still call even such *minor* manifestation - "miracles") of adeptship. The real Yogis, the heirs to the wisdom of the Arya Rishis, are not to be met, however, in the world mixing with the profane and allowing themselves to be known as Yogis. Happy are they to whom the whole world is open, and who know it from their inaccessible *ashrams*; while the world (with the exception of a very few) knowing them not, denies their very existence. But, it really is not a matter of great concern with them whether people at large believe in, or know of them.

7. The exposition of "Occultism" in these columns has been clear enough to show that it is the Science by the study and practice of which the student can become a Mahatma. The articles "The Elixir of Life", and the *Hints on Esoteric Theosophy* are clear enough on this point. They also explain scientifically the necessity of being a vegetarian for the purposes of psychic development. Read and study, and you will find why Vegetarianism, Celibacy, and especially total abstinence from wine and spirituous drink are strictly necessary for "the development of Occult knowledge" - see "Hints on Esoteric Theosophy", No. 2. Question 8 being unnecessary in view of the aforesaid, we close the explanation.

Bibliographical source:

The Theosophist, June 1883, p 235.

A Hindu Professor's View on Indian Yoga



We lay aside other matter already in type to give place to the essential portions of an "Introduction to Indian Yoga" which is found in the January number of Professor M. M. Kunte's *Saddarshana-Chintanika*. In this period of almost total spiritual eclipse in India, it is well worth the while of every student of Aryan Science to cull corroborative testimony from every source. We are (spiritually speaking) passing once more through the Stone-Age of thought. As our cave-dwelling ancestors were physically perfect, if not even gigantic, while at the same time intellectually undeveloped, so this our generation seems to evince but a very rudimentary spiritual grasp while apparently developed in intellect to the utmost extent possible. It is, indeed, a hard, materialistic age: a fragment of sparkling quartz is its appropriate symbol. And yet of what "age" and "generation" do we speak? Not of that of the masses, for they change but little from generation to generation: no, but of the educated class, the leaders of thought, the controllers or stimulators of the opinions of that great middle social group lying between the highly cultured and the brutishly ignorant. They are the sceptics of today, who are as incapable of rising to the sublimity of Vedantic or Buddhistic philosophy as a tortoise to soar like the eagle. This is the class which has derided the founders of the Theosophical Society as imbeciles, or tried to brand them as falsificators and impostors as they have also done with their greatest men of science. For six years now, we have been publicly asserting that Indian Yoga was and is a true

science, endorsed and confirmed by thousands of experimental proofs; and that, though few in number, the true Indian Yogis may still be found when the right person seeks in the right way. That these affirmations should be challenged by Europeans was only to be expected, inasmuch as neither modern Europe nor America had so much as heard of the one thing or the other until the Theosophists began to write and speak. But that Hindus - Hindus, the descendants of the Aryas, the heirs of the ancient philosophers, the posterity of whole generations that had practically and personally learnt spiritual truth - should also deny and scoff, was a bitter draught to swallow. Nevertheless, we uttered our message, and not in a whisper, but boldly. Our voice came back to us almost echoless from the great Indian void. Hardly a brave soul stood up to say we were *right*, that Yoga was true, and that the real Yogis still existed. We were told that India was dead; that all spiritual light had long since flickered out of her torch; that modern Science had proved antiquity fools; and, since we could hardly be considered fools, we were virtually asked if we were not knaves to come here and spread such foolish lies! But when it was seen that we were not to be silenced by counter-proof, and that no such proof could be given, the first signs appeared of a change of the current of opinion. The old Hindu philosophies acquired fresh attractiveness, their mythological figures were infused with a vital spirit which, like the light within a lantern, shone out through their many-coloured fantasies. One of the best known Bengalis in India writes (March 3rd): - "You are now universally known and respected by our people, and you have performed a miracle! Why, the other day, in a company of friends, the question was raised how it was that the educated Babus generally should now be showing so strong an inclination towards Hinduism. I said it was owing to the Theosophists, and it was so admitted by all

present." Let us say that this is but the partiality of a friend - though, indeed, the writer is one of the leading publicists among the Hindus - it matters not. We care nothing for the credit, we only care for the *fact*. If this Aryanistic drift continues it will end in a thorough revival of ennobling Hindu philosophy and science. And that implies the collapse of dogmatic, degraded forms of religions, in India and everywhere else.

Some time ago our friend Sabhapathy Svarin, the "Madras Yogi," publicly endorsed the truth of all that the Theosophists had said about Yoga and Yogis. Recently, the practical *Treatise on the Yoga* by Dr. N. C. Paul [1], in which the scientific basis of Patanjali's sutras was shown, has been republished in these columns. Today we add the testimony of one of the most learned of living Hindus to the reality of the science and the existence of real Yogis among us. According to Prof. Kunte "the Vedic polity culminated, and the Buddhistic polity originated in the Yoga system of Patanjali - a system at once practical and philosophical." He observes that "disgusted with objective nature and his environment, the Arya in the Middle Ages of Indian History - that is, about 1,500 years B.C. - began to look in on himself, to contemplate the inner man, and to practice self-abnegation." This is a terse summary of the facts, and a just one. "All religions" he continues "declare that God is omnipresent. Some mysterious spiritual power pervades the universe. Well - this the Yoga-philosophy calls Chaitanya. All religions declare that God is Spirit, and is allied to that in man which can commune with Him; yes, that which the Holy Ghost influences - the Holy Ghost or God dwelling in the Spirit of man. Well - these the Yoga philosophy characterizes as the Supreme Spirit and the human spirit - the Paramatman and Jivatma. The relationship between the Supreme spirit and the human spirit varies according to the Vedic creed and Yoga-philosophy. And

because of this variance, the stand-point and the outlook of each is distinct. The stand-point and the outlook are, however, the out-come of historical conditions and environment. Hence the Yoga system of philosophy, on the interpretation and explanation of which we are about to enter, has two sides - historical and philosophical, and we will carefully point out the bearings of both."

Unhappily Prof. Kunte has had no practical experience with modern Spiritualism and, therefore, totally fails to give his readers any proper idea of its wonderful phenomena. It would also seem as if he were equally unfamiliar with what the Theosophists have written upon the subject, for he could scarcely have failed, otherwise, to note that gentlemen not merely of "some scientific reputation" but of the very greatest scientific rank, have experimentally proved the actual occurrence of mediumistic phenomena. We take and have always taken the same position as himself, that the phenomena are not attributable to "spirits of the dead," and in so far as they pretend otherwise are a delusion. But it will need more than the few passing words he flings at spiritualists to "sap the foundations" of the broad fact upon which his "rhapsodists" have raised their superstructure. "Is Yoga modern spiritualism?" - He quite superfluously asks, since no one ever said it was - and answers "No, no."

"What is it then? Modern spiritualism imagines strange sights which it dignifies by the name of *phenomena*, and by calling in the aid of the spirits of the dead, attempts to explain them. The rhapsodies of girls, whose brains are diseased, have often amused us. But what has astonished us is that gentlemen of some scientific reputation have lent their aid to the propagation of strange stories. Reader, an Indian Yogi knows for certain that this sort of spiritualism is positive deceit, let American

spiritualists write and preach what they like. The spirits of the dead do not visit the living, nor do they concern themselves in our affairs. When the foundations of American and European Spiritualism are thus sapped, the superstructure raised by mere rhapsodists is of course demolished. But Indian Yoga speaks of spiritual powers acquired by the Yogis. Yes, it does and does so reasonably. Indian Yoga is occult transcendentalism which has a history of its own."

A sad truth he utters in saying: -

"At present Yoga is known by name only, except in the presence of some Yogis, who inherit the warmth, the depth, and grasp, and aspirations of the Upanishads."

In concluding the portion of his *introduction* that is contained in the present issue of his serial, he gives us the credentials upon which he claims attention as a competent analyst of the Patanjali sutras. It must be noted that he affirms not only to have personally met and studied with a real living Yogi who, "*when due preparation* (of the public mind) is made, will reveal himself," but also concedes that an identical faith in the reality of the Yoga siddhis - presumably based upon observed facts - survives among Hindus, Christians, Sikhs, and Mussulmans. The following passages will be read with interest in Europe and America: -

"The reader has a right to enquire, as to what preparation we have made for interpreting and explaining the occult transcendentalism of the Indian Yoga system. Our answer to this query is simple and short. We sit first in the presence of one who knows Indian Yoga, has practised its principles, and whose spirit is imbued with its realities, and then we note down his utterances. We have travelled through India and Ceylon in quest of the knowledge of Yoga, have met with Yogis, have gleaned

with care truths from them, have sat at the feet of eminent Buddhists in remote Ceylon, have admired their aspirations and have obtained some insight into their stand-point. We have actually served some eminent Sufis for some time, and obtained glimpses of their doctrines on the bank of the Jumna. We have prostrated ourselves before the Yogis and, by a series of entreaties and humiliations, have succeeded in securing the means of interpreting and explaining the Yoga-sutras of Patanjali. At present we cannot directly mention the name of the Yogi to whom we have referred. When due preparation is made, he will reveal himself.

"But for what purpose is all this labour? *Quo bono?* [to whose benefit?] The reply is - *pro bono publico* [for the public good]. Whether we sit down on the bank of the tank in Amritsar, listening to the Sikhs, as they talk gravely of Brahma; or mix with the Palavur Roman Catholic Christians near Cape Comorin as they speak of the miraculous powers of their saints; whether we see a Moslem saint in one of the hundreds of tombs of Delhi, or a mendicant devotee in Madura in the South, we find that the Indian population *has supreme faith in the Yoga-philosophy. ...*"

Editor's Notes:

[1] See chapter A *Treatise on the Yoga* by Dr. N. C. Paul with comments of H.P.B.

Bibliography Source:

The Theosophist, April 1881 pp. 158-59.

Who Are the Aryas and the Buddhists

H.P.B.'s introduction: - (We find in the "Journal of the Hindu Sabha," edited by our highly-valued Brother and ally, M.R. Ry A-Śankaria B.A., President-Founder of the Sabha, the following lines throwing a valuable light upon the initiation in India and the question who were the Initiates. We are only sorry, the learned Editor has made the article so brief. This is a subject worthy of being treated most elaborately, and one which interests most deeply students of ancient mysteries.) - **End of introduction.**

We have said that the Hindus are divided into Dvija's or the Initiated and the Śudra or the uninitiated. Manu calls all those not owing allegiance to the Śruti and the Smriti *Mecchas*. There is not a word in Manu of the Aryas or the Buddhists *as a people*. The Aryas were antecedent to his Legislative action, and the Boudhas subsequent. The abode of the former was commemorated by their Hindu descendants and subjects as *Aryāvartam*. The Vedas or the *Sacred Literature of the Hindus* treat of the Aryas as a people. It is absurd to say that any portion of a Vernacular language is held *Sacred* by the people who speak it unless it is ascribed to Superhuman merit. The Initiated held the Transcendental and Ceremonial parts of the Vyasiyam to be Sacred, and the uninitiated the Sanskrit language itself as Dvabhâsha or the language of the Gods. The country of the gods is called by Manu *Brahmavartam*, and of the Rishis *Bahmarishidesam*. The Aryas, the gods, and the Rishis, owned the Sanskrit in common; the gods were *fully Emancipated*

Theosophists, and the Rishis, the *semi-emancipated* among the Aryas.

H.P.B. comment: - Or the highest *adepts*. To this day in Tibet, the "perfect Lamas or Bodhisatvas" are called *gods* and Spirits - LHAS. - **End of comment.**

The Gods have Vedic prayers and temples, but the Rishis have not. The Aryas and the Hindus wish to *contemplate* the gods and to *be educated* by the Rishis. *We hold the ancient land of the Aryas with their gods and their Rishis to have been the Himalayan station which is even now Sacred Hindu Theosophists and where Theosophical merit and learning still flourishes and whence the Brahmaputr  still flows.*

H.P.B.'s comment: - We italicize these lines as they have a direct reference to our first Section, doubted and ridiculed by blind scoffers - a *reality* nevertheless. We can only repeat with Galileo his historical and immortal words: *Eppur si muove!* [*Nonetheless, it moves*] Other scoffers and bigots as blind as our modern skeptics would not allow the earth to *move*, and yet moved, moves and will move unto the last hour of the Pralaya.

And the Brahmaputr  *flows from Tibet*. "There is no reasonable doubt that Tsampu of great Tibet and the Brahmaputr  of the plains are one and the same river" says Markham in his recent work - "Tibet"... "Great Tibet embraces the region between the Northern and Southern chains of the Himalaya, the towns and principal monasteries ... are chiefly in the valley of the Brahmaputr ." - **End of comment.**

The Buddhists are the followers of Gautama Buddha (the Wise who insisted upon *Initiation being thrown open to all who were*

qualified). This is a perfectly reasonable position in the abstract, but the Dvija's and particularly the Brahmans had vested interests like the Covenanted Civil Service in India and argued the impracticability of the step on account of the difficulty of testing the candidates and of watching their fulfillment of the necessary conditions of Initiation. Verse 177 of Manu requires on the part of the candidate under Initiation abstinence from wine and flesh for instance. The Śudras have perfect liberty almost in this respect, and how is a Śudra candidate to be weaned from a diet to which he has been hereditarily accustomed? Buddha founded monasteries for Initiation and prepared the sacredness of life to the people at large. He made enemies of the Brahmans by ignoring their vested and hereditary position, and he made enemies of the Śudras by persecuting the main body who could not abstain from flesh. ... Initiation requires also many other conditions on the part of a candidate and the Initiator must be an *Acarya*. The Hindu Sabha promotes amity and good-will amongst the castes but does not and cannot abolish caste distinctions. Just as the Government of India have to foster the natural aspirations of the natives as well as to provide for the continuance of the British rule, so has the Hindu Sabha to conserve the Brahmanical Theosophy and ritual as well as to elevate the Śudra masses. If this elevation is neglected, Independent Tamburan Madoms and Buddhists, missions will most assuredly gain ground with the intelligent Śudras, and Jesus or Mahomet or Materialism take possession of the illiterate. ... Between Orthodox Aryanism and Headlong Buddhism the Hindu Sabha takes its firm stand upholding where they are agreed and adjusting where they differ. We do not wish to provoke, to propitiate or to alarm any section of the Hindu community or of any other nationality but would unceasingly labour to promote a good understanding among all. The

Sravana Pournami is the great day of the Initiation for all sects of Brahmans in all parts of India, and the Rishi of the day is Śri Veda Vyasa. If Hindus are known as such by the observance of the Tonsure [1] and the Śraddha, the Initiated are recognized by the further observance of the Upakarman on the day aforesaid. We mention this is an additional proof of our opinion that the Brahman as no merit as such which is not due to Initiation into Hindu Theosophy.

It has been pointed out that the Initiator or at least the Original Initiator must be an *Acarya* who is defined in A1 V. 140 of Manu as one who initiates a candidate into the Vedic mysteries and teaches the *concealed or esoteric meaning* besides the conventional. There are four *seats* of *Acaryas* at present for the whole body of Hindus - *viz.* those of Śankara, Ramanujar, Madhva and Vallabha, but the occupants have yet to display the concealed meaning ("Rahasyam") a knowledge of which is tested by the display of Superhuman powers. Poor occupant of Vallabha's seat has been sentenced by a Criminal Court for participation in Theft! and his coadjutors have, we are afraid, not distinguished themselves much except by levying fees from their followers. The priests of Jesus, Mahomet and Gautama have also lost much of the spirit of true Theosophy by making too much of dead-letter and the form. All mankind is looking then to the advent of genuine *Acaryas*. The Founders of the Theosophical Society say that they are in communion with Yogis, the Editor of the *Saddarshana Chintanika* that his Yogi will reveal himself in time, and the Hindu Sabha exhorts every one to evoke the Yogi within himself".

H.P.B.'s comment - And the Hindu Sabha is quite right, if, by "Yogi," it means *Atma*, the highest Spiritual Soul. But the writer uses an incorrect expression when saying that the Founders of the Theosophical Society claim communion with *Yogis*; *Yogis*

can be but Hindus and in the Fraternity - with which we claim to have some acquaintance - the Hindus are in a minority. Even these cannot be strictly called "Yogis" since their modes of life, habits, religious worship and form of Initiation differs entirely from those of the Hindu Yogis as known to the general public. In one respect only are adepts, we know, like Yogis: namely, in their great purity of life, self-abnegation, and the practice of Dhyana and Samadhi.

Editor's Notes:

[1] Tonsure see: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tonsure>

Bibliographical source:

Supplement to the *Theosophist*, October, 1881, pp 2, 3.

Medium and Yogis What is the Difference Between the Two?

[A letter from an anonymous fellow, comments by H.P.B.]

A Yogi is a man who has prepared himself by a long discipline of body and spirit, and is thereby rendered capable of dealing with phenomena, and receiving occult communications at will, the theory being that he, so to say paralyzes his physical brain and reduces his mind to complete passivity by one of the numerous modes at his command, one of which is the magnetization of the second set of faculties pertaining to and exercised by the spiritual or inner man. The soul is inducted by the body, and, in its turn is used to liberate the spirit which is thus placed into direct rapport with the object desired. For example: - A telegraph line at stations A, B, C, D, E, in ordinary cases, sends messages from A to B, B to C, and so on; but, when the several stations are connected, the message may be received direct at E from A without the intermediate stations being made aware of it. In the same manner, the nerves becoming passive, the "Yogi" power controls the other faculties, and finally enables the spirit to receive a communication, which, in the other case, it cannot, because it must act through several mediums.

As the magnetic power is directed to any particular faculty, so that faculty at once forms a direct line of communication with the spirit, [H.P.B.'s comment: Sixth principle - *spiritual soul*. - **End of comment**] which, receiving the impressions conveys them back to the physical body. The spirit cannot grasp at the



communications it desires to receive, unassisted by the physical organization, just as, in the case of a lunatic, the spirit is present, but the faculty of reason is lost, and therefore, the spirit cannot make the man sane; or, as in the case of a blind man, the spirit and reasoning powers are sound, but the faculty of sight is destroyed: hence the soul of the blind man cannot realize the impressions which would be conveyed to it by the optic nerves and retina.

H.P.B.'s comment - In the normal or natural state, the sensations are transmitted from the lowest physical to the highest spiritual body, *i.e.*, from the first to the 8th principle (the 7th being no organized or conditioned body, but an infinite, hence unconditioned principle or state), the faculties of each body having to awaken the faculties of the next higher one, to transmit the message in succession, until they reach the last, when, having received the impression, the latter (the spiritual soul) sends it back in an inverse order to the body. Hence, the faculties of some of the "bodies" (we use this word for want of a better term) being less developed, they fail to transmit the message correctly to the highest principle, and thus also fail to produce the right impression upon the physical senses, as a telegram may have started, from the place of its destination, faultless, and have been bungled up and misinterpreted by the telegraph operator at some intermediate station. This is why some people, otherwise endowed with great intellectual powers and perceptive faculties, are often utterly unable to appreciate - say, the beauties of nature, or some particular moral quality; as, however perfect their physical intellect, - unless the original, material or rough physical impression conveyed has passed in a circuit through the sieve of every "principle" - (from 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, up to 7, and down again from 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, to No.1) - and

that every "sieve" is in good order - the spiritual perception will always be imperfect. The Yogi, who, by a constant training and incessant watchfulness, keeps his septenary instrument in good tune and whose spirit has obtained a perfect control over all, can, at will, and by paralysing the functions of the 4 intermediate principles, communicate from body to spirit and *vice versa*. -

End of comment.

The spirit is an immortal ether (principle?) which cannot be impaired in any way, and, although it is to a certain extent, subservient to the body and its faculties during the life-time of the body it is attached to, it can, through their agency, be so liberated in a higher or lesser degree as to be made to act independently of the other principles. This can be achieved by magnetic power or nerve power, if preferred, and thus the spiritual man be enabled to receive communications from other spirits, to traverse space and produce various phenomena, to assume any shape and appear in any form it desires.

The secret of the theory is this, that the Yogi, possessing the power of self-mesmerisation and having a perfect control over all his inner principles, sees whatever he desires to see, rejecting all elementary influences which tend to contaminate his purity.

The medium receives his communications differently. He *wishes* for "spirits;" they are attracted towards him, their magnetic influence controlling his faculties in proportion to the strength of their respective magnetic powers and the passivity of the subject; the nervous fluid conveys their impressions to the soul or spirit in the same manner, and often the same results are produced as in the case of the Yogi, with this important difference that they are not what the medium or spiritist wishes, but what the spirits (elementary influences) will

produce; hence it is that sometimes (in spiritism) a question on one subject is asked, and a reply of a different nature received, irrelevant to the point and more or less after the "Elementary's" disposition. The spiritist cannot at desire produce a fixed result, - the Yogi can. The spiritist runs the risk of evil influences, which impair the faculties the soul has to command, and these faculties - being more prone to evil than good (as everything having a great percentage of impure matter in it) - are rapidly influenced. The Yogi overcomes this, and his faculties are entirely within his control, the soul acquiring a greater scope for working them and keeping them in check; for, although the soul is their ruler, yet it is subservient to them. I will give a familiar illustration: - A battery generates electricity, the wires convey the current, and the mechanism is put in motion. Just so, the soul is the generator or battery, the nerves the wires, and the faculties the mechanism made to work. The Yogi forms a direct connection between his spiritual soul and any faculty, and, by the power of his trained will, that is by magnetic influence, concentrates all his powers in the soul, which enables him to grasp the subject of his enquiry and convey it back to the physical organs, through the various channels of communication.

H.P.B.'s comment: - Or direct, which is oftener the case, we believe. - **End of comment.**

If the Yogi desires to see a vision, his optic nerves receive the magnetic fluid; if an answer to a question is wanted, the faculties of thought and perception are charged by him; and so on. If he desires to traverse space in spirit, this is easily done by him by transferring the faculty of *will*, and, as he may have acquired

more or less power, so will he be able to produce greater or minor results.

H.P.B.'s comment: - From the physical to the Spiritual body and concentrating it there, as we understand it. - **End of comment.**

The soul of the medium does not become the generator. It is not the battery. It is a Leyden jar, charged from the magnetic influence of the "spirits." The faculties are put in action just as the spirits so-called, make them work from the jar they have charged with their own currents. These currents being magnetic, take after invisibles' own good or evil disposition. The influence of a really good spirit is not left upon the earth after death, so that in reality there are no good spirits, although some may not be mischievous, while others may be full or real devilry. The question arises, how the influences of the bad ones are left behind, when the soul exists no more on earth after death? Well, just as light from the sun illumines an object, which reflects certain invisible active rays, and these, concentrated in a camera, produce a latent image on a photographic plate; in like manner the evil propensities of a man are developed and from an atmosphere around him, which is so impregnated with his magnetic influence that this outer shell (as it were) retains the latent impressions of good or evil deeds. There, after death, are attached to certain localities, and travel as quick as thought wherever an attractive influence is exercised the stronger, they being less dangerous as less attracted to men in general but more to spiritists who attract them by the erratic power of their will, *i.e.*, their own ill-governed magnetic power. Have not many experienced coming across a man unknown to them, whose very appearance has been repulsive, and at the sight of whom, feelings of distrust and dislike spring up in them spontaneously,

although they knew nothing of or against him? On the other hand, how often do we meet a man who, at first sight, seems to attract us to him, and we feel as if we could make a friend of him, and if, by chance, we become acquainted with that person, how much we appreciate his company. We seem lost in hearing him speak, and a certain sympathy is established between us for which we cannot account. What is this, but our own outer shell coming in contact with his and partaking of the magnetic influences of that shell or establishing a communication between each other.

The medium is also influenced by his own spirit sometimes, the reaction of his nerves magnetizing some faculties accidentally, while the elementary spirits are magnetizing the other senses; or a stray current reaches some faculty which their magnetism has not reached, and this leads to some of those incomprehensible messages, which are quite irrelevant to what is expected, and a frequent occurrence which always had been the great stumbling block at all séances.

Bibliographical source:

The Theosophist, May, 1882, pp 197,198.

Questions Answered About Yoga Vidya

H.P.B. - Hindu gentleman of the Madras Presidency propounds a number of questions about Occult Science which we answer in these columns, as the information is often demanded of us and we can reach all at once in this way.

Q. Do you or Col. Olcott undertake to teach this wonderful *Vidya* to anyone who may be anxious to learn it?

A. (H.P.B.) - No: the correspondent is referred to our January number for remarks upon this point.

Q. Would you like to give proofs of the existence of occult powers in man to anyone who may be sceptically inclined, or who may desire to have his faith strengthened, as you have given to Mr. and Mrs. - and the Editor of *The Amrita Bazaar Patrika*?

A. (H.P.B.) - We would "like" that everyone should have such proofs who needs them, but, as the world is rather full of people - some twenty-four crores being in India alone - the thing is impracticable. Still such proofs have always been found by those who sought them in earnest, from the beginning of time until now. We found them - in India. But then we spared neither time, trouble nor expense in journeying around the world.

Q. Can you give such proofs to one like myself, who is at a great distance; or must I come to Bombay?

A. (H.P.B.) - Answered above. We would not undertake to do this thing, even if we could, for we would be run down with thousands of curiosity-seekers, and our life become a burden.

Q. Can a married man acquire the Vidya?

A. (H.P.B.) - No, not while a *Grihastha*. You know the invariable rule was that a boy was placed at a tender age under his *guru* for this training; he stopped with him until he was 25 to 30; then lived as a married man 15 to 20; finally retired to the forest to resume his spiritual studies. The use of liquors, of beef, and certain other meats and certain vegetables, and the relations of marriage prevent spiritual development.

Q. Does God reveal himself by inspiration to a Yogi?

A. (H.P.B.) - Every man has his own ideas about "God." So far as we have learned, the Yogi discovers his god in his inner self, his ATMA. When he reaches that point he *is* inspired - by the union of himself with the Universal, Divine Principle - ParaBrahmām. With a personal God - a God who thinks, plots, rewards, punishes, and repents - we are not acquainted. Nor do we think any Yogi ever saw such an one - unless it be true, as a missionary affirmed, the other day, at the close of Col. Olcott's lecture at Lahore that Moses who had murdered a man in Egypt and the adulterous murderer, (David), were Christian Yogis!

Q. If any Adept has power to do any thing he likes, as Col. Olcott said in his lecture at Simla, (H.P.B. comment. Colonel Olcott

never said anything of the kind.) can he make me, who am hungering and thirsting after the Vidya, a thorough Adept like himself?

A. (H.P.B.) - Colonel Olcott is *no* adept and never boasted of being one. Does our friend suppose any adept ever became such without making himself one, without breaking through every impediment through sheer force of WILL and SOUL-POWER? Such adeptship would be a mere farce. "AN ADEPT BECOMES, HE IS NOT MADE," was the motto of the ancient Rosicrucians.

Q. How is it that in the presence of such clear proof the most civilized nations still continue to be sceptical?

A. (H.P.B.) - The peoples referred to are Christian, and although Jesus declared that all who believed in him should have the power to do all manner of wonders (see Mark, XXVI, 17, 18), like a Hindu Yogi's, Christendom has been waiting in vain some eighteen centuries to see them. And now, having become total disbelievers in the possibility of such *Siddhis*, they must come to India to get their proofs, if they care for them at all.

Q. Why does Col. Olcott fix the year 1848 as the time from which occult phenomena have occurred?

A. (H.P.B.) - Our friend should read more carefully and not put us to the trouble to answer questions that are quite useless. What Col. Olcott did say was that Modern Spiritualism dates from 1848.

Q. Are there any such mediums in India as William Eddy, in

whose presence materialized forms can be seen?

A. (H.P.B.) - We do not know, but suspect there are. We heard of a case at Calcutta where a dead girl revisited her parents' house in broad daylight, and sat and conversed with her mother on various occasions. Mediumship can be easily developed anywhere, but we think it a dangerous thing and decline to give instructions for its development. Those who think otherwise can find what they want in any current number of the *London Spiritualist*, the *Medium and Daybreak*, the *Melbourne Harbinger of Light*, the *American Banner of Light*, or any other respectable Spiritualistic organ.

Q. How do these mediums get their powers; by a course of training, or as the result of an accident of their constitution?

A. (H.P.B.) - Mediums are mainly so from birth; theirs is a peculiar psycho-physiological constitution. But some of the most noted mediums of our times have been made so by sittings in circles. There is in many persons a latent mediumistic faculty, which can be developed by effort and the right conditions. The same remark applies to adeptship. We all have the latent germs of adeptship in us, but in the case of some individuals it is infinitely easier to bring them into activity than in others.

Q. Col. Olcott repudiates the idea of spirit agency as necessary to account for the production of phenomena; yet I have read that a certain scientist sent spirits to visit the planets and report what they saw there.

A. (H.P.B.) - Perhaps reference is made to Professor William Denton, the American geologist, author of that interesting work,

The Soul of Things. His explorations were made through psychometry, his wife - a very intellectual lady though a great sceptic as to spirits - being the psychometer. Our correspondent should read the book.

Q. What becomes of the spirits of the departed?

A. (H.P.B.) - There is but one "Spirit" - ParaBrahmām, or by whatever other name one chooses to call the Eternal Principle. The "souls" of the departed pass through many other stages of existence after leaving this Earth-body, just as they were in many others anterior to their birth as men and women here. The exact truth about this mystery is known only to the highest adepts; but it may be said even by the lowest of the neophytes that each of us controls his future rebirths, making each next succeeding one better or worse according to his present efforts and deserts.

Q. Is asceticism necessary for Yoga?

A. (H.P.B.) - Yoga exacts certain conditions which will be found described at p. 47 of our December number [see *The Theosophist*, Dec. 1880]. One of these conditions is seclusion in a place where the Yogi is free from all impurities - whether physical or moral. In short, he must get away from the immoral atmosphere of the world. If anyone has by such study gained powers, he cannot remain long in the world without losing the greater part of his powers - and that the higher and nobler part. So that, if any such person is seen for many consecutive years labouring in public, and neither for money nor fame, it should be known that he is sacrificing himself for the good of his fellow-men. Some day such men seem to suddenly die, and

their supposed remains are disposed of; but yet they may not be dead. "Appearances are deceitful" - the proverb says.

Bibliographical source:

The Theosophist, Vol. 2 no. 5, Feb. 1881. pp. 103-104.

Yoga Philosophy

[A letter signed by *Truth-seeker*, comments by H.P.B.]

H.P.B's comments: - The following communication, from a European Theosophist, will be read with attention and interest by Hindu students of Yoga. The references to 'Vital air,' 'wind,' 'tubular vessels,' 'moon-fluid of immortality,' 'chambers of the body,' and such like, may be incomprehensible to the materialist unfamiliar with the figurative nomenclature of mystics; but he who has advanced even a single pace along the road of self-development towards spirituality, will comprehend easily enough what is meant by these terms. - **End of comment.**

In the *Dublin University Magazine* for Oct., Nov, Dec. 1853, and Jan. 1854, is a series of papers, entitled "The Dream of Ravan," containing much that is curious on this subject.

In the fourth paper, Jan. 1854, speaking of an ascetic, it is said: 'Following his mystic bent he was full of internal visions and revelations. Sometimes according to the mystic school of Paithana, sitting crosslegged, meditating at midnight at the foot of a banyan tree, with his two thumbs closing his ears, and his little fingers pressed upon his eyelids, he saw rolling before him gigantic fiery wheels, masses of serpent shapes, clusters of brilliant jewels, quadrants of pearls, lamps blazing without oil, a white haze melting away into a sea of glittering moonlight, a solitary fixed swanlike fiery eye of intense ruddy glare, and, at

length, *the splendour of an internal light more dazzling than the sun*. An internal, unproduced music (anahata) vibrated on his ear, and sometimes a sweet mouth, sometimes a whole face of exquisite beseeching beauty, would rise out of a cloud before his inward gnostic eye, look into his soul, and advance to embrace him.'

'At other times he followed the path laid down by the more ancient and profounder school of Alandi and strove to attain the condition of an illumined Yogi as described by Krishna to Arjuna in the 8th Adhy-aya of that most mystic of all mystic books, the *Dnyaneshvari*.'

THE ILLUMINED.

'When this path is beheld, then hunger and thirst are forgotten, night and day are undistinguished in this path.

'Whether one would set out to the bloom of the east or come to the chambers of the west, *without moving*, oh holder of the bow, *is the travelling in this road*. In this path, to whatever place one would go, *that place one's own self becomes!* How shall I easily describe this? Thou thyself shalt experience it.

'The ways of the tubular vessel (nerves) are broken, the nine-fold property of wind (nervous ether) departs, on which account the functions of the body no longer exist.

'Then the moon and the sun, *or that supposition which is so imagined*, appears but like the wind upon a lamp, in such a manner as not to be laid hold of. The bud of understanding is dissolved, the sense of smell no longer remains in the nostrils,

but, together with the *Power*,^[1] retires into the middle chamber. Then with a discharge from above, the reservoir of moon fluid of immortality (contained in the brain) leaning over on one side, communicates into the mouth of the Power. Thereby the tubes (nerves) are filled with the fluid, it penetrates into all the members; and in every direction the vital breath dissolves thereinto.

'As from the heated crucible all the wax flows out, and it remains thoroughly filled with the molten metal poured in,

'Even so, that lustre (of the immortal moon-fluid) has become actually molded into the shape of the body, on the outside it is wrapped up in the folds of the skin.

'As, wrapping himself in a mantle of clouds, the sun for a while remains and afterwards, casting it off, comes forth arrayed in light.

'Even so, above is this dry shell of the skin, which, like the husk of grain, of itself falls off.

'Afterwards, such is the splendour of the limbs, that one is perplexed whether it is a self-existent shaft of Kashmir porphyry or shoots that have sprouted up from jewel seed or a body moulded of tints caught from the glow of evening, or a pillar formed of the interior light.

'A vase filled with liquid saffron, or a statue cast of divine thaumaturgic perfection molten down. To me it appears Quietism itself, personified with limbs.

'Or is it the disc of the moon that, fed by the damps of autumn, has put forth luminous beams, or is it the embodied presence of light that is sitting on yonder seat?

'Such becomes the body, when the serpentine power drinks the

moon (fluid of immortality, descending from the brain) then, O friend, death dreads the form of the body.

'Then disappears old age, the knots of youth are cut in pieces, and *The Lost State of Childhood reappears*. His age remains the same as before, but in other respects he exhibits the strength of childhood, his fortitude is beyond expression. As the golden tree from the extremity of its branches puts forth daily new jewel-buds, so new and beautiful nails sprout forth.

'He gets new teeth also, but these shine inexpressibly beautiful, like rows of diamonds set on either side. The palms of the hands and soles of the feet become like red lotus flowers, the eyes grow inexpressibly clear.

'As when from the crammed state of its interior the pearls can no longer be held in by the double shell, then the seam of the pearl oyster rim bursts open, so, uncontainable within the clasp of the eyelids, the sight, expanding, seeks to go outwards; it is the same indeed as before but is now capable of embracing the heavens. *Then he beholds the things beyond the sea, he hears the language of paradise, he perceives what is passing in the mind of the ant.* He takes a turn with the wind, if he walk, his footsteps touch not the water.

'Finally, -

'When the light of the Power disappears, then the form of the body is lost, he becomes hidden from the eyes of the world.

'In other respects, as before, he appears with the members of his body, but he is as one *formed of the wind*.

'Or like the core of the plantain tree standing up divested of its mantle of outward leaves, or as a cloud from which limbs have sprouted out.

'Such becomes his body, then he is called Kechara, or Sky-goer, this step, being attained is a wonder among people in the body.'

The process here described seems similar to that described in the *Ouphnekhat* [Upanishad]. 'With your heel stop the fundament, then draw the lower air upwards by the right side, make it turn thrice round the second region of the body, thence bring it to the navel, thence to the middle of the heart, then to the throat, then to the sixth region, which is the interior of the nose, between the eyelids, there retain it, it is become the breath of the universal soul. Then meditate on the great Ome [Om?], the universal voice which fills all, the voice of God; it makes itself heard to the ecstatic in ten manners.

'The first is like the voice of a sparrow, the second is twice as loud as the first, the third like the sound of a cymbal, the fourth like the murmur of a great shell, the fifth like the chant of the *Vina*, the sixth like the sound of the 'tal,' the seventh like the sound of a bamboo flute placed near the ear, the eighth the sound of the instrument *pahaoujd* struck with the hand, the ninth like the sound of a small trumpet, the tenth like the rumbling of a thunder cloud. At each of these sounds the ecstatic passes through various states until the tenth *when he becomes God*.

'At the first all the hairs on his body stand up.

At the second his limbs are benumbed.

At the third he feels in all his members the exhaustion of excess.

At the fourth his head turns, he is as it were intoxicated.

At the fifth, *the water of life* flows back into his brain.

At the sixth this water descends into and nourishes him.

At the seventh he becomes master of the vision, he sees into men's hearts, he hears the most distant voices.

At the ninth he feels himself to be so subtle that he can transport himself where he will, and, like the Devas, see all without being seen.

At the tenth he becomes the universal and indivisible voice, he is the creator, the eternal, exempt from change; and, become perfect repose, he distributes repose to the world.'

Compare this with Vaughan - *Anima Magica Abscondita*.

'This mystery is finished when the light in a sudden miraculous corruscation darts from the centre to the circumference, and the divine Spirit has so swallowed up the body that it is a glorious body shining like the sun and moon. In this rotation it doth pass, and no sooner, from the natural to the supernatural state, for it is no more fed with visibles, but with invisibles and the eye of the creator is perpetually upon it. After this the material parts are never more seen.'

Can any of the correspondents of the THEOSPHERIST give any account of this *Dnyaneshvar*? Who was Alandi? It would be a great boon to Theosophists if Dayananda Saraswati Svamin[1] would give to the world a translation of this work, and also of Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras*, of which in English we know only the imperfect summaries of Ward and Thompson. Can, also, some competent Buddhist give an account of the *Kasina*, of which I know only Spence Hardy's imperfect account? We Western Theosophists earnestly desire information as to all the best modes of soul-emancipation and will-culture, and turn to the East for Light.

[1] *Note from Dublin U.M.* - This extraordinary power who is termed elsewhere the World Mother - the casket of Supreme Spirit, is technically called Kundalini, serpentine or annular. Some things related of it would make one imagine it to be electricity personified.

Editor's Notes:

[1] See *The Autobiography of Dayanand Saraswati Svamin*.

Bibliographical source:

The Theosophist, Vol. I, No. 4, January, 1880, p. 86.

Yoga and Kalpa

[A letter from Samar Pungava Sastri, comments by H.P.B.]

H.P.B.'s introduction: - We fully appreciate the kindly feeling in which we are referred to in the following article. But there should be a limit even to sincerely-felt expressions. We have no desire of following in the steps of Babu Keshub C. Sen and never have or will lay claims to being classed with Sadhús or Gurus, "who have attained the whole truth," least of all with "gods." We warn our kind Brother: too much of enthusiasm degenerates generally into fanaticism. - **End of comment.**

ĀUPANISHADĀYA NAMA.

Tatvagnánavidám sákshát
Brahmibhútátmanám satám
Blávatsky álkán mukhánáncha
Sakásáy éyam iritá
Nabóddháham navaktáham
Yathá dévé yat!á gurun
Tathá bhrátrushu yushmásu
Vignaptim kalayé tathá.

"To Madame Blavatsky, Colonel Olcott and other Sadhús who have attained the truth and are Jivanmuktas this letter is



addressed. I come neither to teach nor to expound, but appeal to you, my good brothers, as one would to one's guru or the gods."

In my fourteenth year I met a Lambika Yogi, who, though not an adept of the first order at that time, was sufficiently advanced to instil into me faith in the existence of the Mahatmas, and to teach me the elementary principles of the secret path. Following certain directions he gave me, I began my researches and have since continued them with varied success till the present time. During this period of about 30 years I have studied several books and come in contact with many great men, some of whom have had the rare good fortune of being personal acquaintances of the Mahatmas. It is now my settled conviction that the *Yoga Marga* is the only way to absorption in Brahma and the perfect culmination of bliss. The study and practice of the earlier stages of Yoga have occupied the major part of my time, and I have also been taught to believe in the efficacy of *Kalpas*. With the latter I have successfully made certain experiments, but for want of sympathy and co-operation, have been obliged to suspend them. By the good graces of my Guru, I was able to discover "the base and summit of the middle", and some other secrets of *Yoga Vidya*. Sometime before the separation of his soul from his body, which took place about three years ago, he kindly permitted me to seek instruction and aid from other quarters. Even since I have been seeking for guidance, practising meanwhile the little already learnt by me before.

Práyaso rúdhā múlānam
Chintvám ubhayi gatih
Siddhirarthasya mitréshu
Sankramah kévalóthavá.

"All long-cherished and deep-rooted desires must find vent in one of two ways, viz., the accomplishment of their object, or their complete disclosure to friends," and unless the GORDIAN knot [1] of the heart known as the "Ávidya-granthi" is untied, there is little hope for a man of ever becoming a *Brahma Jnani*.

Yadá sarvé prabhidayanti
Hridayasyeha grandhayah
Atha martya' mritó bhavati
Étavadanusasanam—Katha
Atra Brahma samasnuti—Katha.

In the Chandogya Upanishad Uddalaka says to Svétaketu. "Acháryaván purushó Veda" - none can *know* but through *Acarya* (teacher). I therefore feel myself called upon to communicate to you the state of my mind in the expectation of being favoured with spiritual advice.

It will be admitted on all hands that this our body is the principal medium in the accomplishment of our ends, namely - the attainment of the Siddhis; and that the prevention of death is an essential condition of success therein. Various are the ways pointed out for securing this immunity from death - an immunity which is universally considered by the uninitiated to be impossible to obtain. Some hold that by a careful and systematic regulation of the organs of respiration and the adoption of particular kinds of diet death may be avoided for a long time. Others believe that the administration of certain Kalpas or of particular preparation or compounds of them will give one the power to sustain his body, through all eternity, without destruction or decay.

H.P.B.'s Comment - This, the Mahatmas deny most emphatically. To make one and the same body last eternally, i.e., to prevent the tissues from wearing out is as impossible as the communication of perpetual motion to any finite object in nature. Though *per se* perpetual motion is a fact, the eternal duration of the materials to which it may be imparted is unthinkable. - **End of the comment.**

These methods have several minor sub-divisions, every one of them differing in detail from the rest. Respiration, and diet, however well regulated, cannot though capable prolonging life to wonderfully long periods, give body that eternal immortality which, I believe, is an essential requisite of Yogic success, and which, *Agastya Bhagavan* says can be secured only by Kalpa administration accompanied by *Raja-Yoga*. In His usual mystical language he says:

தினவாகப் பூருடனுக்குப் பெண்மேல் மோகம்
 பெரிசரிபூங் குழன்மகட்கா டவன்மேன்மோகம்
 கனமருவு மிருவருமே கலந்தபோது
 கமலமலர் வதனமோ மிதிக்கும்பிள்ளை
 இனிதான பிள்ளையினுலெல்லா முண்டாம்
 இந்தவிதமாயிருக்கும் நிலைமார்த்தம்
 வனவாசமாய்த்திரியும் வேடத்தேதாரோ
 மன்னவர்க்கு மங்கையர்க்கும் உயதுகேளே.

"The man's love is directed toward the woman: the woman's love is towards the man: When these two join together, the issue is a lotus-faced child. This sweet child will give everything. The way to adeptship will lie in this wise. O, pretenders who roam about the jungles, hear the ages of the man and woman."

H.P.B.'s comment - What *Agastya Bhagavan* meant was not the eternal duration of any physical body, but of the inner, divine man in his individuality, and thus by avoiding reincarnations in other personalities, the unbroken preservation of one's own higher personality. This may be reached only by such great adepts as he was himself. - **End of comment.**

There can be no difficulty in understanding what the child here stands for, when it is borne in mind that the man and woman are intended to signify respectively *Yoga* and *Kalpa*. By the reciprocity of affection, *Agastya* seems to me to declare the indispensableness and union of both for the production of the desired result - namely, the *Siddhis*. The same view is expressed in another stanza of this sage:

பாரப்பா விரண்டிற்று மொருபேரிட்டு
 பாடினூவமானப் பாடையாலே
 வாரப்பா காதவித்து வழலைக்கும்பேர்
 மவுனமென்ற சிவயோக வாழ்க்கைக்கும்பேர்
 ஓரப்பா விதையெறித் ததிலே சொல்லார்
 அதையெறித் திதிற்புகட்டி யதவாமென்பார்
 கூரப்பா காதவித்து முடித்தபேர்க்கு
 கூச்சமற்ற ஞானமென்றும் பொருடான்வாய்க்கும்.

"You will see that he gives the same name to both and signs in allegory. *Nada Bindu* stands for *Valalai* as well as *Śiva Yoga*. Who is there to append the latter to the former, or explain the connection between them and say that the two are identical. Depend upon it, the perfection of knowledge will be the reward of those who accomplish *Nada Bindu*."

According to this Rishi, it is the combination of *Yoga* and *Kalpa* that constitutes the surest method of obtaining *Brahma-jnana*. The designation adopted by him to denote this combination is "*Brahma Garbha*," a term which seems to convey the double

meaning intended and to fit in equally well with the objects of both departments. It is described under 400 and odd distinct denominations, every one of them applying to a distinct stage in its formation or chemical combination. Among these combinations are Nada, Bindu, Valalai, Isan Uppu, Vaman, Kal Chunnambu, Sarai Pambu, Pasumpon and Akaśa, occurring in the stanzas quoted in this letter. The advantages of resorting to Brahma-Garbha are thus described by this Mahatmas:

இருக்கலாம் வெஞ்சமனு மேவல்செய்ய
இவ்வுலகு மவ்வுலகு மென்றும்போற்றப்
பெருக்கலாம் கைலைவாழ்சன்பாதம்
பெற்றிடலாம் சித்தருடன் பேசலாகும்
கெழுச்சமுறு மாயிரத் தெட்டண்டீர்தம்மை
நிமிடநீந் சுற்றிவந்து நிலைக்கலாகும்
முருக்கெலா மீசுண்பு முருக்கேயல்லால்
முத்துமேற்றவுப்பின் முடியாவாறே.

"One may live on, exacting servitude from *Yāma* himself: may grow big so as to be an object of wonder to this world and the next: may obtain the feet of the God who lives in Kaisala: may hold communion with the Siddhas: may go round the whole cosmos of 1008 worlds in an instant. But all these powers result only from *Isan Uppu* and no other."

போச்சப்பா பிறப்பிதப்பு மாண்டுபோகும்
புகழுடைய வாசனம்பான் மேனியாகும்
வாய்ச்சுதுபார் வாசியது நிலைத்துப்போகும்
மகத்தான காயமது பெலத்துப்போகும்
கூச்சமுறே றுர்க்குணாற் குணங்களாகும்
கோடான கோடியுகம் வாழலாகும்
சூச்சிதுபார் வாமத்தால் யோகமாகும்
அவையன்றி யொன்றுமில் சாயம்பாழே.

"There will be an end of births and deaths: the body will look like the most precious of metals: respiration will stand still: the body will acquire very great strength: all bad nature will be turned into good: and one may thus live crores of Yugas. Mind that *Yoga* comes of *Vama*, and without these there can be nothing and the body itself is useless."

H.P.B.'s Comment: - Not quite so. "Crores of Yugas" in one's self-conscious "inner-self" not in one and the same physical body. - **End of the comment.**

சொல்லாத பொருளையா பிரமகற்பம்
சொல்லாமன் மறைத்தார்கள் சித்தந்தாமும்
கொல்லாமற் கொல்லுமையா வெளிவிடாதே
சோதையர் சளாசையிலே சிச்சிடாதே
பொல்லாத பொருளதுகைக் கொண்டாயானால்
புசலநிய பிரமலிபி தவறிப்போகும்.
வெல்லாமல் வெல்லுமந்த தீகைகண்டால்
வெருகோடி வித்தையெலா மாடலாமே.

"Brahma-Garbha is a thing which cannot be published. The Siddhas have kept them concealed. Seeming not to kill, it will disclose it not. Get not entangled in the love of females. It is dangerous substance and if secured will aver *Brahma Lipi* itself. This course, which while seeming not to succeed, will succeed, if found out, enable one to practise crores of arts."

பகம்பொன்னே மாற்றதிக மாணியில்லை
பருகினு லாதுகண்ட பரமனாவர்.

"It is gold of such high quality that it is beyond the capacity of a touchstone to test it. By imbibing it you may become *Pralaya* - witnessing *Paramá*."

It will be seen from these stanzas that Agastya, while extolling "Brahma Garbha" as the most efficacious means of securing the Siddhis, seems also to point out in unmistakable language, that Yoga and Kalpa go hand in hand, and, without either, true Yogic success is impossible. What Brahma-Garbha is, is described by him in a series of stanzas of which the following are among the foremost. The language used is, as a rule, allegorical, and the ideas abstruse, and certainly above the comprehension of the uninitiated. He says:

மண்ணிலெழு பிறப்பாகும் பிரமகற்பம்
வானவிட்டுர் சீழிறங்கும் கற்கண்ணும்பும்
விண்ணவர்க்கு மந்தான சாராப்பாம்பும்
வெளியில் வெளியானவர் க்கே விண்ணூர் தானே.

"The *seven* times born Brahma Garbha, the stone-chunam that descends from the sky, and the Sarai serpent which is the elixir of the gods, can be discovered only by those who have seen the light of lights." The "seven births" or transformations referred to are then explained but in words as obscure as an enigma.

H.P.B.'s Comment - When Mr. Sinnett's *Esoteric Buddhism*, and *Fragments of Occult Truth* are read and comprehended, it will be easy to understand that the "seven births" or transformations refer to the seven births in the *seven root races*. Every such birth being the key-note struck for other and subsequent births in sub-races, each key-note resounding in a higher key than the preceding one on the scale of tones; or, in other words, every new *root-birth* carrying the individuality higher and higher until it reaches the *seventh root-race*, which will bring man finally to the highest, eternal Buddhahip or "Brahma Garbha" in a degree corresponding to that he will have acquired

by his enlightenment during his lives on earth. - **End of the comment.**

விள்ளுமே யாதியிலே யொளியுமாச்சே
வெந்தழலா மறுபிறப்பு நீலமாச்சே
கண்ணமதா யிறப்பிறப்பு சிவப்புமாச்சே
காங்கைகொண்டு மறுபிறப்பு வெள்ளையாச்சே
துள்ளியது பின்பிறப்பு மஞ்சளாச்சே
தோகைமயி னிறமாச்சே மறுபிறப்பில்
உள்ளபடிசடைசி யெழுபிறப்பிற் றுணும்
உயர்கோழி முட்டைநீறும் படிசுமாச்சே.

"In the beginning it was light. In its fiery next birth it became blue. In its mysterious third, it became red. In the fourth it got heated and became white. Springing then, it became yellow. In its next birth its colour was that of the feathery peacock. In its seventh and last, it became, indeed, an egg coloured crystal."

H.P.B.'s Comment - The meaning of this is simple enough to him who has studied the theory of rebirths in the Esoteric doctrine. This gradation and change of colours refers to our physical and moral constitution on (a) the various seven planets and (b) in the seven root races. Planet A, corresponds to pure *light* - the essence of man's primeval body when he is all spiritual; on planet B man becomes more objective - assumes definite colour; on C, he becomes still more physical - hence red, the red-earth or Adam Kadmon, being the material acquired by the monad in the preceding world prior to being developed as man - on this Earth; on planet D, white, the colour containing an equal proportion of spirit and matter; on E, he is yellow - (relating to the Yogi's robe) more spiritual; on F, he is fast approaching "the peacock" colour, that bird being the emblem and *vahana* of

Sarasvati, the goddess of universal occult wisdom; while in the seventh and last birth man's aura is compared to that of an egg-coloured crystal - pure crystalline, purity being the attribute of *God-Man*. - **End of the comment.**

படிக்கென்ற வண்டமெலாம் பிரமகற்பம்
பார்க்கவென்ற லாகா சப்பிரமவிந்து.

"It is the crystal globe that is known as Brahma Garbham, the seed of Akaśa Brahma."

Not Agastya alone, but all the Siddhas speak of the extraordinary powers of this Bindu. The same idea is expressed in the Chandogya Upanishad by Jaivali, when in answer to Salavatya he said that "Akaśa" is the ultimate course of this world.

H.P.B.'s Comment: - "What is the ultimate end of this Loka (cosmos)? - It is Akaś." - **End of the comment.**

“ Asya lōkasya ka gativiti?
Akasa iti hē va cha.”

I am therefore in earnest search of instruction regarding Agastya's mysterious teachings about the Brahma Garbha, and as it has pleased Paramatma to place the key to the SECRET WAY in the hands of worthy people like you. Mumukshus, who have renounced everything worldly for the sake of the Truth, I have deemed it my duty to appeal to you for that instruction which, I hope, you will after consultation with the Mahatmas, if necessary, be gracious enough to give me, together with any further advice you may consider necessary for my guidance. I am sanguine that you will not disregard my humble solicitations, but will count me as one of your own, and that, which your aid, I

shall one day be brought fact to face with the Mahatmas themselves.

Samar Pungava Sastri ஸாமர பிங்கவ சாஸ்திரி.

H.P.B.'s Comment: - This does not depend on us, but on the writer himself. We can help him in the esoteric interpretation of that which he seems to understand quite exoterically as far as we ourselves know. But we can give no promise on behalf of our Mahatmas. - **End of the comment.**

Editor's Notes:

[1] The Gordian Knot see: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gordian_Knot

Bibliographical source:

The Theosophist, Vol. V, No. 3 p. 51, December, 1883, pp. 77-79

Hints to the Students of Yoga Vidya – I

Lalla Ruttun Chund



The student should realize that in order to render one's self worthy of an admission into the sanctuary of Yoga, a thorough regeneration of the mind is the essential condition imposed upon him. Integrity of purpose and purity of intention he has rigidly to observe in his desires and actions throughout life, and no sensual appetites or cravings of the flesh can he be allowed to cherish in his bosom. In short, to keep his passions and animal propensities in entire subjection, is the vow he has to make at the very threshold of the sacred science of Yoga.

Ever successful to abide by this vow are they who have a determined *will* to do so: but it must be clearly understood that a violation of this vow, on the part of the student of Yoga Vidya, however advanced, will lower him in his development as much, at least, as a decimal point lowers in value the integer before which it is placed.

The sanctification of the mind, to such an extent that evil emotions and feelings may never be able to make their way into it, is most assuredly secured by a perfect concentration of the mind on one single object; and the proper object for this purpose is OM, which my imperfect knowledge of the English language, or rather, perhaps, its own poverty, constrains me to translate as the "Infinite One." It is true that the concentration of the mind

upon one single object, and especially such object as the OM - Deity, is a difficult task; but no difficulty, however great, depend upon it, can stand in the way of a *really determined man*.

Again, to a beginner, this science appears dry and unattractive, and one that involves the loss of time, apparently to no purpose; but a few months' practice of its principles is sure to secure to its devotee a comfort and bliss which he could not have obtained in years, from any other source.

Siddhis, *i e.*, psychic powers, which are certain to attend more or less every Yogi, should never be moving cause to induce one to pursue this science; for desires, other than that one of realizing OM in the soul, are to be abandoned at the outset.

Attachment to the world, and its pleasures, should never be stronger, on the part of the Yogi than the attachment which a traveller, bound homeward, has for an inn in which he has to stop for a fleeting night.

Such are the sacrifices which are to be made by every student of this spiritual science; and none need attempt to approach it who are loth to observe these terms.

Namaste.

Lahore, Punjab, Oct. 13th, 1879.

Bibliographical reference:

The Theosophist, Vol I. No. 2, November, 1879 p. 46.

Hints to the Students of Yoga Vidya – II

Ruttun Chund Bary

There are eight parts of Yoga, viz, Yáma, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi, each of which I shall endeavour to define as briefly as possible.

The principles of Yáma enjoin us -

- (1) To observe perfect freedom from the desire of injuring others, and to realize in practice real love and heartfelt sympathy for all creatures;
- (2) To speak always the truth; making our words convey our exact meaning;
- (3) To be free from a desire to misappropriate others' property, however insignificant;
- (4) To practise self-denial, or in other words never to allow gratification to carnal passions, even in thought;
- (5) To keep always and everywhere aloof from pride and vanity.

The principles of Niyama, enjoin us -

- (1) To observe cleanliness of body and purity of mind;
- (2) To be content and cheerful under all the vicissitudes of life;

(3) To listen to, and practise, the doctrines calculated to exalt our mind and refine our thoughts;

(4) To read the sacred books, such as the Vedas etc. , and to have full faith in the existence of the Infinite Spirit, Om;

(5) To bear always in mind that our actions and thoughts are watched and witnessed by the Omnipresent Spirit.

Asana

This treats of the posture to be adopted at the time of performing Yoga. The posture assumed should be quite easy and in no way painful or inconvenient. For oriental people, squatting is the one generally preferred.

Pranayama

This relates to the suppression of the inspiration and expiration of breath.

(1) When the breath is exhaled, the student should, before he takes it in again, allow as much time to pass as he conveniently can.

(2) And when it is inhaled, he should suffer the same amount of time to elapse before it is exhaled again.

(3) He should then suspend breathing altogether, of course for a few seconds at the beginning, and never so long as would cause him inconvenience or prove dangerous to his health. In short, his practice must be regulated by his strength.

(4) He should then inhale and exhale his breaths slowly and with less force than usual. I advise no person to practise this part of Yog, unless he has a Yogi at his side, inasmuch as it

endangers health and life, if unskillfully attempted and in the absence of an instructor.

Pratyahara

This requires us to control our mind so as to exercise full authority over its feelings and emotions.

Dharana

is to withhold the mind from all external objects and internal thoughts and to concentrate it upon a certain part of the body, either the navel, heart, forehead, nose or tongue, and then to meditate on *Om* and its attributes.

Dhyana

is to intensify that meditation, and to keep the mind void of any other thought, feeling or emotion.

Samadhi

leads the Yogi to gain that perfection in the intensity of meditation, which enables him to attain absorption in the Infinite Spirit.

In Dhyana the Yogi is conscious of his own self, of his mind, and of the Infinite Spirit; but in Samadhi he loses the consciousness of the first two, and the Infinite Spirit only remains before his mind's eye.

Your readers must know that the writer of this article, not being a Yogi himself, writes this not so much to teach others as to learn himself, and will, therefore, feel highly grateful to any who, being

Yogis themselves, will correct him wherever they see him taking a wrong course.

Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi are together called Samyama.

No one should expect to enjoy the bliss of *Samyama*, which is beyond all description, without first observing the principles of *Yama* and *Niyama*.

God, the primeval cause that pervades the universe, and is the Master of all things, either animate or inanimate, is a Being invisible to the physical eyes, imperceptible to the bodily senses and incomprehensible to our finite intellect. Who dares define such a Being, and in what language? No other language than that of the Deity itself, (if it can be said to have any specific language at all) can boast of representing it as it is. And in *Samyama* we are brought face to face with this Being.

The first fruit, that a Yogi reaps, is that his mind is always fearless and his soul happy. These two qualifications are the true attendants that a Yogi can always count upon, and without these no person should be looked upon as a Yogi. It is, indeed, difficult to enter all at once into the state of Samadhi, but Dhyana, I am sure, is a stage that can at any rate be reached even by a beginner.

It is in *Dhyana* that a student of Yoga Vidya begins to hear that mystic music called the *Anahad-Shabd* (which is so beautifully illustrated at page 87 of the *THEOSOPHIST* for January 1880, in the article on Yoga Philosophy) which varies in its tunes and notes in proportion to the advancement of the student from one stage to another.

In the first stage it resembles the chirping of a sparrow, in the second it is twice as loud, in the third it is like the tolling of bells, in the fourth like the blowing of a great shell, in the fifth like the

music of a lute, in the sixth like the clapping of hands, in the seventh like the sound of a flute (Vinna), in the eighth like the beating of a drum, in the ninth like the sound of a small trumpet, and in the tenth like the deep pealing of thunder.

It is in the tenth stage called *Samadhi* that *Hiraninyagarbha*, that eternal and unfailing light, which until then penetrated its rays only now and then through the thick cloud of matter, breaks in upon the Yogi in its full brightness and glory, and absorbs him. The Yogis, when they reach this state, gain the power of the Deity, just as a piece of iron gains the property of the magnet when both are brought in close connection with each other. And it is such Yogis that should be looked upon with awe and reverence. However, the farther the student advances from one stage to another, the greater the psychic powers he begins to possess. In the infancy of his spiritual development, future events are revealed to him through dreams, especially those connected with his own person, his intimate friends and nearest relatives. But as his *Dhyana* makes a move nearer to the attainment of *Samadhi*, his capacity is so increased as to enable him to see distant objects and future events as happening before him in his semi-*Samadhi*. And he can also save himself to a certain extent from the attack of diseases and all hurtful creatures.

When the student acquires so much power, it happens in some few cases that he becomes reserved, and looks down upon others. This he should scrupulously avoid, as otherwise he stands face to face with the danger of being pulled down to the point from whence he first started.

He should bear all ill-treatment with patience and be ever forgiving; in short, he should act like the Omnipresent Deity that allows the sun to shine equally both on the good and the wicked.

A slight partiality for one and hatred for another is sure to retard his progress.

It should be borne in mind that *Dhyana* can never be enjoyed unless the mind is quite free of all desires at the time. The ever-wavering state of the mind is a great obstacle in our way of spiritual development, and no mind can be brought to any point of stability unless it is separated from all desires. And to effect this various are the means adopted by different persons. Some engage their mind *without reserve* in the recitation of either of the following ineffable names of the Deity: - *Om, Soham, Hans-Hans, Tut-Sut* &c. &c. Others engage their mind directly in searching after Eternal Light, which manifests itself to the devotee in the inner chamber of his heart, called in Sanskrit, *Brahm-poori*.

Punjab, February 1880

Bibliographical source:

The Theosophist, 1880, April, Vol. 01, p.75.

A Treatise on the Yoga Philosophy - Introduction

N.C. Paul, G.B.M.C., wrote a small, but very interesting and very scientific pamphlet. He was only a regimental surgeon in Benares, but his name was well known amongst his compatriots as a very learned specialist in physiology. The pamphlet was called *A Treatise on the Yoga Philosophy*, and produced a sensation amongst the representatives of medicine in India, and a lively polemic between the Anglo-Indian and native journalists. Dr. Paul spent thirty-five years in studying the extraordinary facts of Yogism, the existence of which was, for him, beyond all doubt. He not only described them, but explained some of the most extraordinary phenomena, for instance, levitation, the seeming evidence to the contrary of some laws of nature, notwithstanding. With perfect sincerity, and evident regret, Dr. Paul says he could never learn anything from the Raja-Yogis. His experience was almost wholly limited to the facts that fakirs and Hatha-Yogis would consent to give him. It was his great friendship with Captain Seymour chiefly which helped him to penetrate some mysteries, which, till then, were supposed to be impenetrable.

The history of this English gentleman is truly incredible, and produced, about twenty-five years ago, an unprecedented scandal in the records of the British army in India. Captain Seymour, a wealthy and well-educated officer, accepted the Brahmanical creed and became a Yogi. Of course he was proclaimed mad, and, having been caught, was sent back to

England. Seymour escaped, and returned to India in the dress of a Samnyasin. He was caught again, and shut up in some lunatic asylum in London. Three days after, in spite of the bolts and the watchmen, he disappeared from the establishment. Later on his acquaintances saw him in Benares, and the governor-general received a letter from him from the Himalayas. In this letter he declared that he never was mad, in spite of his being put into a hospital; he advised the governor-general not to interfere with what was strictly his own private concern, and announced his firm resolve never to return to civilized society. "I am a Yogi," wrote he, "and I hope to obtain before I die what is the aim of my life - to become a Raja-Yogi." After this letter he was left alone, and no European ever saw him except Dr. Paul, who, as it is reported, was in constant correspondence with him, and even went twice to see him in the Himalayas under the pretext of botanic excursions.

I was told that the pamphlet of Dr. Paul was ordered to be burned "as being offensive to the science of physiology and pathology." At the time I visited India copies of it were very great rarities. Out of a few copies still extant, one is to be found in the library of the Maharaja of Benares, and another was given to me by the Takur.

This evening we dined at the refreshment rooms of the railway station. Our arrival caused an evident sensation. Our party occupied the whole end of a table, at which were dining many first-class passengers, who all stared at us with undisguised astonishment. Europeans on an equal footing with Hindus! Hindus who condescended to dine with Europeans! These two were rare and wonderful sights indeed. The subdued whispers grew into loud exclamations. Two officers who happened to know the Takur took him aside, and, having shaken hands with

him, began a very animated conversation, as if discussing some matter of business; but, as we learned afterwards, they simply wanted to gratify their curiosity about us.

Here we learned, for the first time, that we were under police supervision, the police being represented by an individual clad in a suit of white clothes, and possessing a very fresh complexion, and a pair of long moustaches. He was an agent of the secret police, and had followed us from Bombay. On learning this flattering piece of news, the colonel burst into a loud laugh; which only made us still more suspicious in the eyes of all these Anglo-Indians, enjoying a quiet and dignified meal. As to me, I was very disagreeably impressed by this bit of news, I must confess, and wished this unpleasant dinner was over.

The train for Allahabad was to leave at eight P.M., and we were to spend the night in the railway carriage. We had ten reserved seats in a first-class carriage, and had made sure that no strange passengers would enter it, but, nevertheless, there were many reasons which made me think I could not sleep this night. So I obtained a provision of candles for my reading lamp, and making myself comfortable on my couch, began reading the pamphlet of Dr. Paul, which interested me greatly.

Amongst many other interesting things, Dr. Paul explains very fully and learnedly the mystery of the periodical suspension of breathing, and some other seemingly impossible phenomena, practised by the Yogis.

Here is his theory in brief. The Yogis have discovered the reason of the wondrous capacity of the chameleon to assume the appearance of plumpness or of leanness. This animal looks enormous when his lungs are filled with air, but in his normal condition he is quite insignificant. Many other reptiles as well

acquire the possibility of swimming across large rivers quite easily by the same process. And the air that remains in their lungs, after the blood has been fully oxygenated, makes them extraordinarily lively on dry land and in the water. The capacity of storing up an extraordinary provision of air is a characteristic feature of all the animals that are subjected to hibernation.

The Hindu Yogis studied this capacity, and perfected and developed it in themselves.

The means by which they acquire it - known under the name of Bhastrika Kumbhala - consist of the following: The Yogi isolates himself in an underground cave, where the atmosphere is more uniform and more damp than on the surface of the earth: this causes the appetite to grow less. Man's appetite is proportionate to the quantity of carbonic acid he exhales in a certain period of time. The Yogis never use salt, and live entirely on milk, which they take only during the night. They move very slowly in order not to breathe too often. Movement increases the exhaled carbonic acid, and so the Yoga practice prescribes avoidance of movement. The quantity of exhaled carbonic acid is also increased by loud and lively talking: so the Yogis are taught to talk slowly and in subdued tones, and are even advised to take the vows of silence. Physical labor is propitious to the increase of carbonic acid, and mental to its decrease; accordingly the Yogi spends his life in contemplation and deep meditation. Padmasana and Siddhasana are the two methods by which a person is taught to breathe as little as possible.

Suka-Devi, a well-known miracle-monger of the second century B.C. says:

"Place the left foot upon the right thigh, and the right foot upon the left thigh; straighten the neck and back; make the palms of the hands rest upon the knees; shut the mouth; and expire

forcibly through both nostrils. Next, inspire and expire quickly until you are fatigued. Then inspire through the right nostril, fill the abdomen with the inspired air, suspend the breath, and fix the sight on the tip of the nose. Then expire through the left nostril, and next, inspiring through the left nostril, suspend the breath ..." and so on.

"When a Yogi, by practice, is enabled to maintain himself in one of the above-mentioned postures for the period of three hours, and to live upon a quantity of food proportional to the reduced condition of circulation and respiration, without inconvenience, he proceeds to the practice of Pranayama," writes Dr. Paul. "It is the fourth stage or division of Yoga."

The Pranayama consists of three parts. The first excites the secretion of sweat, the second is attended by convulsive movements of the features, the third gives to the Yogi a feeling of extraordinary lightness in his body.

After this, the Yogi practises Pratyahara, a kind of voluntary trance, which is recognizable by the full suspension of all the senses. After this stage the Yogis study the process of Dharana; this not only stops the activity of physical senses, but also causes the mental capacities to be plunged into a deep torpor. This stage brings abundant suffering; it requires a good deal of firmness and resolution on the part of a Yogi, but it leads him to Dhyana, a state of perfect, indescribable bliss. According to their own description, in this state they swim in the ocean of eternal light, in Akaśa, or Ananta Jyoti, which they call the "Soul of the Universe." Reaching the stage of Dhyana, the Yogi becomes a seer. The Dhyana of the Yogis is the same thing as Turiya-Avastha of the Vedantins, in the number of whom are the Raja-Yogis.

"Samadhi is the last stage of self-trance," says Dr. Paul. "In this

state the Yogis, like the bat, the hedge-hog, the marmot, the hamster and the dormouse, acquire the power of supporting the abstraction of atmospheric air, and the privation of food and drink. Of Samadhi or human hibernation there have been three cases within the last twenty-five years. The first case occurred in Calcutta, the second in Jesselmer, and the third in the Punjab. I was an eyewitness of the first case. The Jesselmer, the Punjab, and the Calcutta Yogis assumed a death-like condition by swallowing the tongue. How the Punjabi fakir (witnessed by Dr. McGregor), by suspending his breath, lived forty days without food and drink, is a question which has puzzled a great many learned men of Europe ... It is on the principle of Laghima and Gariman (a diminution of one's specific gravity by swallowing large draughts of air) that the Brahman of Madras maintained himself in an aerial posture ... "

However, all these are physical phenomena produced by Hatha-Yogis. Each of them ought to be investigated by physical science, but they are much less interesting than the phenomena of the region of psychology. But Dr. Paul has next to nothing to say on this subject. During the thirty-five years of his Indian career, he met only three Raja-Yogis; but in spite of the friendliness they showed to the English doctor, none of them consented to initiate him into the mysteries of nature, a knowledge of which is ascribed to them. One of them simply denied that he had any power at all; the other did not deny, and even showed Dr. Paul some very wonderful things, but refused to give any explanations whatever; the third said he would explain a few things on the condition that Dr. Paul must pledge himself never to repeat anything he learned from him. In acquiring this kind of information, Dr. Paul had only one aim - to give these secrets publicity, and to enlighten the public ignorance, and so he declined the honor.

However, the gifts of the true Raja-Yogis are much more interesting, and a great deal more important for the world, than the phenomena of the lay Hatha-Yogis. These gifts are purely psychic: to the knowledge of the Hatha-Yogis the Raja-Yogis add the whole scale of mental phenomena. Sacred books ascribe to them the following gifts: foreseeing future events; understanding of all languages; the healing of all diseases; the art of reading other people's thoughts; witnessing at will everything that happens thousands of miles from them; understanding the language of animals and birds; Prakamya or the power of keeping up youthful appearance during incredible periods of time; the power of abandoning their own bodies and entering other people's frames; Vashitva, or the gift to kill, and to tame wild animals with their eyes; and, lastly, the mesmeric power to subjugate any one, and to force any one to obey the unexpressed orders of the Raja-Yogi.

Dr. Paul has witnessed the few phenomena of Hatha-Yoga already described; there are many others about which he has heard, and which he neither believes nor disbelieves. But he guarantees that a Yogi can suspend his breath for forty-three minutes and twelve seconds.

Nevertheless, European scientific authorities maintain that no one can suspend the breath for more than two minutes. O science! Is it possible then that thy name is also vanitas vanitatum, like the other things of this world?

We are forced to suppose that, in Europe, nothing is known about the means which enabled the philosophers of India, from times immemorial, gradually to transform their human frames.

Here are a few deep words of Professor Boutleroff, a Russian scientist whom I, in common with all Russians, greatly respect: "... All this belongs to knowledge; the increase of the mass of

knowledge will only enrich and not abolish science. This must be accomplished on the strength of serious observation, of study, of experience, and under the guidance of positive scientific methods, by which people are taught to acknowledge every other phenomenon of nature. We do not call you blindly to accept hypotheses, after the example of bygone years, but to seek after knowledge; we do not invite you to give up science, but to enlarge her regions ... "

This was said about spiritualist phenomena. As to the rest of our learned physiologists, this is, approximately, what they have the right to say: "We know well certain phenomena of nature which we have personally studied and investigated, under certain conditions, which we call normal or abnormal, and we guarantee the accuracy of our conclusions."

However, it would be very well if they added:

"But having no pretensions to assure the world that we are acquainted with all the forces of nature, known and unknown, we do not claim the right to hold back other people from bold investigations in regions which we have not reached as yet, owing to our great cautiousness and also to our moral timidity. Not being able to maintain that the human organism is utterly incapable of developing certain transcendental powers, which are rare, and observable only under certain conditions, unknown to science, we by no means wish to keep other explorers within the limits of our own scientific discoveries."

By pronouncing this noble, and, at the same time, modest speech, our physiologists would doubtless gain the undying gratitude of posterity.

After this speech there would be no fear of mockery, no danger of losing one's reputation for veracity and sound reason; and the learned colleagues of these broad-minded physiologists would

investigate every phenomenon of nature seriously and openly. The phenomena of spiritualism would then transmigrate from the region of materialized "mothers-in-law" and half-witted fortune-telling to the regions of the psycho-physiological sciences. The celebrated "spirits" would probably evaporate, but in their stead the living spirit, which "belongeth not to this world," would become better known and better realized by humanity, because humanity will comprehend the harmony of the whole only after learning how closely the visible world is bound to the world invisible.

After this speech, Haeckel at the head of the evolutionists, and Alfred Russel Wallace at the head of the spiritualists, would be relieved from many anxieties, and would shake hands in brotherhood.

Seriously speaking, what is there to prevent humanity from acknowledging two active forces within itself, one purely animal, the other purely divine?

It does not behove even the greatest amongst scientists to try to "bind the sweet influences of the Pleiades," even if they have chosen "Arcturus with his sons" for their guides. Did it never occur to them to apply to their own intellectual pride the questions the "voice out of the whirlwind" once asked of long-suffering Job: "where were they when were laid the foundations of the earth? And have the gates of death been opened unto them?" If so, only then have they the right to maintain that here and not there is the abode of eternal light.

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A Treatise on the Yoga Philosophy

[By N.C. Paul, G.B.M.C., sub-assistant surgeon [1], comments by H.P.B.]



H.P.B.'s Introduction: - When, in America and Europe, we affirmed upon the authority of the testimony of eye-witnesses the quasi-miraculous physical endurance of certain ascetics in India, our statements were invariably received by the general public with incredulity; and sometimes by physicians, and men of science, with contemptuous sneers. Some of the most humoristic articles, ever printed in the New York newspapers, were written at our expense upon this text. When we mentioned that we had personally known, not only professional *fakirs* and *sannyasins*, but private Jains, who, under the inspiration of fanaticism, would abstain from breathing for over twenty-two minutes, till they brought on a dead trance, while others would fast for over forty days and yet survive, our evidence was regarded, as little better than that of a hopeless lunatic. Naturally, therefore, such an experience made us very guarded, and at last we came to speak with great diffidence upon the subject at all, except with good and trusted friends. Knowing what gigantic strides biological science was making, we thought it could not be long before some scientific experiment would turn up, which would prove the possibility of such phenomena and wrest from sceptical science the confession of its pre-vious ignorance. It now seems that we were not to be disappointed.

A Reuter's telegram from New York, dated August 7, apprised the world of the following stupendous event: -

"Dr. Tanner, who announced his disbelief regarding medical theories about starvation, declaring he could live for forty days without food, and who began here his self-imposed task on the 28th June, completed it today, but is emaciated and exhausted."

At once the idea occurred to us that the time had at last arrived to make the world acquainted with certain facts which, before Dr. Tanner's courageous experiment, would have been most assuredly classed by the ignorant as fictions along with other facts that have heretofore appeared in our journal, but, although supported by trust-worthy evidence, been ranked by the sceptics as incredible. These facts are discussed in a small pamphlet, published at Benares thirty years ago by an Anglo-Indian doctor, which, on account of its subject being so distasteful to the incredulous, failed to attract the attention of men of science at that time. It is through the obliging kindness of the venerable Pandit Lakshmi Narain Vyása, of Allahabad, that we are enabled to reproduce for the instruction and gratification of our readers, from the copy in his possession, this, Dr. Paul's excellent monograph on the Yoga Philosophy. Though written so long ago, and, of course containing none of the more recent speculations of science, yet this work has a distinct value as an honest attempt to explain, from the standing-point of a medical man, the reason for this, that, or the other of the Yogi's stages of discipline; which, as we have shown, have been repudiated as "scientifically" impossible. But, as we cannot say that in every case the author has succeeded in making himself or his facts clearly understood, we venture to accompany the text with

commentaries. And this with the double object in view of silencing at once the malicious accusation that our Society is no better than a school of "magic," the word being used to signify ridiculous superstition and belief in *supernaturalism* and of preventing our readers from receiving wrong impressions in general.

We are glad to say that the eighteen months passed by us in this country, and the twelve-month existence of our journal, have not been fruitless in experience. For, during this period, we have learned at least one most important feature pertaining to the actual state of Hindu society. We find that the latter comprises two distinct parties, one, that of the free-thinkers, all-denying, sceptical, and wholly materialistic, whether of the Bradlaugh party, or the "modern school of thought;" the other, orthodox, bigoted, full of the unreasoning superstitions of the Brahmanical schools, and believing in anything if it only tallies with one or the other of the *Puranas*. Both the *nec plus ultra* of exaggeration and, as the saying goes, "each more Catholic than the Pope," whether the latter is represented by Bradlaugh or the Caste Almighty, the most inflexible of gods. The few honorable exceptions go but enforcing the general rule.

The Theosophical Society - whatever any inimical paper may say - knew why it was wanted in India, and came just in time to place itself between the above-named parties. Our journal, its organ, has from the beginning pursued the distinct policy of lending a friendly ear to both these parties, and bidding its time to have its full say. By doing so it has puzzled many, given offence to a few - through no malice or fault of ours, though - but afforded instruction, we hope, to such as have had the wit to understand its policy. And now that the end of the year is reached, we mean to commence our intended series of

explanations by reprinting Dr. Paul's treatise, from month to month, with a commentary upon the text as before stated. At the same time the criticisms of all persons, learned in the Yoga, upon either Dr. Paul's views or our own, are invited.

This Treatise mainly relates to the practices of the *Hatha*, not the *Raja*, Yoga, - though the author has devoted to each a distinct chapter. We will notice the great difference between the two, later on. - **End of introduction.**

Author's Preface

The present Treatise contains the theory and practice of the Yoga, one of the six systems of doctrine held by the Hindus.

The Yoga treats of various processes, by which the Hindu Ecstatic acquire the power of abstaining from eating and breathing for a long time, and of becoming in-sensible to all external impressions.

The Hindu mystics (yogis), who practice yoga, retire into subterranean retreats (guphá), they abstain from com-mon salt, and are extremely fond of milk, on which they chiefly live: they are nocturnal in their habits, keeping retired in the day; they are slow in their motions, and torpid in their manners; they eat and walk during the night. They practice two postures, termed Padmasana, and Siddhasana, with a view to respire with the least pos-sible frequency. They also dread the rapid changes and inclemencies of the weather.

When the yogis are able to practice the above quiescent postures for the period of two hours, they commence to practice Pranayama, a stage of self-trance which is characterized by

profuse perspiration, tremblings of the system, and a sense of lightness of the animal economy. They next practice Pratyahara, a stage of self-trance in which they have the functions of the senses suspended. They then practice Dharana, a stage of self-trance in which sensibility and voluntary motion are suspended, and the body is capable of retaining any given posture, the mind being said to be quiescent in this stage of self-trance.

The Yogis, after attaining the stage of Dharana (cata-leptic condition), aspire to what is termed Dhyana, a stage of self-trance in which they pretend to be surrounded by flashes of eternal light or electricity, termed Ananta-jyotí, (from two Sanskrit words signifying endless or all-pervad-ing light), which they say is the universal soul. The Yogis in a state of Dhyana are said to be clairvoyant. The Dhyana of the Yogis is the Turyá avasthá of the Vedantists - the ecstasy of the Physicians, the self-contempla-tion of the German mesmerisers, and the clairvoyance of the French philosophers.

Samadhi is the last stage of self-trance. In this state, the yogis, like the bat, the hedgehog, the marmot, the hamster, and the dormouse, acquire the power of support-ing the abstraction of atmospheric air, and the privation of food and drink. Of Samadhi or human hibernation there have been three cases within the last twenty-five years. The first case occurred in Calcutta, the second in Jesselmere and the third in the Punjab. I was an eye-witness of the first case.

Of Samadhi there are two varieties, termed Samprajnata and Asamprajnata. Colonel Townsend, who could stop the motion of his heart and arteries at pleasure, and could die or expire when he pleased, and again revive, was a case of Samprajnata Samadhi.

The Jesselmere, the Punjabi, and the Calcutta yogis, who assumed a death-like condition by swallowing the tongue, and who could not revive of themselves at plea-sure, were cases of Asamprajnata samadhi, as they were all resuscitated by others who drew the buried tongue out of the fauces and restored it to its normal place.

On account of the real obscurity of the nature of the Yoga philosophy, and of my utter ignorance of the Sans-krit language, in which all the standard works on Indian mysticism are written, I must crave some indulgence if I have failed to do full justice to the subject of self-trance as practiced by the cold-blooded and hibernating philoso-phers of the East.

A TREATISE ON THE YOGA PHILOSOPHY

Before entering on the consideration of the elements of human hibernation or Yoga, it may not be altogether uninteresting to give a full account of the nature of the expired air, which the Sanskrit authorities term Prâná.

The expired air contains more caloric and more watery vapor, is more elastic, and is of less specific gravity than the inspired air. The average temperature of the expired air is 99'5 F.

The average quantity of Watery vapor expired in 24 hours by an adult, in temperate- climates, is 7,819,222 grains. The bulk of carbonic acid, in the 100 parts of the expired air, varies, according to different authorities, as shown by the table following: -

Authorities	Average percentage of carbonic acid by volume.
Prout.....	3- 45.
Coathupe.....	4- 02.
Thompson.....	4- 16.
Vierordt.....	4- 334.
Brunner and Valentine.....	4- 380.

The quantity of carbonic acid, evolved during the day, is greater than what is excreted during the night.

For every 12 volumes of carbonic acid evolved during the day, 10 are exhaled during the night. The quantity of carbonic acid evolved in respiration is considerably in-creased after a full meal. Hence, moderation in diet, term-ed Mitáhara, is recommended to persons who practice the suspension of the breath. Sequin found that when he was in a state of repose, and fasting, he vitiated only 1,210 cubic inches of oxygen, while, during digestion, this bulk was increased to between 1,800 and 1,900 cubic inches.

With a view to expire less carbonic acid, many fakirs fast during the day and take one moderate meal during the night. These are called Naktabhojí.

Exercise increases the amount of carbonic acid in the expired air in a given time. Aware of this fact, the ancient Hindu philosophers prescribed slow movements to such as wanted to exhale less carbonic acid.

Yogis are recommended to move slowly in order to ren-der their respiration less frequent.

Temperature

Human beings deteriorate a greater quantity of air in a cold than in a warm medium; that is to say, they exhale more carbonic acid in a cold atmosphere than in a hot one. Hence the Yogis are recommended to dwell, like the burrowing animals, in subterranean retreats which are remarkable for possessing a uniform temperature. The nearer the temperature of the external air is to the animal heat, the less is the quantity of carbonic acid in the expired air. Hence the appetite for food at the equator is less keen than in the Polar Regions. The appetite for food is in proportion to the quantity of carbonic acid exhaled during a given time. In a confined atmosphere less carbonic acid is evolved than in the free ventilated air. Hence a Yogi delights to live in a guphá (subterranean cell) having a small door which is blocked up with clay by his assistant.

Loud Speaking

The amount of carbonic acid exhaled in a given time, is greater in loud speaking than in a state of silence. Hence a Yogi is recommended to practice Maunávrata, - taciturnity, or the vow of silence.

Mental Labour

Mental labour diminishes the quantity of carbonic acid in the expired air. Hence the Yogis are recommended to avoid physical exertions, and to engage in meditation.

Mental Abstraction

When the mind is abstracted from its functions, the amount of carbonic acid is lessened. Hence the Yogis are recommended

to fix their sight on the tip of the nose or upon the space between the eye-brows. These peculiar turns of the axes of vision suspend the respiratory movements and generally produce hypnotism. This process is termed Trataka in Sanskrit.

Rest

The quantity of carbonic acid exhaled in a given time is less in a state of rest than in one of exercise. Hence the Yogis are recommended to sit in the two tranquil and quiescent postures termed the Siddhasana and Kamalasana, of which a circumstantial account will be given while treating of human hibernation.

The longer the state of rest is continued, the less is the quantity of carbonic acid evolved from the gradual decrease of the number of respirations. This is better illustrated by the following paragraph quoted from a standard work on Natural History.

"In a specimen of *Bombus terrestris*, which remained at rest for about half an hour, the respirations had become deep and labored, and were continued regularly at about fifty-eight per minute. At the expiration of one hundred and forty minutes, during which time the insect remained in a state of repose, the respirations were only forty-six per minute. At the expiration of a hundred and eighty minutes, the respirations were no longer perceptible."

As the respirations are fewer in a given time, in persons of sedentary habits, the desire for food is proportionally less keen. Owing to this circumstance, individuals, leading a sedentary life, are subject to an infinite variety of diseases. A studious man digests badly because he exhales a very small quantity of carbonic acid, owing to the diminished number of respirations

dependent on intense mental application and on a state of repose.

Milk diet is well suited to sedentary habits, and generally supersedes the employment of purgatives, emetics and cordials, which are in such general vogue in the treatment of diseases arising from sedentary habits.

Influence of Dryness and Moisture on the Expired Air

Human beings exhale more carbonic acid in a dry atmosphere than in a moist one.

Influence of Height of Places

The exhalation of carbonic acid is greater at the level of the sea than on mountains.

Influence of Radiation and Vaporization on Expired Air

On being exposed to the open air in a carriage, or on the deck of a ship, human beings exhale more carbonic acid than usual, from the more active radiation and evaporation from the animal economy.

Influence of Conductors and Non-Conductors on the Expired Air

When we are surrounded by non-conductors, we exhale less carbonic acid, if the atmosphere be cold, than when surrounded by conductors. Hence dealers in metallic utensils consume more food during the winter. A true Yogi is directed not to touch metals of any description. It may be observed that hibernating animals are covered with non-conductors during their long hibernal sleep. Hence the more warmly we are clad, the less is

the quantity of carbonic acid evolved, and the less, consequently, is the demand for food.

Influence of the Drinking of Cold Water on the Expired Air

Those, who are accustomed to drink large quantities of cold water, exhale more carbonic acid than those who drink a small quantity of the liquid. A Yogi is recommended to take a small quantity of water to quench his thirst. I have known a native to abstain altogether from water, and to maintain sound health at the same time.

Influence of Alcoholic Liquors on the Expired Air

The use of alcoholic liquor causes a considerable diminution in the amount of carbonic acid given out. The Aghoras, a sect of Hindu fakirs, consume a large quantity of alcoholic liquor in the course of the 24 hours.

H.P.B.'s Comment: - The Aghoras, or Aghora-Pantha, can hardly be fairly compared with or even be said to follow any Yoga, system at all, not even the Hatha-Yoga. They are notorious for their filthy habits; eat carrion of various kinds, and, in days of old, were even accused of devouring human flesh! These persons certainly made spirituous liquors their habitual drink, and, unlike real Yogis, extorted alms and used their system as a mere pretext for making money. Reduced to a few miserable and disgusting wretches, they were finally suppressed, and have now disappeared. - **End of the comment.**

Influence of Weight on the Expired Air

Persons, who are heavy, exhale more carbonic acid than those who are comparatively light. Hence the Yogis ex-tenuate their systems, restrain their passions, and subdue their vicious natures, by a parsimonious use of food. Ab-stinence favors longevity, by diminishing the waste of matter. With frugal fare, St. Anthony lived 105 years; James the Hermit, 104; Arsenius, tutor of the Emperor Arcadins, 120; Simon the Stylite, 112; and Romauld, 120. These persons took but very little food.

Cassian assures us that the common rate, for 24 hours, was 12 ounces of bread and a sufficiency of pure water.

On analysis, 12 ounces of bread will be found to consist of: -

Water	-----	2304	Grains
Carbon	-----	1534.	8 do.
Oxygen	-----	1524.	do.
Hydrogen	-----	205.	2 do.
Nitrogen	-----	72	do.
Salts	-----	120	do.

From the above analysis of the food of the fore-men-tioned long-lived individuals, it appears that they con-sumed a little more than 1500 grains of carbon in 24 hours, and that they respired less than six times per minute, as shown by the table following:

Number of respirations per minute	Percentage of carbonic acid in the expired air	Volume of expired air in a minute
6	5.70	183
12	4.10	366
42	3.3	732
48	2.9	1464
96	2.7	2928

Volume of carbonic acid in the expired air in a minute	Volume of carbonic acid in each expiration	Weight of carbonic exhaled in 24 hours in grains
10.431	1.738	1943.67
15.006	1.250	2798.18
24.156	1.006	4501.13
42.456	0.884	7911.08
79.056	0.823	14772.22

Abstinence diminishes the number of respirations; it diminishes the waste of body; it promotes longevity.

According to the Hindu Rishis, whatever prolongs the interval (Kumbhaka) promotes longevity. The term Kumbhaka means the interval between an inspiration (puraka) and an expiration (rechaka). The terms Puraka, Kumbhaka, and Rechaka, are frequently met within almost all the sacred writings of the Hindus. The object of the puraka (the expired air) is called Apana, and that of the rechaka (the expired air) is called Prana. The cessation of an expiration constitutes death, and the retention of the same, life. The suppression of expiration constitutes Pranayama, a practice by which the Hindu pretends to acquire ashtasiddhi (eight consummations), and to overcome death. It is the daily practice of the Brahman mendicants who aspire to human hibernation or Yoga.

H.P.B.'s Comment: - Human hibernation belongs to the Yoga system and may be termed one of its many results, but it cannot be called "Yoga." - **End of comment.**

The stoppage of the respiratory movements (Pranayama), or rather the prolongation of the interval (Kumbhaka) has a remarkable effect upon the quantity of carbonic acid in the

expired air. Vierordt has made four series of experiments, in order to ascertain the extent of this influence upon the quantity of carbonic acid evolved from the lungs. In the first series, he shut his mouth, and held his nose from 20 to 60 seconds, the longest period he could continue the experiment, and then made the deepest possible inspiration. In the second series, he made the deepest inspiration possible, and then suspended the respiratory movements for a longer or shorter time, at the termination of which he made the deepest expiration. This experiment he was able to prolong to 70, 90, and even 100 seconds.

In the third series, he made an ordinary inspiration before suspending the respiratory movements, and, after this suspension had continued for different periods up to 30 seconds, he made an ordinary expiration. The fourth series of experiments, which he performed, was to ascertain the period of time, after the stoppage of the respiratory movements, when the percentage of carbonic acid becomes uniform in the different parts of the lungs and air; and this, he found, took place after 40 seconds.

He has arranged the results of the first three series of experiments, in several tables, exhibiting the difference between the percentage and absolute quantity of carbonic acid gas in the expired air, at different periods after the suspension of the respiratory movements, under the circumstances mentioned, and when the respiratory movements proceed in the normal manner. In the first series of experiments, the percentage of carbonic acid in the expired air, after the respiratory movements had been suspended 20 seconds, was higher by 1.73 than when these movements were normal. But the absolute quantity of carbonic acid evolved from the lungs had diminished by 2.642

cubic inches, and at the end of 55 seconds its percentage had increased 2.32; but its absolute quantity had diminished to the extent of 12.382 cubic inches per minute. When the respirations are 3 in number per minute, the percentage of carbonic acid may be reckoned 5.83, and the absolute quantity of the gas in the expired air, 5.33,445 cubic inches in a minute.

When there is but one respiration per minute, the percentage of carbonic acid in the expired air may be reckoned at 6.42, and the absolute quantity of carbonic acid, 1.9581 cubic inches per minute.

In the second series of experiments, where the deepest possible inspiration preceded, and the deepest possible expiration followed, the suspension of the respiratory movements, the above quantity of carbonic acid, evolved from the lungs for the first 15 seconds, was somewhat more than what there would have been, had these movements preceded. But after this it began to diminish; and when the respiratory movements had been suspended for 95 seconds, it was diminished to the extent of 14.078 cubic inches.

At the end of 100 seconds, the percentage of the carbonic acid was 3.08 above the normal quantity in ordinary respiration. In the third series of experiments, the carbonic acid, in the expired air, at the end of 30 seconds, was 1.555 percent, above the normal quantity. When the respirations were 2 in number per minute, the percentage of carbonic acid, in the expired air, was 5.65.

The normal number of respirations per minute is 12: the average bulk of each expiration is 30,5 English cubic inches; and the normal percentage of carbonic acid is 4.1, by volume.

From the above experiments it is evident that the absolute quantity of carbonic acid, evolved from the lungs in a given time,

is less in retarded than in normal expiration, and that the percentage of carbonic acid is greater in retarded than in normal expiration.

The exhalation of carbonic acid from the lungs is materially diminished by the inaudible and frequent repetition of certain words, such as Om, Bom, etc., etc. The inaudible pronunciation of Om, the sacred trilateral monosyllable, diminishes the absolute quantity of carbonic acid in the expired air of a given time. This constitutes the Jāpa of Pranāva (or Om). Next to abstinence, Jāpa ranks in importance. A Dandi, who repeats Om twelve thousand times every day, in an inaudible voice, generally lives upon a small quantity of food.

H.P.B.'s Comment - Thus we find, in this portion of the Treatise, a full vindication of the habits of the Hindu ascetics - nay those even of the Christian saints of every period, from the first century down to our own days, as we will prove. And hence the laugh of the ignorant, the sceptic and the materialist, at what seems to them the most absurd of practices, is turned against the jokers. For we now see that - if an ascetic prefers a subterranean cave to the open fresh air, takes (apparently) the vow of silence and meditation, refuses to touch money or anything metallic, and, lastly, passes his days in what appears the most ludicrous occupation of all, that of concentrating his whole thoughts on the tip of his nose, - he does this, neither for the sake of playing an aimless comedy nor yet out of mere unreasoned superstition, but as a physical discipline, based on strictly scientific principles. Most of the thousands of fakirs, gosâins, vairagis and others of the mendicant order, who throng the villages and religious fairs of India in our present age, may be and undoubtedly are worthless and idle vagabonds, modern

clowns, imitating the great students of the philosophic ages of the past. And, there is but little doubt that, though they ape the postures and servilely copy the traditional customs of their nobler brethren, they understand no more *why* they do it than the sceptic who laughs at them. But, if we look closer at the origin of their school and study Patanjali's *Yoga Vidya* - we will be better able to understand and hence appreciate their seemingly ridiculous practices. If the ancients were not as well versed in the details of physiology as are our physicians of the Carpenterian modern school, - a question still *sub judice* [*under judgment*] - they may perhaps be proved, on the other hand, to have fathomed this science in another direction by other methods far deeper than the former; in short, to have made themselves better acquainted with its occult and exceptional laws than we are. That the ancients of all countries were intimately acquainted with what is termed in our days "hypnotism" or self-mesmerisation, the production, in a word, of voluntary trance - cannot be denied. One of many proofs is found in the fact that the same method, described here, is known as a tradition and practiced by the Christian monks at Mount-Athos even to this very day. These, to induce "divine visions," concentrate their thoughts and fix their eyes on the navel for hours together. A number of Russian travellers testify to such an occupation in the Greek convents, and writers of other nationalities, who have visited this celebrated hermitage, will bear out our assertion...

Having made clear this first point and vindicated the Hindu Yogis in the name and upon the authority of modern science, we will now leave the further consideration on the subject to our next number. - **End of comment.**

Colonel Townsend an English officer of excellent natural parts, and of great honour and integrity, could die or expire when he pleased and again revive. He observed the strictest regimen, living on the softest vegetables and the lightest animal food, drinking asses' milk daily, even in the camp, and, for common drink, Bristol water. By an abstemious course of diet he could suspend the respiration and pulsation, and thereby assume a condition similar to death, or the samadhi of the Indian fakirs. Low diet and a state of composure or rest were the principal means employed by the English officer to assume this death-like appearance. The fakir who was buried alive for 40 days in the time of Runjeet Singh, and then exhumed alive, lived entirely upon milk previous to his burial, and abstained from food, drinks, and air, all the time he was buried. To all intents and purposes he hibernated. A fakir, who hibernated in Jesselmere, lived entirely upon milk.

The above facts establish, beyond doubt, the property in milk of conducing to hibernation. All the profane and sacred writings of the Hindu extol milk as an aliment favouring longevity. I believe it is to the highly hygienic property in milk that the cow owes its sanctity amongst the Hindus, whose unparalleled benevolence to the animal is notorious.

All hibernal aliments diminish the exhalation of carbonic acid from the lungs. They, therefore, diminish the waste of the animal economy.

The following table shows the relative waste of the body from different varieties of diet.

Names of diet	Specific number, indicating waste in a given time
Vegetable diet	1000
Mixed do.	1445
Animal do.	2367

Without a few remarks, the above table will not be well understood. If a man, living on vegetables, loses 1000 grains in weight in a given time, the same man will lose 1445 grains of his weight during the same time, while living upon mixed diet; and 2367 grains while living upon animal food.

A studious man digests badly when he lives upon mixed or animal food. But he digests the hibernal aliments with ease. With milk diet he can undergo mental labour which would be painful and injurious to digestions, should he live upon animal or mixed diet. Milk is the normal food of intellectual man. Mental labour, when indulged in after meals of mixed or animal diet, is the prolific source of an infinite variety of diseases. To painters, engravers, poets, mathematicians, and scientific men in general, the nature of whose avocations requires fixed attention and mental abstraction, milk is admirably adapted.

The following table shows the analysis of milk:

Cow's-milk, as analysed by Liebig	100 grains	1000 grains	14400 grains or 1 seer	28800 grains or 2 seers
Water	87.080	870.80	12539.520	25070.940
Carbon	6.982	69.82	1005.408	2010.816
Hydrogen	1.144	11.44	164.736	329.472
Nitrogen	.520	5.20	74.880	149.760
Oxygen	3.649	36.49	525.456	1050.912
Salts and earths	.625	6.25	90.000	180.000

Rice is another article of diet used by the Yogis of India. Its composition is shown in the table following:

Rice	100 grains	1000 grains	14400 grains or 1 seer
Water	7. 6	76	1094. 4
Carbon	42. 1036	421. 036	6062. 9184
Hydrogen	5. 754	57. 54	828. 576
Nitrogen	1. 268	12. 68	182. 592
Oxygen	42. 8744	428. 744	9173. 576
Salts and earths	4.	4.	57.6

Wheat is another staple article of diet of Yogis. Its composition is as follows:

Wheat	100 grains	1000 grains	14400 grains or 1 seer
Water	10.	100.	1440.
Carbon	40. 557	405. 57	5840. 108
Hydrogen	5. 53	55. 3	796. 32
Nitrogen	2. 149	21. 49	308. 556
Oxygen	39. 759	397. 59	5724. 366
Salts and earths	2.	20.	288.

Barley is another article of the Yogis diet. The Emperor Akbar, who was noted for justice and moderation, lived upon barley and anethum sowa. According to Dr. Beekman and Bonssingault, barley, dried at 212. F., contains 2.02 percent of nitrogen. According to the latest authority, it has the following composition.

Barley	100 grains	1000 grains	14400 grains or 1 seer
Water	9. 37	93. 7	1349. 28
Carbon	44. 32	443. 2	6382. 08
Hydrogen	2. 38	23. 8	342. 72
Nitrogen	1. 8	18.	259. 2
Oxygen	40. 47	404. 7	5827. 28
Salts and earths	1. 66	16. 6	239. 04

Meat, which the Yogis abstain from, has the following composition:

Fresh meat	100 grains	1000 grains	14400 grains or 1 seer
Water	75. 012	750. 12	10801. 2
Carbon	12. 972	129. 72	1867. 99
Hydrogen	1. 897	18. 97	273. 19
Nitrogen	3. 762	37. 62	541. 75
Oxygen	5. 31	5. 31	764. 64
Salts and earths	1. 057	10. 57	152. 23

The numerical proportion of carbon to oxygen, in carbonic, is as 1 to 2.666. Carbonic acid that is thrown out from the lungs and the skin, arises from the combination of the carbon of the aliments with the inspired oxygen. When the oxygen is deficient in the aliment, its carbon, in order to be converted into carbonic acid, requires more oxygen from the atmospheric air which can only be accomplished by increasing the number of respirations.

The following table shows the numerical proportion of carbon oxygen in different aliments referred to in the foregoing tables.

Aliments	Numerical proportion of carbon oxygen
Fresh Meat	1 to .409
Milk	1 " .522
Barley	1 " .913
Wheat	1 " .98
Rice	1 " .1001

Animal flesh, when used as an aliment, requires more atmospheric oxygen, and hence it is necessary for a carnivorous animal to accelerate respiration by motion. A tiger, which lives entirely upon flesh diet, moves to and from even when confined in an iron cage, in order to consume the more oxygen from the air. For an amount of meat containing one grain of carbon, the animal must inhale 2.257 grains of atmospheric oxygen.

One living upon cow's milk must inhale 2.144 grains of atmospheric oxygen for a quantity of the nutritious fluid containing one of carbon. He should be less active than one living upon flesh diet. A person who lives upon barley consumes 1.753 grains of atmospheric oxygen for a quantity of the aliment containing one grain of carbon. He that lives upon wheat consumes 1.686 grains of atmospheric oxygen for a quantity of the aliment yielding one grain of carbon. One living upon rice requires 1.665 of atmospheric oxygen for a quantity of the aliment containing one grain of carbon.

The following table shows the relative quantity of atmospheric oxygen, in grains, required for one grain carbon of different aliments.

Aliments	Relative Quantity of atmospheric oxygen for each alimental grain of carbon.
Fresh Meat	257 grains
Milk	144 grains
Barley	1. 753 grains.
Wheat	1. 686 grains.
Rice	1. 665 grains.

An aliment is more or less stimulant to the circulating system, according to the more or less quantity of nitrogen contained in a given weight of the substance, as shown by the table following.

Azotized aliments	Quantity	Quantity of Nitrogen
Fresh Meat	1000	37.62
Wheat	do.	21.49
Barley	do.	18.00
Rice	do.	12.68
Fresh cow's-milk	do.	5.20
Fresh asses' milk	do.	2.63

From the above table it is evident that asses' milk is the least stimulating to the circulating system; and, owing to this circumstance, Colonel Townsend, who used asses' milk habitually, acquired the power of expiring and reviving when he pleased.

Woman's milk contains .19516 percent of nitrogen, 1000 parts of this milk contains 1.9516 of nitrogen. It is the lightest of all animal aliments. A child at the breast enjoys a longer repose, in consequence of the low stimulating nature of woman's milk, which is the only nourishment it takes until it is weaned.

The hibernal aliments, such as barley, rice, wheat, sugar, ghee, milk etc., etc., promote longevity, increase power and strength. They are pleasing to the palate, nourishing, permanent, and congenial to the body. According to the Bhagavad Gita, all aliments which are neither too bitter, too saltish, too hot, too pungent, too astringent, nor too inflammable or heating, are regarded as *satyá guni* food. They are said to be palatable, nourishing, permanent, and congenial to the body.

Sleep

As Yoga, or human hibernation, is nothing more than prolonged sleep, it may not be altogether uninteresting to discuss the subject of somnolence before we enter upon the difficult subject of self-trance practised by the Indian fakirs. Sleep may be defined the repose of the organs of sense and motion. "It is of inestimable value to man. It knits up the ravelled sleeve of care. It is the death of each day's life. It is sore labour's bath. It is the balm of hurt minds, and chief nourisher in life's feast."

The duration of sleep in manhood is from 4 to 6 hours per day. It is longer with the child at the breast than with one that is weaned. It is longer with boys and girls than in the case of adults; and longer with adults than with the aged.

There are instances on record, of individuals sleeping for weeks, months, nay even for years.

H.P.B.'s comment - We have ourself known a Russian lady - Madame Kashereninof - whose sister, then an unmarried lady, about 27, slept regularly for six weeks at a time. After that period she would awake, weak bit not very exhausted and ask for some milk - her habitual food. At the end of a fortnight, sometimes three weeks, she would begin to show unmistakeable signs of

somnolence, and at the end of a month fall into her trance again. Thus it lasted for seven years, she being considered by the populace as a great saint. It was in 1841. What became of her after that, we are unable to say. - **End of the comment.**

"Samuel Chilton, a labourer, aged about 25, residing at Timsbury near Bath, was accustomed to fall into a sleep from which no one could rouse him till after a month's time, during which he neither ate nor drank. Once he slept for seven weeks, during which he made water once and had one evacuation."

"There lived in the parish of Cortachy, in the country of Forfar, between 1819 and 1834, a certain female, Euphemia Lindsay, commonly known through the most of Forfarshire by the appellation of sleeping Effie. Her peculiarities were as remarkable as those of any who has appeared in the annals of human history. She was addicted to wandering, and commonly left her home about the time when other people retired to rest, and during the night would frequently wander from twelve to fifteen miles. It was remarked that when she took these nocturnal journeys she was sure shortly afterwards to fall into sleeping fits; and it was no unusual thing for her to sleep two or three weeks without awaking. In the winter of 1820 she slept five weeks, and during the spring of 1825 she slept six weeks and three days, which was the longer sleep she had been known to take. She never touched her store of provisions during the time she slept."

During sleep the temperature of the body is diminished, the number of pulsations diminished, and the respirations less frequent and audible. During deep sleep there are about 22 pulsations and 6 respirations per minute. Sleep is prolonged in proportion as the animal heat subsides to that of surroundings atmosphere.

A deep and perfect sleep (sushupti) has been aptly defined a temporary cessation of all the functions of animal life, viz., of thought, sensation, mental emotion, and all their combinations and modifications. In *sushupti* the soul is extricated from terrestrial bonds, and man is free from all sins.

Yoga has been differently defined by different authorities. Some have defined it mental abstraction; some have defined it silent prayer; some have defined it the union of the inspired to the expired air; some have defined it the union of mind to soul. But by Yoga I understand the art of suspending the circulation and respiration. Yoga is chiefly divided into *Raja-Yoga* and *Hatha-Yoga*. I shall first consider *Raja-Yoga*.

H.P.B.'s Comment - Here the author falls into an unmistakable error. He confounds the *Raja* with the *Hatha-Yogis*, whereas the former have nothing to do with the physical training of the *Hatha* nor with any other of the innumerable sects who have now adopted the name and emblems of Yogis. Wilson in his *Essays on the Religions of the Hindus* falls into the same confusion and knows very little, if anything at all, of the true *Raja-Yogis* who have no more to do with *Śiva* than with *Vishnu* or any other deity. Alone, the most learned among the *Śankara's Dandis* of Northern India, especially those who are settled in Rajputana who would be able - if they would - to give some correct notions about the *Raja Yogis*; for these men, who have adopted the philosophical tenets of *Śankara's Vedānta*, are, moreover, profoundly versed in the doctrines of the *Tantras* - termed devilish by those who either do not understand them or reject their tenets with some preconceived object. If, in speaking of the *Dandis*, we have used above the phrase beginning with the conjunction "if," it is because we happen to know how carefully the secrets of the real *Yogis* - may even their existence itself -

are denied within this fraternity. It is comparatively but lately that the usual excuse adopted by them, in support of which they bring their strongest authorities, who affirm that the *Yogi* state is unattainable in the present or *Kali* age - has been set afloat by them. "From the unsteadiness of the senses, the prevalence of sin in the *Kali*, and the shortness of life, how can exaltation by the *Yoga* be obtained?" enquires *Kasikhanda*. But this declaration can be refuted in two words and with their own weapons. The duration of the present *Kali-Yuga* is 432,000 years of which 4,979 have already expired. It is at the very beginning of *Kali-Yuga* that Krishna and Arjuna were born. It is since Vishnu's eighth incarnation that the country had all its *historical Yogis*, for as to the prehistoric ones, or claimed as such, we do not find ourselves entitled to force them upon public notice. Are we then to understand that none of these numerous saints, philosophers and ascetics from Krishna down to the late Vishnu Bramacārya Bawa of Bombay had ever reached the "exaltation by *Yoga*"? To repeat this assertion is simply suicidal in their own interests.

It is not that among the *Hatha-Yogis* - men who at times had reached through a physical and well-organized system of training the highest powers as "wonder-workers" - there has never been a man worthy of being considered as a true *Yogi*. What we say, is simply this: the *Raja-Yogi* trains but his mental and intellectual powers, leaving the physical alone, and making but little of the exercise of phenomena simply of a physical character. Hence it is the rarest thing in the world to find a real *Yogi* boasting of being one, or willing to exhibit such powers - though *he does acquire them as well as the one practicing Hatha-Yoga, but through another and far more intellectual system*. Generally, they deny these powers pointblank, for reasons but too well-grounded. The latter need not even belong

to any apparent order of ascetics, and are oftener known as private individuals than members of a religious fraternity, nor need they necessarily be Hindus. Kabir, who was one of them, fulminates against most of the later sects of mendicants who occasionally become warriors when not simply brigands, and sketches them with a masterly hand: -

"I never beheld such a *Yogi*, Oh, brother! Who forgetting his doctrine roves about in negligence. He follows professedly the faith of MAHADEVA and calls himself an eminent teacher; the scene of his abstraction is the fair or market. MAYA is the mistress of the false saint. When did DATTATREYA demolish a dwelling? When did SUKHÁDEVA collect an armed host? When did NARADÁ mount a matchlock? When did VYASADEVA blow a trumpet? etc."

Therefore, whenever the author - Dr. Paul - speaks of *Raja-Yoga* - the *Hatha* simply is to be understood. - **End of comment.**

Raja Yoga consists of eight stages, *viz.*, Yáma, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana, and Samadhi.

Yáma - Under this term the practice of the five acts of restraint is included, *viz.*, Ahimsa, (absence of violence or cruelty to living creatures, universal innocence), Asteya (avoidance of theft), Satyá (truth), Bramacárya (chastity), and Aparigraha (disinterestedness, or non-acceptance of gifts).

Under the head of Yáma some of the best moral maxims of all religions are evidently included.

Niyama - After practising Yáma, a *Yogi* practises Niyama. Under Niyama are comprehended: - Saucha (purity, personal

cleanliness), Santoska (contentment, patience under injuries), Tapasya (devotion, self-mortifications, self-denial), Svadhyaya (knowledge of nature and of soul), and Ísvara pranidhana (adoration of one Supreme Being, the Creator, the Preserver, and the Destroyer of the world).

Asana - This is a fixed attitude of intense meditation. It is the third stage of Yoga. There are many asanas or postures, in which the *Yogi* is directed to sit while he engages in Yoga, or the art of reducing or suspending the functions of respiration and circulation. Of these asanas the most important are the Siddhasana and the Padmasana.

Without the practice of asana, Yoga cannot be practised. By the practice of asana the *Yogi* is supposed to secure immunity from certain diseases.

By practising successfully the two postures, Padmasana and Siddhasana, one can easily attain the seventh and eighth stages of Yoga, *viz.*, Dhyana and Samadhi. The Siddhasana may be thus practised. Place the left heel under you and the right heel in front of you; fix the sight upon the space between the eyebrows, or the seat of the phrenological power, Individuality, and, while in this motionless attitude, meditate upon the syllable Om, a mysterious word, the frequent inaudible repetition of which is said to ensure release from worldly existence.

The second posture is the Padmasana, which is thus practised. Place the left foot upon the right thigh, and the right foot upon the left thigh; hold with the right hand the right great toe, and with the left hand the left great toe (the hands coming from behind the back and crossing each other); rest the chin on the interclavicular space, and fix the sight on the tip of the nose.

The Siddhasana and Padmasana are both tranquil and quiet

postures, favouring a tranquil circulation and slow respiration. In these postures the Yogis sit and pronounce inaudibly the hypnotic syllable Om, and meditate upon it, in order to tranquilize circulation and retard the respiratory movements. By persevering practice, the Yogis prolong the duration of the above named postures, and, in proportion as they continue these attitudes, they diminish the quantity of their aliments. They reside in their subterranean retreats, called *guphás*, after they have become adept in the practice of these postures. There they live upon hibernal aliments, a circumstantial account of which had been recorded in the preceding pages.

When a Yogi, by practice, is enabled to maintain himself in one of the above mentioned postures, for the period of three hours, and to live upon a quantity of food proportional to the reduced condition of circulation and respiration, without inconvenience, he proceeds to the practice of Pranayama. This is the fourth stage or division of Yoga. It is the suspension of the respiratory movements, which the Yogis daily practise with a view to purging themselves from minor sins. Like the Himalayan marmot, Yogi lives in a subterranean retreat, which is contrived with great art, and consists of an oval cavern, large enough to contain two or three individuals, and having a narrow and long passage. The entrance to the *guphá* is very narrow, and is blocked up with clay when the Yogi attains to the state of Samadhi. While living in the *guphá*, the Yogi lives upon milk, of which he is extremely fond, and sits and lies upon kus'a grass, blankets, and skins of the stag. Breathing the confined atmosphere of a *guphá* possessing uniform temperature, he is not troubled by the vicissitudes of the weather to which others are liable. A Yogi is directed to pronounce inaudible the mantras, Bam, Sam, and Lam, 600 times. He then pronounces, Bam, Bham, Man, Yam, Ram, and Lam, 6000 times. He then

pronounces inaudibly Kam, Kham, Gam, Gham, Nam, Cham, Chham, Jam, Jham, Nam, Tam, and Tham. He then pronounces inaudibly Am, Ám, Im, I'm, Um, U'm, Rim, Rim, Lrim, Lrim, Em, Aim, Om, Aum, Am, 6000 times. And lastly he utters inaudibly Hansa 2000 times. He follows this course of *jápa* for sometime, in order to reduce his respiration, and thereby enable himself to endure the privation of air for a time without inconvenience. Dr. Grant says that an animal whose respiration is small can endure the total privation of air for a certain period.

He next practices the Yamyasana for the period of three months, in the following manner. He inspires through the left nostril, fills the stomach with the inspired air by the act of deglutition, suspends the breath, and then expires through the right nostril. He next inspires through the right nostril, swallows the inspired air, suspends the breath, and finally expires through the left nostril. By the practice of the Yamyasana the Yogi purifies his system, and is thereby enabled to swallow a large quantity of the inspired air.

Suspension of the breath, or Pranayama, cannot be practiced by a Yogi who eats more than enough or less than enough; who sleeps too much or who does not sleep at all. A person who is moderate in eating, sleeping, and recreation and exercise, is qualified for the practice of Pranayama. He aims at a pure, sublime, and perfect devotion, unalloyed with all selfish considerations. He aspires to an entire disinterested love of God, with a view of obtaining beatitude, or emancipation from terrestrial bonds, technically called *Moksa*. With a view of purifying his soul, a Yogi courts silence or taciturnity (*maunávrata*), tranquility, repose, solitude, moderation in eating and sleeping; turns away his eyes from terrestrial vanities, and practices the Pranayama.

The following are the principal process of Pranayama, selected from different authorities.

Preliminary Process

Inspire through the left nostril for the period of 3.4128 seconds, suspend the breath for the period of 13.6512 seconds, and then slowly expire for the period of 6.8256 seconds, through the right nostril. Then inspire through the right nostril for the period of 3.4128 seconds, suspend the breath for the period of 13.6512 seconds, and then expire through the left nostril for the period of 6.8256 seconds. Lastly, commence the process with the left nostril in a similar way. This process is to be practiced four times in the course of the day, for the period of 48 minutes each time. Continue the process for three months, at the expiration of which attempt to increase gradually the duration of Pranayama until able to practice the following process. Inspire through the left nostril for the period of 13.6512 seconds, suspend the breath for the period of 54.6048 seconds, and then expire through the right nostril for the period of 27.3024 seconds. Next inspire through the right nostril for the period of 13.6512 seconds, suspend the breath for the period of 54.6048 seconds, and inspire slowly through the left nostril for the period of 27.3024 seconds and, lastly, inspire through the left nostril once more for the period of 13.6512 seconds. Suspend the breath for the period of 54.6048 seconds, and expire through the right nostril for the period of 27.3024 seconds.

According to some Yogis, Pranayama is of three kinds, the Adhamá, Madhyamá, and Uttamá. The Adhamá Pranayama excites the secretion of sweat. It is thus practiced. Inspire through the left nostril for the period of 2.5596 seconds, suspend

the breath for the period of 10.2384 seconds, and expire through the right nostril for the period of 5.1192 seconds. Next inspire through the right nostril for the period 2.5596 seconds, suspend the breath for the period of 10.2384 seconds, and expire through the right nostril for the period of 5.1192 seconds. Lastly, inspire through the left nostril for the period of 2.5596 seconds, suspend the breath for the period of 10.2384 seconds, and expire through the right nostril for the period of 5.1192 seconds. The second variety of Pranayama is called the Madhyamá Pranayama. It is attended by convulsive movements of the features. It is thus practiced. Inspire through the left nostril for the period of 5.1192 seconds, suspend the breath for the period of 20.4768 seconds, and expire through the right nostril for the period of 10.2384 seconds. Next inspire through the right nostril for the period of 5.1192 seconds, suspend the breath for the period of 20.4768 seconds, and expire through the left nostril for the period of 10.2384 seconds. Lastly, inspire through the left nostril for the period of 5.1192 seconds, suspend the breath for the period of 20.4768 seconds, and expire through the right nostril for the period of 10.2384 seconds. The third of Uttamá variety of Pranayama *raises the Padmasana above the surface of the earth*. It is by the successful practice of this Pranayama that the aerial Brahman of Madras is supposed to have supported himself in a miraculous posture, which puzzled the ingenuity of the European spectators. It is thus practiced. Inspire through the left nostril for the period of 7.6788 seconds, suspend the breath for the period of 30.7152 seconds, and expire through the right nostril for the period of 15.3576 seconds. Next inspire through the right nostril for the period of 30.7152 seconds, and expire through the right nostril for the period of 7.6788 seconds, suspend the breath for the period of 30.7152 seconds, and expire through the left nostril for the period of 15.3576 seconds.

Lastly, inspire through the left nostril for the period of 7.6788 seconds, suspend the breath for the period of 30.7152 seconds, and expire through the right nostril for the period of 15.3576 seconds.

H.P.B.'s Comment - All the above are, as we said before, the practices of *Hatha-Yoga*, and conducive but of the production of physical phenomena - affording very rarely flashes of real clairvoyance, unless it be a kind of feverish state of artificial ecstasy. If we publish them, it is merely for the great value we set upon this information as liable to afford a glimpse of truth to skeptics, by showing them that even in the case of the *Hatha-Yogis* the cause for the production of the phenomena as well as the results obtained can be all explained scientifically, and that, therefore, there is no need to either reject the phenomena a priori and without investigation or to attribute them to any but natural though occult powers, more or less latent in every man and woman. - **End of comment.**

There are eight varieties of Kumbhaka which Yogis practise with a view to study the nature of the soul. They are as follow: Súryabhedhi, Ujjayí, Sítkári, Sítalí, Bhastríká, Bhramari, Múrccha, and Kevala Kumbhaka. There are two processes which are essentially necessary for the practice of the above Kumbhakas. There are the Khecari mudra and the Mulabandha.

Khecari mudra is the act of lengthening the tongue by incising the fraenum linguae and by constant exercise. A yogi cuts the fraenum linguae, rubs the tongue with his hands, and milks it. When the tongue gets lengthened by the division of the fraenum linguae and by the milking process, and reaches the gullet, the Yogi is enabled to shut the rima glottidis by pressing back the epiglottis with the point of the retroverted tongue.

A large and long tongue is indispensably necessary to human hibernation. The turtle, salamander, and guana, which hibernate, have remarkably long and large tongues. A Yogi, by artificial means, lengthens his tongue, turns back the point of it into gullet, presses the epiglottis, which shuts the rima glottides, and confines the inspired air within the system.

In practising this mudra, a Yogi fill the lungs and intestines with the inspired air, shuts up all the apertures of body with the waved cotton balls, assumes the Padmasana, and then shuts the rima glottides by means of the epiglottis pressed upon by the point of the tongue wedged in the gullet.

By the practise of this mudra, a Yogi is supposed to be able to overcome death. He becomes a poet or a prophet at will. He becomes a pure soul, and can penetrate the secrets of the past, the present, and the future. Without it he can never be *absorbed into God*. By the practise of this mudra he becomes insensible, to heat and cold, to pleasure and pain, and holds communion with the "Supreme, Incorruptible, Invisible, Eternal, Inexhaustible, Inconceivable, Omniscient, Omnipresent, and Omnipotent Being," which by the learned is termed the Paramá Púrusha or Great Spirit.

H.P.B.'s Comment - As the science and study of Yoga Philosophy pertains to Buddhist, Lamaie and other religions supposed to be atheistical, *i.e.*, rejecting belief in a personal deity, and as a Vedantin would by no means use such an expression, we must understand the term "absorption into God" in the sense of union with the *Universal Soul*, or *Parama-Púrusha* - the Primal or One Spirit. - **End of comment.**

This mudra removes hunger, thirst, and sleep. The blood of a Yogi who practises this mudra for the period of 24 years,

become converted into chyle. The saline that is sucked or deglutated during the continuance of this mudra, is termed *Amrita*.

Mulabandha is a process by the practise of which an old man becomes a youth. It is thus practised. Place the left foot under the right foot in front of you and breathe the same air over and over again. Or, sit in the posture termed the padmasana. The Yogi then extends his lowers extremities, inspires through the right nostril, rests his chin on his breast, places his forehead on his knees, holds his great toes with his hands, and suspends the breath. When fatigued, he expires through the left nostril, and commences a similar process through the left nostril, and, lastly, through the right nostril. This constitutes the *Pas'chimas thana* of the Yogi.

H.P.B.'s Comment - This posture will hardly have the desired effect unless its philosophy is well understood and it is practiced from youth. The appearance of old age, when the skin has wrinkled and the tissues have relaxed, can be restored but temporarily and with the help of *Maya*. The *Mulabandha* is simply a process to throw oneself in sleep (thus gaining the regular hours of sleep). - **End of comment**.

The *Súryabhedhi Kumbhaka* consists in inspiring through the right nostril, suspending the breath, and then expiring through the left nostril. In this kumbhaka, inspiration is made through the right nostril. Suspension of the breath is effected by resting the chin on the breast (*jalandharabandha*); and expiration is performed through the left nostril, upon which the hairs of the body become erect. The posture employed in this kumbhaka is the padmasana or sukhasana. By the repetition of this kumbhaka, cephalalgia is relieved, coryza cured, and the worms found in the frontal sinuses are expelled.

Ujjayi Kumbakha - By the exercise of this Kumbakha, a Yogi enhances his personal beauty. It is thus practised. Assume the posture called Sukhasana, render the two nostrils free by the first Kumbakha, inspire through both nostrils, fill the stomach and throat with the inspired air, suspend the breath, and then expire slowly through the left nostril. He that practises this Kumbakha gets rid of pulmonary, cardiac, and dropsical, diseases. By this Kumbhaka a Yogi cures all diseases dependent upon deficient inhalation of oxygen.

H.P.B.'s Comment - And if any one feels inclined to sneer at the novel remedy employed by the Yogis to cure "coryza," "worms" and other diseases - which is only a certain mode of inhalation, - his attention is invited to the fact that these *illiterate* and *superstitious* ascetics seem to have only anticipated the discoveries of modern science. One of the latest is reported in the last number of the *New York Medical Record* (Sept., 1880), under the title of "A new and curious Plan for deadening Pain." The experiments were made by Dr. Bonwill, a well-known physician of Philadelphia, in 1872, and have been since successfully applied as an anaesthetic. We quote it from the *Dubuque Daily Telegraph*.

"In 1875, Dr. A. Hewson made a favourable report of his experience with it to the International Medical Congress, and at a recent meeting of the Philadelphia County Medical Society several papers were read on the subject, and much discussion followed. In using the method, the operator merely requests the patient to *breath rapidly, making about 100 respirations per minute, ending in rapid puffing expirations*. At the end of from two to five minutes an entire or partial absence of pain results for half a minute or more, and during that time teeth may be drawn or incisions made. The patient may be in any position, but

that recommended is lying on the side, and it is generally best to throw a handkerchief over the face to prevent distraction of the patient's attention. When the rapid breathing is first begun the patient may feel some exhilaration; following this comes a sensation of fullness in the head or dizziness. The face is first flushed, and afterwards pale or even bluish, the heart beats rather feebly and fast, but the sense of touch is not affected, nor is consciousness lost. The effect is produced more readily in females than in males, and in middle-aged more easily than on the old: children can hardly made to breath properly. It is denied that there is any possible danger. Several minor operations, other than frequent dental ones, have been successfully made by this method, and it is claimed that in dentistry, surgery, and obstetrics, it may supplant the common anaesthetics. Dr. Hewson's explanation is that rapid breathing diminishes the oxygenation of the blood, and that the resultant excess of carbonic acid temporally poisons the nerve centres. Dr. Bonwill gives several explanations, one being the specific effect of carbonic acid, another the diversion of will-force produced by rapid voluntary muscular action, and third, the damming up of the blood in the brain, due to excessive amount of air passing into the lungs. The Record is not satisfied with the theories, but considers it well proved that pain may be deadened by the method, which it commends to the profession for the exact experimental determination of its precise value."

And if it be well proved that about 100 respirations per minute ending in rapid puffing expirations can successfully deaden pain, then why should not a varied mode of inhaling oxygen be productive of other and still more extraordinary results, yet unknown to science but awaiting her future discoveries? - **End of comment.**

Sītkāri Kumbhaka - It is thus practised. Expire through both nostrils, after yawning, (which is a deep and prolonged inspiration,) inspire through the mouth with the two rows of teeth in contact, producing the sound of c.c., suspended the breath, and then expire through the nostrils. This practice increases the beauty and vigour of the body; it removes hunger and thirst, indolence and sleep; and augments the irritability of the system. By this Kumbhaka a Yogi becomes a cold-blooded and an independent being.

Sitalī Kumbhaka - It is thus practised. Apply the tip of the tongue to the soft palate, inspire by the combined exertion of the tongue and soft palate, suspend the breath, and expire slowly through both nostrils, after relaxing the whole system. By the uninterrupted practice of this Kumbhaka for the period of one month, a Yogi is said to acquire great tenacity of life, and power of repairing the effects of injury. He becomes proof against all sorts of inflammation and fever. Like crabs, lobsters, serpents, lizards, salamanders, toads, frogs, and turtles, which exhibit none of the phenomena of inflammation, a Yogi becomes a cold-blooded creature, and is exempted from fevers, splenitis, and several organic diseases. He is endowed with the property of casting his skin, and of privation of air, water, and food. By becoming a cold-blooded creature he can the better endure to spend his time in solitude and devotion.

A Yogi who lives entirely upon milk, guí [*sic*. gueue], and cold water, is competent to practise this Kumbhaka, which promotes a love of study and retirement, and renders the system susceptible of self-trance, a condition in which he is said to be susceptible to peculiar spiritual impressions. By three years of practice of this Kumbhaka, a Yogi is said to hold communion with the Supreme Soul.

It is believed that the serpents cast their skins by the practice of this Kumbhaka. The fact of the cool surface of the skin of a serpent may be attributed to this peculiar mode of respiration. As the serpent has a long narrow tongue, it can easily practise this Kumbhaka by turning its tongue into the fauces, and inspiring through the nostrils.

The Sitali Kumbhaka must be regarded as an admirable imitation of the respiration of a serpent, which, of all animals, is the most remarkable for abstinence, and which can endure the privation of food, drinks, and air, for the longest period.

Bhastriká Kumbhaka - This is the fifth Kumbhaka. It promotes appetite, opens the three superior valves of the intestinal canal, and cures all pulmonary and hepatic diseases. It is an excellent substitute for exercise. The Bhastriká Kumbhaka is thus practised. Place the left foot upon the right thigh, and the right foot upon the left thigh, straighten the neck and back, make the palms of the hands rest upon the knees, shut the mouth, and expire forcibly through both nostrils. Next, inspire and expire quickly until you are fatigued. Then inspire through the right nostril, fill the abdomen with the inspired air, suspend the breath, and fix the sight on the tip of the nose. Then expire through the left nostril, and next inspire through the left nostril; suspend the breath, and expire through the right nostril. It is by this variety of respiration that the chameleon assumes the apparent conditions of plumpness and leanness. This animal becomes plump by inflating its lungs and intestinal canal with the inspired air, and then becomes lean by a single expiration from those organs. The long-continued hissing sound which serpents produce to alarm their prey, is affected by the expulsion through their nostrils of a great volume of air taken into the lungs and intestinal canal by long continued inspiration. It is by taking more

air into the system than is employed in oxygenating the blood, that most of the reptiles are enabled to lighten their bodies, and to swim over lakes and rivers, or perform bounding motions on the dry land. The act of taking in more air than is subservient to respiration, is the characteristic feature of all hibernating animals; and the ancient Hindu philosophers, observing this fact in nature, discovered this variety of respiration. An Indian Yogi becomes plump by inflating his intestinal canal with the inspired air, and then lean by expiring the inspired air. He becomes light by introducing a large quantity of the inspired air into his system, and he becomes specifically heavier by compressing the inspired air within the system. Such is the explanation of the two of the "perfections" of the Yogi. When a Yogi fills the whole intestinal canal with the inspired air by the practise of this kumbhaka, he is said to acquire the property of casting his skin, and of altering his specific gravity at pleasure.

Bhramari Kumbhaka - It consists in respiring rapidly with a view to augment the animal heat by quickening the circulation, in the first instance, and thereby to lower the animal heat by profuse perspiration, and when the temperature of the body is reduced indirectly by the rapid and violent respiratory movement, then by suspending the breath. A Yogi, seated in one of the tranquil postures, begins to respire through his two nostrils, at first very gradually. In a short time he renders his respirations more and more frequent, until he is bathed in perspiration. He next inspires through both nostrils, and suspends the breath, and then expires slowly.

Múrccha Kumbhaka - This induces fainting. It is thus practised. Sit in the posture of siddhasana, inspire in such a way as to produce the sound of raining, suspend the breath, resting the

chin on the breast until you expect fainting, and then expire. Should fainting occur you are certain that the Kumbhaka is successfully practised. A Yogi is directed by the Gheranda Samhita to inspire in such a way as to produce the sound of raining, to rest his chin on the chest, to suspend the breath, to stop the ears with the fingers, to listen to the sounds of the right ear with the left ear, and to expire (when he ceases to hear any sound,) through the nostrils.

Kerala Kumbhaka - This is the eight or last Kumbhaka. It cures all diseases, purges from all sins, promotes longevity, removes darkness of mind, enlightens the moral nature, and awakens the soul. It induces what is called Samadhi. This kumbhaka can only be practised by a Yogi who lives for a long time in a subterranean retreat constructed according to the directions laid down in the Yoga Śāstra, who subsists entirely upon milk, and who is well experienced in the knowledge and practice of the foregoing Kumbhakas and of the Khechari mudra. The Yogi makes 24 incisions in the fraenum linguae, each incision being performed on every eighth day. After each incision he milks the tongue for seven days with astringent, oily, and saline substances, twice a day. During six whole months he lives entirely upon milk, and practises the suspension of breath in his subterranean retreat, gradually diminishing the amount of his food. At the approach of winter, when he finds that he can stop the breathing by swallowing the tongue, he lives for about a week on gūi and milk, abstains from all sorts of food for a day or two, fills the stomach and intestines with inspired air, sits in posture of siddhasana, takes a deep inspiration, fills the lungs with the inspired air, shuts the rima glottides with the glottis pressed backward by the point of the tongue swallowed into the fauces, and thus suspends the breath, with his eyes fixed upon

the space between the eyebrows.

"A pupa of sphina ligustri [Privet Hawk moth], which, in the month of August, immediately after its transformation, weighed 71.1 grains, in the month of April following weighed 67.4 grains; having thus lost only 3.7 grains in the period of nearly 8 months of entire abstinence. The whole of this expenditure had passed off by the cutaneous and respiratory surface. But when the changes in the internal structure are nearly completed, and the perfect insect is soon to be developed, the respiration of the pupa is greatly increased, and gaseous expenditure of the body is augmented in the rates of volume of its respiration, which is greater, the nearer the period of development. Thus, in the same insect the diminution of weight, which was so trifling during eight months' quiescence and abstinence, amounted, in the succeeding 51 days, to nearly half of the original weight of the pupa, since the perfect insect, immediately after its appearance of the 24th of May weighed only thirty-six grains."

How the Punjabi fakir, by suspending his breath, lived 40 days without food and drinks, is a question which has puzzled a great many learned men of Europe.

H.P.B.'s Comment - But Dr. Tanner's successful experiment of fasting 40 days that has just been completed, verifies the Punjabi phenomenon which otherwise would be disbelieved altogether by scientists. - **End of comment.**

If we compare the habits of the hibernating animals with those of the Yogis, we find that they are identically the same; and consequently it is no wonder we hear of a Yogi abstaining from food for a month or two. According to Suka Deva, who is a high authority on the subject of human hibernation, a man is

considered adept in Pranayama when he can suspend his respiratory movements for the period of five minutes and twenty four seconds. A *dandin* states that Pranayama consists in the inaudible pronunciation of Om one thousand times. According to the Kasi Khanda, Pranayama consists in the suspension for breath for the period of fifty seconds.

In order to preserve himself from the corruption of the world, to court the delights of solitude and study, and to dedicate his mind to nothing temporal, a Yogi has recourse to Mitáhára and Pranayama.

I have already given a full account of Pranayama. I shall now describe Mitáhára.

The aliments of man are either primary or secondary. Of the first class are wheat, barley, and rice. These are the staple or substantive aliments, in contradistinction to others which are called secondary. The secondary or adjective articles of diet are chiefly milk, sugar, ghee, honey, mung, and five culinary vegetables. The primary articles of diet are mixed with secondary ones, and constitute the food of man. A Yogi is directed to take 1728 grains of any of the above primary aliments, along with necessary quantities of the secondary ones. A hermit or *vánaprastha* should take 3456 grains of rice, or wheat, or barley, along with the necessary quantities of usual hibernal secondary aliments, while a worldly man must take double the allowance of aliments prescribed to the hermit.

Milk is the only aliment that can be taken by itself, it combining the properties of both classes of aliments. A Yogi should consume as much milk as contains 975 grains of carbon, while a hermit takes as much of that nourishing fluid as contains 1950 grains of carbon; and, lastly a worldly man must consume a quantity of that nutriment containing 3900 grains of carbon.

The worldly man in India, from the above statement, is taught to consume, daily, 8 ounces and 1 dram of carbon, with a view to maintain his health. The hermit consumes 4 ounces and 30 grains of carbon; and, lastly, the cold-blooded and hibernal philosopher, who is insensible to the stings and motions of sense, is directed to consume two ounces and fifteen grains (Troy weight) of carbon in his hibernal aliments.

Pratyahara - This is the fifth stage or division of Yoga. It is the suspension of the senses. Dr. Wilson defines Pratyahara to be control of the senses. A Yogi who lives upon a dish of rice prepared with butter, sugar and milk, and acquires the properties of gentleness, knowledge, and resignation, practises the suspension of the respiratory movements; and when he suspends the breath for 10 minutes his senses become suspended.

The organs of sense are susceptible of external impressions. The eyes are acted upon by colour, which is of seven sorts, white, blue, yellow, red, green, orange and variegated. The tongue appreciates savour, which is of six sorts, sweet, acid, saline, bitter, astringent, and pungent. The organ of smell cognises two sorts of odour, fragrance and stench. The organ of hearing takes cognizance of sounds, which, according to the Yogis, are of ten kinds. And the organ of touch perceives the feelings of hardness, softness, roughness, slipperiness, heat, cold, etc., etc. The organs of sense are called the organs of intellect (*Buddhindriya*).

A Yogi restrains his senses, just as a tortoise draws in all its members, by the following process.

1st Process - Be seated in a quiet and tranquil posture, and fix your sight on the space between the eyebrows, or the seat of

the phrenological power termed Individuality. This process is daily practised for the space of 10 minutes, when only the senses are suspended.

2nd Process - Be seated in a tranquil posture, and fix your sight in the tip of the nose for the space of ten minutes.

3rd Process - Close the ears with the middle fingers, incline the head a little to the left side, and listen with each ear alternately to the sounds produced by the other ear, for the space of 10 minutes.

4th Process - Pronounce inaudibly, twelve thousand times, the mystic syllable *Om*, and meditate upon it daily, after deep inspirations.

5th Process - This is the *kapalāsana*, in which the Yogi maintains an erect posture, with the head resting on the ground.

According to Suka Deva, a Yogi's sense are suspended when he can suspend the respiratory movements for the period of 10 minutes and 48 seconds. After the restraint of the senses, the Yogi renders his mind tranquil, with a view to adapt it to acquire wisdom (*jnana*). He brings back the wandering thoughts, and dissolves them in the contemplation of the soul.

Pratyahara is the preparatory process to Dharana, which is a steady immovable abstraction, with the breath suspended, the mind collected, and all natural wants subdued. The symptoms of Dharana closely resemble those of the cataleptic condition of the body.

Dharana - This is the sixth stage or division of Yoga. It is the suspension of the operations of the mind. When a Yogi suspends the respiratory movements for two hours, he is said to accomplish the Dharana, which has for its object a tranquillity of mind free from every degree of sensual disturbance.

1st Process - Repeat the mystic syllable *Om* 144,000 times in silence, and meditate upon it, and you will suspend the function or operations of the mind.

2nd Process - Fix the eyes upon the point of the nose for the period of 2 hours.

3rd Process - Fix the eyes upon the space between the eye-brows for two hours.

4th Process - After a few forcible inspirations, swallow the tongue, and thereby suspend the breath, and such and deglutate the saliva for two hours.

5th Process - Listen to the sounds within the right ear, abstractedly, for two hours, with the left ear.

According to Suka Seva a Yogi is blessed with a tranquil mind, when his respiratory movements are suspended for the period of 21 minutes and 36 seconds.

Dhyana - This is the seventh stage or division of Yoga. It is the intense and abstract contemplation of the soul, after the suspension of the operations or functions of the senses and of the mind. It is the suspension of the respiration and circulation for the period of 24 hours.

When a Yogi keeps his head, neck, and body steady, in a state of absolute quietude, and his senses and mind free from sensual and mental excitements, for 24 hours, he is said to be in a state of Dhyana. It has for its object the property of awakening the soul.

1st Process - Pronounce slowly and inaudibly the mystic syllable Om 1,728,000 times, in one position of absolute rest.

2nd Process - Fix the sight on the tip of the nose for 24 hours.

3rd Process - Fix the sight on the space between the eye-brows for 24 hours.

During the state of Dhyana, the Yogi acquires the power of clairvoyance, and is said to hold communion with the Supreme Being.

According to Suka Deva, a man is said to hold communion with the Supreme Being by suspending his respiratory movements for the period of 43 minutes and 12 seconds.

Samadhi - This is the eight and last division of Yoga. It is a state of perfect human hibernation, in which a Yogi is insensible to heat and cold, to pleasure and to pain. A hibernating Yogi is insensible to blows and wounds. He is insensible to effects of fire. He is the same in prosperity and adversity. He enjoys ecstatic condition. He is free from lust, fear, and anger. He is disengaged from all works. He is not affected by honour and dishonour. He looks upon gold, iron, and stones with the same unconcerned eyes. He is the same in love and hatred. He is the same amongst friends and enemies.

As the water of a river beats the shore when there is wind, so the unsteady mind roams with the continuance of respiration. Just as the waves diminish when the air becomes still, so the mind moves not when the respiration ceases. Whatever diminishes the respiration renders the mind calm.

1st Process - Practise the Kevala Kumbhaka, of which a particular account has been given, in the preceding pages.

2nd Process - Repeat the mystic syllable Om 20,736,000 times, in silence, and meditate upon it.

3rd Process - Suspend the respiratory movements for the period of 12 days, and you will be in a state of Samadhi. According to Suka Deva, one requires a perfect condition of human hibernation when one's respiratory movements are suspended for the period of one hour, twenty six minutes, and twenty four seconds. In a state of human hibernation a Yogi is not poisoned by snake-bites, he remains unaffected by the cutting of weapons; he is not afflicted with pain when brought in contact with fire. Like the hibernating animals, Yogis resist the injuries of weapons and fire. They die not when drowned in water; nor do they dry up when exposed to air. They live without food, water, and air, while in the condition of Samadhi, Yogis, like the torpid animals while hibernating, are incapable of committing sin in act, thought, or speech.

A Yogi, whose functions of respiration and circulation are suspended, is deprived of the power of committing sin in act, thought or speech. Samadhi, then, is the total suspension of the functions of respiration and circulation, but not the extinction of those functions.

Professor Wilson explains Samadhi to be the entire occupation of the thoughts by the idea of Brahma (the Supreme Soul), without any effort of the mind.

As I have treated on the various branches of Raja-Yoga, by which a Yogi analyses the various corporeal, intellectual, moral, sensual, and religious principles of which man is composed, and by which he segregates or awakens the soul to the contemplation of, and absorption into, the Supreme Soul, the Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer of the world, - I will now give a succinct account of Hatha-Yoga, which the Panjabi fakir successfully practised before a large concourse of Native and European gentlemen.

H.P.B.'s Comment - This system, evolved by long ages of practice until it was brought to bear the above-described results, was not practiced in India alone in the days of antiquity. The greatest philosophers of all countries sought to acquire these powers; and certainly, behind the external ridiculous postures of the Yogis of today, lies concealed the profound wisdom of the archaic ages; one that included among other things a perfect knowledge of what are now termed physiology and psychology. Ammonius Saccas, Porphyry, Proclus and others practiced it in Egypt; and Greece and Rome did not shrink at all even in their time of philosophical glory, to follow suit. Pythagoras speaks of the celestial music of the spheres that one hears in hours of ecstasy; Zeno finds a wise man who having conquered all passions, feels happiness and emotion, but in the midst of torture. Plato advocates the man of meditation and likens his powers to those of the divinity; and we see the Christian ascetics themselves through a mere life of contemplation and self-torture acquire powers of levitation or aethrobacy, which, though attributed to the miraculous intervention of a personal

God, are nevertheless real and the result of physiological changes in the human body. "The Yogi," says Patanjali, "will hear celestial sounds, the songs and conversations of celestial choirs. He will have the perception of their touch in their passage through the air," - which translated into a more sober language means that the ascetic is enabled to see with the spiritual eye in the Astral Light, hear with the spiritual ear subjective sounds inaudible to others, and live and feel, so to say, in the *Unseen Universe*. "The Yogi is able to enter a dead or a living body by the path of the senses, and in this body to act as though it were his own." The "path of the senses" - our physical senses supposed to originate in the astral body, the ethereal counterpart of man, or the *jivatma*, which dies with the body - the senses are here meant in their spiritual sense - volition of the higher principle in man. The true Raja-Yogi is a Stoic; and Kapila, who deals but with the latter - utterly rejecting the claim of the *Hatha-Yogis* to converse during Samadhi with the *Infinite Iswar* - describes their state in the following words: - "To a Yogi, in whose mind all things are identified as spirit, what is infatuation? What is grief? He sees all things as one; he is destitute of affections; he neither rejoices in good, nor is offended with evil ... A wise man sees so many false things in those which are called true, so much misery in what is called happiness, that he turns away with disgust ... He who in the body has obtained liberation (from the tyranny of the senses) is of no caste, of no sect, of no order, attends to no duties, adheres to no *śāstras*, to no formulas, to no works of merit; he is beyond the reach of speech; he remains at a distance from all secular concerns; he has renounced the love and the knowledge of sensible objects; he flatters none, he honours none, he is not worshipped, he worships none; whether he practices and follows the customs of his fellow men or not, this is his character."

And a selfish and disgustingly misanthropical one this character would be, were it that for which the TRUE ADEPT would be striving. But, it must not be understood *literally*, and we will have something more to say upon the subject in the following article which will conclude Dr. Paul's Essay on Yoga Philosophy. - **End of comment.**

Hatha-Yoga treats of the various methods by which one can attain to the state of self-trance, and acquire the power of hibernating.

The Hatha-Yogi, like the Raja-Yogi, lives entirely upon milk, previously to his acquiring the condition of samadhi or human hibernation. He lives in a guphá or subterranean cell, and avoids the society of man. First of all, he practises the six cleansing processes. He that can maintain good health on the allowance of two seers of fresh cow's milk in the course of twenty-four hours, is competent to the practise of the six processes, which are as follows: -

Nefi - This is the first process. It consists in the act of passing a twisted cord of delicate thread, of two lines in diameter, and eleven inches in length, through one of the nostrils, and bringing it out at the mouth. This process is performed alternately through both nostrils. This is a very easy process.

Dhauti - This is the act of swallowing a bandage of linen moistened with water, measuring three inches in breadth and fifteen cubits in length. This is rather a difficult process. But very few fakirs can practise it.

H.P.B.'s Comment - And a happy thing it is, that the process is so difficult, as we do not know of anything half so disgusting. No

true Raja-Yogi will ever condescend to practice it. Besides, as every physician can easily tell, the process, if repeated, becomes a very dangerous one for the experimenter. The following "processes" are still more hideous and as useless for psychological purposes. - **End of comment.**

Bastí - This is the act which the holothuria pentactes practises almost every moment of its existence. (See *Lancet*, 1833-1834, Vol. 2, page 960.)

Gajakarma - This is the act of vomiting a large quantity of water, after filling the stomach and aesophagus with that liquid, by fixing the sight on the space between the eyebrows. This is a very simple process.

Nauli - This is the alternate exercise of the rectimuscles of the abdomen, while the back and abdomen are straightened. I have seen many fakirs practise this process.

Trátaka - This is the act of fixing the sight on the tip of the nose, or upon the space between the eyebrows, until tears come into the eyes. A Hatha-Yogi next practises the following mudras or immovable postures.

H.P.B.'s Comment - It is needless to remind the constant readers of this magazine of our comments upon the vital difference between the *Raja* and *Hatha*-Yogis. But it may be of some use to the general reader, ignorant of what has been written, to turn to page 31 of this volume (November, 1880), and see for themselves. Many are those who have in our days adopted the name of *Yogis*, with as little idea of true "Yogism" as a poor Chinaman has of the ceremonials and etiquette of the Queen's Drawing-room. - **End of comment.**

Kechari Mudra - This is the act of swallowing the tongue, with a view to producing suspension of breath. I quote the following cases of insensibility and suspension of respiration consequent upon this Mudra.

"I was called", says Dr. Law, "to a negro child in the town of Sabarra, in Brazil, born in a state of asphyxia. I examined his mouth; found the tongue turned over, and very deep in fauces. With the intention of removing any foreign matter that might perhaps obstruct the passage of air, I put my finger into the mouth of the infant, and, moving the tongue to draw it forth, the air rushed forcibly, and the child began to cry and to breathe." - *Lancet*, 1832-33. Vol. 2. page 361.

The following passage occurs in *Notices of Brazil 1828-29*, by the Rev. R. Walsh, L.L.D." In speaking the foreign slave trade, he remarks: - "The wretch slaves often inflict death upon themselves in a extraordinary manner. They bury their tongues in the throat in such a way as to produce suffocation. A friend of mine was passing when a slave was tied and flogged; after a few flashes, he hung his head, appearing lifeless; and, when taken down, was actually dead. His tongue was founded wedged in the oesophagus, so as completely to close the trachea. The slave who, by this action of hi tongue, provokes death, hitherto has been supposed to be dead; and in many instances, perhaps without any examination at all, his body has been consigned to the grave." - *Lancet*, 1836-1873 Vol. 2, p. 258.

"Mr. J.T. Batten, of Tooley-street has forwarded to us the following particulars of his treatment of an infant which had lost all signs of vitality for a space of nearly half an hour directly after its birth: - Mrs. R. gave birth to the child on the 4th instant. She had previously had three children, each of which, born between the eighth and the ninth month, had expired at birth, under

similar circumstances, having however, been left without any efforts at resuscitation. On this occasion, says Mr. Batten, my determination was to act with the greatest care, so that the chord was not tied until the infant had cried powerfully, and its maternal pulsation had ceased. It was at this period that vitality seemed to cease. The moment placental circulation stopped, the crying rapidly lost power: presently respiration failed, and animal heat receded, so that just three minutes after birth every symptom of animation subsided. The skin was of a cadaverous aspect, while the surface of the body was quite cold, and the heart and lungs were left without a vestige of impulse. I first applied friction to the chest by means of gin, which happened to be in the room; and having directed it to be wrapped in the flannel, and instructed the nurse to procure hot water, my next step was to inflate the lungs; which, having no apparatus at hand, was effected by my mouth, but with a result entirely fruitless so far. A warm bath was now formed, of the temperature of my own blood, in which the child was immersed; and the fat-like matter being washed from the surface of its body, artificial respiration was again resorted to; this was easily effected, as just described, during the pressure of the fingers upon the aesophagus and nostrils, - of course, alternately emptying the lungs by a similar process. But nothing seemed of any service; and a quarter of an hour had now elapsed since the signs of life had subsided. Having introduced my fingers upon the epiglottis, which seemed to rest in a rather tenacious manner in its situation, and raised its apex a little, artificial respiration was again persevered in: when, to my surprise and satisfaction, signs of returning life showed themselves. The surface of the thorax and the lower extremities seemed to resume their natural colour, animal heat gradually returned, and an occasional movement supervened. Twenty-five minutes had

elapsed and a full space of half an hour had passed before the vital functions were decidedly restored." - *Lancet*, 1833-34, Vol. 2, page 861.

The common practise of quieting infants, employed by nurses, consists in thrusting into their mouths a bag made of wash-leather, containing sugar. It may be considered a substitute for the Kechari Mudra.

There are two authentic cases of human hibernation on record.

I. - The account of the fakir of the Punjab is thus described in the words of Dr. McGregor. "A Fakir who arrived at Lahore, engaged to bury himself for any length of time, shut up in a box, and without either food or drink. Runjeet naturally disbelieved the man's assertions, and was determined to put them to the test. For this purpose the fakir was shut up in a wooden box, which was placed in a small apartment below the middle of the ground; there was a folding-door to his box, which was secured by a lock and a key. Surrounding this apartment there was the garden-house, the door of which was likewise locked; and outside the whole, a high wall, having its door-way built up with bricks and mud. In order to prevent any one from approaching the place, a line of sentries was placed, and relieved at regular intervals. The strictest watch was kept up for the space of forty days and forty nights, at the expiration of which period the Maharaja, attended by his grandson and several of his Sirdars, as well as General Ventura, Captain Wade, and myself, proceeded to disinter the fakir. The bricks and mud were removed from the outer door-way; the door of the garden-house was next unlocked, and lastly that of the wooden box containing the fakir. The latter was found covered with a white sheet, on removing which, the figure of the man presented itself in a sitting posture. His hands and arms were pressed to his sides, and his

legs and thighs crossed. The first step of the operation of resuscitation consisted in pouring over his head a quantity of warm water. After this, a hot cake of *atta* was placed on the crown of his head; a plug of wax was next removed from one of his nostrils, and, on this being done, the man breathed strongly through it. The mouth was now opened, and the tongue, which had been closely applied to the roof of the mouth, brought forward, and both it and the lips anointed with *ghee*. During this part of the proceeding, I could not feel the pulsation of the wrist, though the temperature of the body was much above the natural standard of health. The legs and arms being extended, and the eyelids raised, the former were well rubbed, and a little *ghee* applied to the latter. The eyelids presented a dimmed, suffused appearance, like those of a corpse. The man now evinced signs of returning animation; the pulse became perceptible at the wrist, whilst the unnatural temperature of the body rapidly diminished. He made several ineffectual efforts to speak, and at length uttered a few words, in a tone so low and feeble as to render them inaudible. When the fakir was able to converse, the completion of the feat was announced by the discharge of guns, and other demonstrations of joy. A rich chain of gold was placed round his neck by Runjeet, and ear-rings, bawbles, and shawls were presented to him."

H.P.B.'s Comment: - While in Lahore, we had this identical story from an eye-witness, a native gentleman, who was clerk to Sir Claude Wade at the time of the occurrence. His interesting narrative will be found at page 94 of this volume. (Feb. 81). -

End of comment.

II. - The account of the second fakir is thus described, in the words of Lieut. A. H. Boileau, "I have just witnessed a singular

circumstance, of which I had heard during our stay at this place, but said nothing about before, the time for its accomplishment not being completed. This morning, however, a man who had been buried a month, on the bank of a tank, near our camp, was dug out alive, in the presence of Esur Lal, one of the ministers of the Muharawul of Jaisalmer, on whose account this singular individual voluntarily was interred a month ago. He is a youngish man, about thirty years of age, and his native village is within 5 kos of Kurnaul; but he generally travels about the country to Ajmere, Kotah, Indore etc., allows himself to be buried for weeks, or months, by any person who will pay him handsomely for the same. In the present instance Rawul put this singular body in requisition, under the hope of obtaining an heir to his throne ... He was buried at Jaisalmer, in a small building about twelve feet by eight, built of stone. In the floor was a hole, three feet long, two and a half feet wide, and perhaps a yard deep, in which he was placed, in a sitting posture, sewed up in his shroud, with his feet (or legs) turned inwards towards the stomach, and his hands also pointed inwards towards the chest. Two heavy slabs of stone, six feet long, several inches thick, and broad enough to cover the mouth of the grave, so that he could not escape, were then placed over him, and I believe a little earth was plastered over the whole, so as to make the surface of the grave smooth and compact. The door of the house was also built up, and people were placed outside, that no tricks might be played. At the expiration of a full month, that is to say this morning, the walling of the door was broken, and the buried man dug out of the grave. He was perfectly senseless, his eyes were closed, his hands cramped and powerless, his stomach shrunk very much and his teeth jammed so fast together, that they were forced to open his mouth with an iron instrument, to pour a little water down his throat. He gradually

recovered his senses, and the use of his limbs, and when we went to see him, was sitting up, supported by two men, and conversed in low feeble tone of voice ... Cornet McNaghten, ... assistant to the agent to the Governor-General in Rajputana, put his abstinence to the test at Pookur, by suspending him, for thirteen days, shut up in a wooden chest ... The man is said, by long practice, to have acquired the art of holding his breath, by shutting the mouth and stopping the interior opening of the nostrils with his tongue ... His powers of abstinence must be wonderful; nor does his hair grow during the time he remains buried. I really believe that there is no imposture in the case."

Both these fakirs were Hatha-Yogis. They practised the Khechari Mudra successfully, and thereby acquired the power of abstinence from air, water, and food, for a long time.

H.P.B.'s Comment - In reference to the arrest of the growth of the hair, some adepts in the secret science, which is generally known in India under the name of *Yoga*, claim to know something more than this. They prove their ability to completely suspend the functions of life each night during the hours intended for sleep. Life then is, so to say, held in total abeyance. The wear and tear of the inner as well as the outer organism being thus artificially arrested, and there being no possibility of waste, these men accumulate as much vital energy for use in their waking state as they would have lost in sleep during which state, if natural, the process of energy and expanse of force is still mechanically going on in the human body. In the induced state described, as in that of a deep swoon, the brain no more dreams than if it were dead. One century, if passed, would appear no longer than one second, for all perception of time is lost for him who is subjected to it. Nor do the hairs or nails grow

under such circumstances, though they do for a certain time in a body actually dead, which proves if anything can, that the atoms and tissues of the physical body are held under conditions quite different from those of the state we call death. For, to use a physiological paradox, life in a dead animal organism is even more intensely active than it ever is in a living one, which as we see, does not hold good in the case under notice. Though the average sceptic may regard this statement as sheer nonsense, those who have experienced this in themselves know it is an undoubted fact. Two certain fakirs from Nepal once agreed to try the experiment. One of them, previous to attempting the hibernation, underwent all the ceremonies of preparation as above described by Dr. Paul, and took all the necessary precautions; the other, simply threw himself by a process known to himself and others into that temporary state of complete paralysis, which imposes no limits of time, may last months as well as hours, and which is known in certain Tibet lamaseries as ... The result was that while the hair, beard, and nails of the former had grown at the end of six weeks, though feebly yet perceptibly, the cells of the latter had remained as closed and inactive as if he had been transformed for that lapse of time into a marble statue. Not having personally seen either of the two men, or the experiment, we can vouch only in a general way for the possibility of the phenomenon, not for the details of this peculiar case, though we would as soon doubt our existence as the truthfulness of those from whom we have the story. We only hope that among the sceptical and materialistic who may scoff, we may not find either people who, nevertheless accept with a firm and pious conviction the story of the resurrection of the half-decayed Lazarus and other like miracles, or yet those who, while ready to crush a theosophist for his beliefs would never dare scoff at that of a Christian. - **End of the comment.**

Bhuchari Mudra - This consists in directing the sight to the point of the nose, while seated in the posture called Padmasana. Both the Khechari in Bhuchari mudras produce self-trance in a short time.

Chadari Mudra - To practise this mudra the sight is fixed on a point three inches in front of the eyes. In this mudra, the sights should be direct and fixed for a long time. When the yogi is fatigued, he turns his eyes to the point of the nose, and then to the part between the eyebrows until self-trance is effected.

Agochari Mudra - This is the method of producing self-trance through the function of hearing. A Yogi practises this mudra, plugs the ears with balls of waxed cotton, and listens to the sounds of the left ear with the right ear, bending the head a little laterally, towards the right sholder, until self-trance is effected.

Unamani Mudra - This is the method of suspending the breath, by shutting all the outlets of the body, after a deep inspiration. A Yogi who practises this mudra successfully, is said to be able to recall the soul, to awaken it, and enjoy heavenly felicity. He needs not prayers nor hymns. He becomes self-tranced.

H.P.B.'s Comment - This is more like the real Raja-Yoga, and is true scientific one. - **End of comment.**

A Hatha-Yogi practises the 4 bandhas or restraints, which are as follows:

Mulabandha - A Yogi practises this bandha, by placing his left heel under him, or by sitting in the posture of Padmasana, with a cloth ball in contact with the seat and secured by a bandage.

Jalandharabandha - A Yogi practises this bandha by resting his chin on the interclavicular region, and suspending the breath, after taking a deep inspiration.

Udyanabandha - A Yogi practises this bandha by shutting the mouth, swallowing the tongue, placing the right heel in contact with the epigastric region, and closing the ears, nostrils, and other orifices, after the filling the system with inspired air.

Mahabandha - In order to practise this bandha, a Yogi places his left foot under him, rests his chin on the breast, holds his right foot with his hands extended, and places his forehead in contact with the knees; inspires through the left nostril, fills the stomach and lungs with the inspired air, fixes his eyes on the point of his nose, suspends the breath, and, lastly, expires through the right nostril. He then inspires through the right nostril, suspends the breath, expires through the left nostril, and, finally, breathes through the left nostril, expiring through the right nostril. When one practises this bandha for three successive hours one is said to be an accomplished Yogi, and entitled to practise Samadhi or human hibernation.

Of the Ashta Sidhi, or Eight Consummations

Anima and *Mahima* - A chameleon, by merely inspiring air, renders the whole of its body, from the head to the rectum, turgid, round, and plump; and merely by a single expiration of air, the whole of the body again assumes a lank and lean appearance. The lean and lank condition of the system is technically named Anima; and the turgid, round, and plump appearance is denoted by the term Mahima.

A Yogi, imitating the chameleon, fills his lungs and the whole of the intestinal canal with inspired air, and acquires a plum round and turgid appearance (*mahima*); and becomes lean and lank again (*anima*) by a single expiration.

Laghima and *Gariman* - The sturgeon, by swallowing great draughts of the atmosphere, distends not only the stomach, but a large bag that communicates with the aesophagus, and thereby becomes specifically lighter, and floats above the surface of the sea. A Yogi, by long practice, acquires the power of swallowing large draughts of the air, and, thereby produces diminution of his specific gravity (*laghima*.) It is on the principle that the Brahman of Madras maintained himself in an aerial posture.

A Yogi acquires an increase of specific gravity (*gariman*) by swallowing great draughts of the air, and compressing the same within the system.

H.P.B.'s Comment - This is what, three years ago, in describing the phenomenon in *Isis Unveiled*, we called "interpolarisation" (See vol. I, op. cit page 23 & 24; paragraph on AETHROBACY.) [see chapter on AETHROBACY] - **End of comment.**

Prapti - This is the obtaining of desired objects. A Yogi, in a state of self-trance, acquires the power of predicting future events, of understanding unknown languages (a), of curing divers disease, (b) or divining the unexpressed thoughts of others,(c) of hearing distant sounds, of seeing distant objects, of smelling mystical fragrant odours, and of understanding the language of beasts and birds (d).

Such is the prescription of Prapti in the several works on Yoga to which I have had access.

H.P.B.'s Comment - (a) In the eternity there is neither Past nor Future; hence - for the disenthralled Soul of (Inner *Ego*) the three tenses merge into one, the PRESENT.

As a deaf and dumb person learns to understand the exact meaning of what is said simply from the motion of the lips and face of the speaker and without understanding any language phonetically, other and extra senses can be developed in the soul as well as in the physical mind of a mute; a sixth and as phenomenal a sense is developed as a result of practice, which supplies for him the lack of the other two.

(b) Magnetic and mesmeric aura or "fluid" can be generated and intensified in every man to an almost miraculous extent, unless he be by nature utterly passive.

c. We have known of such a faculty to exist in individuals who were far from being adepts or Yogis, and had never heard of the latter. It can be easily developed by intense will, perseverance and practice, especially in persons who are born with natural analytical powers, intuitive perception, and a certain aptness for observation and penetration. These may, if they only preserve perfect the faculty of divining people's thoughts to a degree which seems almost supernatural. Some very clear but quite uneducated detectives in London and Paris, develop it in themselves to almost a faultless perfection. It can be also helped by mathematical study and practice. If then such is found to be the case with simple individuals, why not in men who have devoted to it a whole life, helped on a study of the accumulated experience of many a generation of mystic and under the tuition of real adepts?

(d) The Bi-part Soul is no fancy and may be one day explained in scientific language, when the psycho-physiological faculties of man shall be better studied, when the possibility of many a now-doubted phenomenon is discovered, and when truth will be no longer sacrificed to conceit, vanity, and routine. Our physical senses have nothing to do with the spiritual or psychological faculties. The latter begin their action where the former stop, owing to that Chinese wall about the Soul Empire, called - MATTER. - **End of the comment.**

Prakamyā - By *Prakamyā* is meant the power of casting the old skin and maintaining a youth-like appearance for an unusual period of time. By some writers it is defined to be the property of entering into the system of another. (e) Yayati, who was old and decrepid, and yet anxious to enjoy life, entered into the system of his youngest son, having left his own body. So say the Puranās.

Vasitwa - This is the power of taming living creatures, or of bringing them under control.

"Pythagoras, who visited India, is said to have tamed, by the influence of his will or word, a furious bear, prevented an ox from eating beans, and stopped an eagle in its fight (f)."

Vasitwa may be defined to be the power of mesmerising persons by the exercise of the will, and of making them obedient to one's own wishes and orders.

Some learned pandits define *Vasitwa* to be the restraint of passions and emotions.

H.P.B.'s comment (e) Perhaps the Hobilgans and the Shaberons of Tibet might have something to tell us if they

chose. The great secret which enwraps the mystery of the reincarnations of their great Dalai-Lamas, their Supreme Hobilgans, and others who as well as the former are supposed, a few days after their Enlightened Souls have laid aside their mortal clothing, to reincarnate themselves in young and always previously to that very weak bodies of children, has never yet been told. These children who are invariably on the point of death when designated to have their bodies become the tabernacles of the Souls of deceased Buddhas, recover immediately after the ceremony, and barring accident, live long years, exhibiting trait for trait the same peculiarities of temper, characteristics, and predilections as the dead man's. But of this no more for the present.

(f) These are mesmeric feats and it is only by (in) exact scientists that mesmerism is denied in our days. It is largely treated of in *Isis*; and the power of Pythagoras is explained in Vol. I, pp. 283 *et seq.* - **End of the comment.**

Isatwa, or Divine Power - When the passions are restrained from their desires, the mind becomes tranquil and the soul is awakened. The Yogi becomes full of Brahma (the Supreme Soul) (g). His eye penetrates all the secrets of nature, he knows the events of the past, present, and future; and, when he is not led astray by the temptations of the seven preceding "perfections," his soul not only holds communion with the invisible, inconceivable unalterable, omni-present, omniscient, and omnipotent Principle, but he becomes absorbed into the essence of the same. It is commonly supposed that a Yogi who acquires the power, can restore the dead to life (h).

H.P.B.'s Comment: (g) In which case it means that the Soul being liberated from the yoke of the body through certain

practices, discipline, and purity of life, during the life-time of the latter, acquires powers identical with its primitive element, the universal Soul. It has overpowered its material custodian; the terrestrial gross appetites and passions of the latter, from being its despotic masters have become its Slaves, hence the Soul has become free henceforth to exercise its transcendental powers untrammelled by any fetters.

(h) Life once extinct can never be recalled. But *another* life and *another* Soul can sometimes reanimate in the abandoned frame if we may believe learned men who were never known to utter an untruth.

Wherever the word "Soul" has occurred in the course of the above comments, the reader must bear in mind that we do not use it in the sense of an immortal principle in man, but in that of the group of personal qualities which are but a congeries of material particles whose term of survival is limited, this survival of the physical, or material, personality being for a longer or shorter period, proportionately with the grossness or refinement of the individual.

Various correspondents have asked whether the Siddhis of Yoga can only be acquired by the rude training of Hatha-Yoga; and the *Journal of Science* (London) assuming that they cannot, launched out in the violent expressions which were recently quoted in these pages. But the fact is that there is another, an unobjectionable and rational process, the particulars of which cannot be given to the idle inquirer, and which must not even be touched upon at the latter end of a commentary like the present one. The subject may be reverted to at a more favourable time.

Editor's Notes:

[1] "A Treatise on the Yoga Philosophy" by Dr. N.C.Paul, G.M.C.,

Doctor assistant surgeon. The Article was first published as a booklet in 1850, very rare today. The second edition was in 1883 from the *Indian Echo Press*, Calcutta, and can be found in the Britannic Museum, London. There was a third edition of the booklet in 1888, from the *Bombay Theosophical Publishing House Fund Tukaran Tanya*.

Bibliographical source:

"A Treatise on the Yoga Philosophy" by N.C. Paul G.B.M.C. , with commentaries by H.P. Blavatsky. *The Theosophist*: Sept. 1880 (pp. 311-315), Nov. 1880 (pp. 29-32), Jan. 1881 (pp. 72-75), Apr. 1881 (pp. 144-47).

Fakirs

Religious devotees in East India. They are generally attached to Brahmanical pagodas and follow the laws of Manu. A strictly religious fakir will go absolutely naked, with the exception of a small piece of linen called *dhoti*, around his loins. They wear their hair long, and it serves them as a pocket, as they stick in it various objects - such as a pipe, a small flute called *vagudah*, the sounds of which throw the serpents into a cataleptic torpor, and sometimes their bamboo-stick (about one foot long) with *the seven mystical knots* on it. This magical stick, or rather *rod*, the fakir receives from his guru on the day of his initiation, together with the three *mantrams*, which are communicated to him "mouth to ear." No fakir will be seen without this powerful adjunct of his calling. It is, as they all claim, the divining rod, the cause of every occult phenomenon produced by them.[1] The Brahmanical fakir is entirely distinct from the Mussulman mendicant of India, also called fakirs in some parts of the British territory.

(1) Philostratus assures us that the Brahmins were able, in his time, to perform the most wonderful cures by merely pronouncing certain magical words. "The Indian Brahmins carry a staff and a ring, by means of which they are able to do almost anything." Origenes states the same ("Contra Celsum"). But if a strong mesmeric fluid - say projected from the eye, and without any other contact - is not added, no magical words would be efficacious.

Bibliographical source:

Isis Unveiled, Vol. 1, p. xxxiii, Before the Veil.



Sadhús

The Sadhús differ greatly from every other sect. They never appear unclothed, do not cover themselves with damp ashes, wear no painted signs on their faces, or foreheads, and do not worship idols. Belonging to the Advaiti section of the Vedantic school, they believe only in Para-Brahman (the Great Spirit) ...

Sadhús are aspirants to the Raja-Yoga, and, as I have said above, usually belong to the school of the Vedanta. That is to say, they are disciples of initiates who have entirely resigned the life of the world, and lead a life of monastic chastity. Between the Sadhús and the Shivaite bunis there exists a mortal enmity, which manifests itself by a silent contempt on the side of the Sadhús, and on that of the bunis by constant attempts to sweep their rivals off the face of the earth. This antipathy is as marked as that between light and darkness, and reminds one of the dualism of the Ahura-Mazda and Ahriman of the Zoroastrians. Masses of people look up to the first as to Magi, sons of the sun and of the Divine Principle, while the latter are dreaded as dangerous sorcerers. Having heard most wonderful accounts of the former, we were burning with anxiety to see some of the "miracles" ascribed to them by some even among the Englishmen. We eagerly invited the Sadhú to visit our vihara during the evening. But the handsome ascetic sternly refused, for the reason that we were staying within the temple of the idol-worshippers, the very air of which would prove antagonistic to him.

Bibliographical source:

From the Caves and Jungles of Hindustan by H. P. Blavatsky.

Madame Blavatsky on Fakirs



To the Editor of The Sun:

Sir, - However ignorant I may be of the laws of the solar system, I am, at all events, so firm a believer in heliocentric journalism that I subscribe for *The Sun*. I have, therefore, seen your remarks in to-day's *Sun* upon my "iconoclasm."

No doubt it is a great honour for an unpretentious foreigner to be thus crucified between the two greatest celebrities of your chivalrous country - the truly good Deacon Richard Smith, of the blue gauze trousers, and the nightingale of the willow and the cypress, G. Washington Childs, A.M. But I am not a Hindu fakir, and therefore cannot say that I enjoy crucifixion, especially when unmerited. I would not even fancy being swung round the "tall tower" with the steel hooks of your satire metaphorically thrust through my back. I have not invited the reporters to a show. I have not sought notoriety. I have only taken up a quiet corner in your free country, and, as a woman who has travelled much, shall try to tell a Western public what strange things I have seen among Eastern peoples. If I could have enjoyed this privilege at home, I should not be here. Being here, I shall, as your old English proverb expresses it, "Tell the truth and shame the devil."

The World reporter who visited me wrote an article which mingled his souvenirs of my stuffed apes and my canaries, my tiger-heads and palms, with aerial music and the flitting *doppelgangers* [1] of adepts. It was a very interesting article, and

certainly intended to be very impartial. If he made me appear to deny the immutability of natural law, and inferentially to affirm the possibility of miracle, it is due to my faulty English or to the carelessness of the reader.

There are no such uncompromising believers in the immutability and universality of the laws of nature as students of occultism. Let us then, with your permission, leave the shade of the great Newton to rest in peace. It is not the principle of the law of gravitation, or the necessity of a central force acting toward the sun, that is denied, but the assumption that behind the law which draws bodies toward the earth's centre, and which is our most familiar example of gravitation, there is not another law, equally immutable, that under certain conditions appears to counteract it. If but once in a hundred years a table or a fakir is seen to rise in the air, without a visible mechanical cause, then that rising is a manifestation of a natural law of which our scientists are yet ignorant. Christians believe in miracles; occultists credit them even less than pious scientists - Sir David Brewster, for instance. Show an occultist an unfamiliar phenomenon, and he will never affirm *a priori* that it is either a trick or a miracle. He will search for the cause in the region of causes.

There was an anecdote about Babinet, the astronomer, current in Paris in 1854, when the great war was raging between the Academy and the "waltzing tables." This skeptical man of science had proclaimed in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* (January 15, 1854, p. 414) that the levitation of furniture without contact "was simply as impossible as perpetual motion." A few days later, during an experimental seance, a table was levitated, without contact, in his presence. The result was that Babinet went straight to a dentist to have a molar tooth extracted, which

the iconoclastic table, in its aerial flight, had seriously damaged. But it was too late to recall his article.

I suppose nine men out of ten, including editors, would maintain that the undulatory theory of light is one of the most firmly established. And yet, if you will turn to page 22 of *The New Chemistry* (New York, 1876), by Professor Josiah P. Cooke, Jr., of Harvard University, you will find him saying: "I cannot agree with those who regard the wave theory of light as an established principle of science ... [it] requires a combination of qualities in the ether of space, which I find it difficult to believe are actually realized." What is this but iconoclasm?

Let us bear in mind that Newton himself received the corpuscular theory of Pythagoras and his predecessors, from whom he learned it, and that it was only *en désespoir de cause* that later scientists accepted the wave theory of Descartes and Huyghens. Kepler maintained the magnetic nature of the sun. Leibnitz ascribed the planetary motions to agitations of an ether. Borelli anticipated Newton in his discovery, although he failed to demonstrate it as triumphantly. Huyghens and Boyle, Horrocks and Hooke, Halley and Wren, all had ideas of a central force acting toward the sun, and of the true principle of diminution of action of the force in the ratio of the inverse square of the distance.

The last word has not yet been spoken with respect to gravitation; its limitations can never be known until the nature of the sun is better understood. They are just beginning to recognize (see Professor Balfour Stewart's lecture at Manchester, entitled *The Sun and the Earth*, and Professor A. M. Mayer's lecture, *The Earth a Great Magnet*) the intimate connection between the sun's spots and the position of the heavenly bodies. The interplanetary magnetic attractions are but

just being demonstrated. Until gravitation is understood to be simply magnetic attraction and repulsion, and the part played by magnetism itself in the endless correlations of forces in the ether of space - that "hypothetical medium," as Webster terms it, I maintain that it is neither fair nor wise to deny the levitation of either fakir or table. Bodies oppositely electrified attract each other; similarly electrified, repulse each other. Admit, therefore, that any body having weight, whether man or inanimate object, can by any cause whatever, external or internal, be given the same polarity as the spot on which it stands, and what is to prevent its rising?

Before charging me with falsehood when I affirm that I have seen both men and objects levitated, you must first dispose of the abundant testimony of persons far better known than my humble self. Mr. Crookes, Professor Thury of Geneva, Louis Jacolliot, your own Dr. Gray and Dr. Warner, and hundreds of others, have, first and last, certified to the fact of levitation.

I am surprised to find how little even the editors of your erudite contemporary, *The World*, are acquainted with Oriental metaphysics in general and the trousers of Hindu fakirs in particular. It was bad enough to make those holy mendicants of the religion of Brahma graduate from the Buddhist Lamaseries of Tibet; but it is unpardonable to make them wear baggy breeches in the exercise of their religious functions. This is as bad as if a Hindu journalist had represented the Rev. Mr. Beecher entering his pulpit in the scant costume of the fakir - the *dhoti*, a cloth about the loins; "only that and nothing more." To account, therefore, for the oft-witnessed, open-air levitations of the Svamins and Gurus upon the theory of an iron frame concealed beneath the clothing, is as reasonable as Monsieur Babinet's explanation of the table-tipping and tapping as "unconscious ventriloquism."

You may object to the act of disembowelling, which I am compelled to affirm I have seen performed. It is, as you say, "remarkable"; but still not miraculous. Your suggestion that Dr. Hammond *should go and see* it is a *good one*. Science would be the gainer, and your humble correspondent be justified. Are you, however, in a position to guarantee that he would furnish the world of skeptics with an example of "veracious reporting," if his observation should tend to overthrow the pet theories of what we loosely call science?

Yours very respectfully,

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

New York, March 28th, 1877.

Editor's Notes:

[1] Doppelgänger see: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doppelg%C3%A4nger>

Bibliographical Source:

Banner of Light, Boston, Vol. XLI, April 21, 1877, p. 8., From the *New York Sun*, April 1st 1877.



H.P.B.'S Comments on Fakirs

We are asked by a "Subscriber" in America to "comment" upon a curious report in the *Chicago Tribune*, which he sends us. We do so the more willingly as it contains a very ingenuous, newly-invented "dodge" to detect the real nature of the "mango tree growing," "boy and basket" performance and other like phenomena produced by Indian "jugglers," and an alleged "scientific" explanation of the same. The latter, however, is as old as the hills, and known to every Occultist, and has never been made a secret of. The heading of the article "IT IS ONLY HYPNOTISM" - (is it *only* that?) - pretends to let the cat out of the bag, and the "Chicagoan" interviewer seems very proud of this achievement of his countryman. But, to facts; let us see HOW INDIAN FAKIRS DECEIVE THOSE WHO WATCH THEM.

Fred S. Ellmore, a Young Chicagoan, Demonstrates the Truth of His Theory at Gaya, India - Mango Trees, Babies, and Other Objects Created by the Fakir Shown to Be Creatures of the Imagination - How a Clever Scheme Was Worked.

"Nearly every traveler who comes back from India brings with him more or less marvelous stories of the performance of Indian fakirs or jugglers. No one ever heard of one of these tales without being curious to know the explanation of the mystery. All sorts of theories have been offered, all of which are more or less unsatisfactory. It has remained for a young Chicagoan to furnish

an explanation that explains and to present what must be accepted as absolute proof of the correctness of his idea. His discovery may attract attention in all parts of the world and he may become as widely known as the discoverer of electricity."

Well, he might, no doubt, but for two trifling facts (a) if what he has discovered had not been known in the East, for ages, by the Occultists as GUPTA-MAYA or "Secret Illusion"; and (b) had not the Theosophical Society existed for over fifteen years to tell the "Ellmore" tale to every *gobe-mouche* inclined to believe in the *miraculous* and *supernatural* character of Indian, so-called "jugglery." It is over ten years ago that all such phenomena - the more wondrous and phenomenal for being simply *scientific* and explicable on *natural* principles - were repeatedly characterized by the present writer, when at Simla, as "psychological tricks," to the great disgust of her over-enthusiastic friends. What these *psychological tricks* are in reality and the difference between them and "conjuring" will be explained further on. And now to the *Tribune* narrative. After stating every particular about Mr. Frederick S. Ellmore, describing his childhood, and college life, giving the color of his hair and the address and number of his family residence, the interviewer shows him, with a friend and classmate, Mr. George Lessing - one "an enthusiastic photographer" the other a clever artist and draughtsman - in the land of the Sacred Cow and the wily *fakir*.

In talking to a *Tribune* man of his remarkable experience in India, Mr. Ellmore said: "We had done West India pretty thoroughly and had spent some time in Calcutta. From there we went North, stopping for a short time at Rajmahal and Dinapur. From the latter city we went South to Gaya, which we reached in July last. Lessing and I had frequently talked over the Indian fakirs and their marvellous performances and had determined upon

making a careful test of their powers. So we were constantly on the alert for some first-class juggler. One afternoon Lessing rushed into the room where I was taking a snooze and told me there was a fakir front about ready to begin his performances. I was as pleased as he. Neither of us had been able previous to this time to see one of these fellows, but we had arranged a little plan which we were to put into operation when opportunity offered. I had been impressed by a theory that the explanation of all their alleged supernatural performances would be found in hypnotism, but I did not know how to get at it, until Lessing proposed this plan to test my theory. While the fakir was going through his performances Lessing was to make a rapid pencil sketch of what he saw while I at the same moment would take a snap-shot with my kodak.

Being prepared to put this plan into operation we went out from our abode, and there found the fakir and a crowd of natives and one or two Europeans. The fakir was a queer-looking chap. His hair was long and matted and his beard hung low on his breast. His only decoration was a copper ring or bracelet worn about his right arm between the wrist and the elbow. His eyes were remarkable both for their brilliancy and their intense depth, if I may so term it. They seemed to be almost jet black and were set unusually deep in his head. When we stepped into the little circle about him those eyes took us in from sole to crown. He had spread upon the ground a coarse carpet of peculiar texture about four feet wide and six feet long. At his right stood a small earthen bowl, and across his knees lay a strange looking musical instrument.

Having received the signal that all was ready he took the bowl in his hands and turned the contents - a reddish, sand-like mixture - out upon the carpet. He mixed it about with his fingers,

apparently to show that it contained no concealed objects. Replacing the sand in the bowl he stood it in the centre of the carpet, several feet in front of his knees, and covered it with a small shawl, first placing in the mixture several seeds of the mango fruit. Then he played a weird air on his pipe, swayed back and forth, and as he did so, slowly took in each member of the crowd of the spectators with those marvellous eyes of his. The swaying and pipe-playing lasted two or three minutes. Then he suddenly stopped and raised one corner of the shawl. We saw several green shoots two or three inches high. He replaced the shawl, played a little more on his pipe, and I could have sworn I saw the shawl pushed three feet into the air. Again he stopped and removed the shawl. This time there was a perfect tree, two feet or more in height, with long slender flat leaves. Lessing nudged me and I took my picture while he made a skeleton sketch. While we were watching this creation of the queer old man it seemed to vanish before our eyes. When it was gone he removed the bowl and spread the shawl on the ground before him. Then there was more music and more swaying, more looking at the ground, and as we watched the dirty square of cloth he had placed on the ground we saw outlined beneath it some moving object. As we watched he grasped the shawl by each of two corners and snatched it from the ground. Upon the spot where it had rested but a moment before, there sat the queerest dimpled Indian baby that I had seen in my travels. Lessing kept his nerve better than I did. I would have forgotten what I was doing if he had not reminded me. I took the picture and he made his sketch. The baby remained but a moment, before Mr. Fakir recovered it with the shawl, and drawing a knife cut and slashed at the spot where the infant sat. In another instant he threw away the shawl and there was nothing there.

We had scarce time to recover from our astonishment when the fakir drew from under his knee a ball of grey twine. Taking the loose end between his teeth, he, with a quick upward motion, tossed the ball into the air. Instead of coming back to him it kept on going up and up until out of sight, and there remained only the long swaying end. When we looked down after trying to see where the ball had gone, we were all astonished to see standing beside the fakir a boy about six years old. He had not been there when the ball was tossed into the air, but he was there now, and at a word from the fakir he walked over to the twine and began climbing it, a good deal after the fashion of a monkey climbing a grape vine. As he was starting I got his range and made a picture of him, Lessing at the same time making a sketch. The boy disappeared when he had reached a point thirty or forty feet from the ground, at least we could not see him. A moment later the twine disappeared. Then the fakir arose, rolled up his carpet, took the bowl away, and passed among the crowd soliciting contributions.

I had no facilities for developing the kodak films, and it was these Lessing took with him, as well as a thousand or more other negatives, to be developed. The fakir pictures with a few others, I received this afternoon. After the fakir's departure Lessing filled in his sketches and these he left with me. You'll see by comparing the ones Lessing made with the photographs that in no instance did the camera record the marvellous features of the performance. For instance, Lessing's sketch shows the tree grown from the bush, while the camera shows there was no bush there. Lessing saw a baby, and so did I, and he has got it in his sketch, but the camera demonstrates that there was no baby. Lessing's sketch of the body climbing the twine is evidence that he saw it, but the camera says there was no boy and no twine. From which I'm compelled to believe that my

theory is absolutely correct - that Mr. Fakir had simply hypnotized the entire crowd, but couldn't hypnotize the camera. I'm going to write an history of the affair and have copies made of the pictures and forward them to the London Society for Psychical Research. I have no doubt it will make good use of them."

Nor have we any doubt, upon this. The "S. P. R." is sure to make "as good use" of the sketches, by Mr. Lessing, and the photographic pictures by Mr. Ellmore, as it has made of the hundreds of its s?ances with spiritual mediums, and the evidence furnished by the Theosophist: unable to trace the things to its much beloved "telepathic impact," it will brand the whole round of the above enumerated well-known "juggler" phenomena as prestidigitation, sleight of hand and conjuring tricks *à la* "Maskelyne and Cook." For this is usually the only explanation given by the "learned" Society, of all that it does not understand and is incapable of understanding.

We wish Messrs. Ellmore and Lessing joy, and must say a few words on the subject, for their further and personal benefit.

First of all we ask them why they call the "juggler" a "fakir"? If he is the one he cannot be the other; for a fakir is simply a *Mussulman Devotee* whose whole time is taken up by acts of holiness such as standing for days on one leg, or on the top of his head, and who pays no attention to any other phenomena. Nor could their "juggler" be a Yogi, the latter title being incompatible with "taking up collections" after the exhibition of his psychic powers. The man they saw then at Gaya was simply - as they very correctly state - a public juggler, or as he is generally called in India, a *jadoowalla* (sorcerer) and a "producer of *illusions*," whether Hindu or Mohammedan. As a genuine juggler, *i.e.*, one who makes us professions of showing the

supernatural phenomena or *Siddhis* of a Yogi, he would be quite as entitled to the use of conjuring tricks as a Hoffman or Maskelyne and Cook. Well, the latter gentlemen, and all the "Wizards of the North" as well, are invited to repeat if they can, even such *juggling phenomena* as the above, clad, or rather *unclad*, as such jugglers are, and under the canopy of the heavens, instead of the roof and ceiling of a hall or a theatre. *They will never be able to do so.* And why? Because these "jugglers" are not sleight of hand conjurers. They are regular and genuine psychologists, mesmerisers endowed with the most phenomenal powers, hitherto unknown to, and quite unpractised in Europe, save in a few exceptional cases. And with regard to this point, basing our questions of the logic of analogy, *if such phenomenal powers of fascination, as throwing glamour over audiences often numbering several hundreds and even thousands, are once proven to exist in simple professional jugglers, who can deny the same powers, only twenty times as strong, in trained adepts in Occultism?* This is the future nut for the Society for Psychical Research to crack - if it ever accepts Mr. Ellmore's testimony, which we doubt. But if it is accepted, what right will its members or the public have to doubt the claims made on behalf of great Yogis and learned adepts and "Mahatmas" to produce far more wonderful phenomena? The fact alone forsooth, that a whole audience sees a twine thrown into the air, (1) the end of which seems fastened in the clouds, a boy climbing up it, a baby under a basket, and a mango tree growing, when there is, in truth, neither twine nor boy, neither baby nor mango tree - may well give us the right to call it the greatest mental miracle possible; a "psychological *trick*" - true enough, but one never to be rivalled, nor even approached by a physical phenomenon, however astounding. "It is *only* Hypnotism," you say. Then those who say so, do not know the

difference between hypnotism, which, at best, is only a *purely physiological manifestation* even in the hands of the most powerful and learned experimenters, and real mesmerism, let alone *maha-maya* or even the Gupta-maya of ancient and modern India. We defy all, and everyone, from Charcot and Richet down to all the second rate hypnotizers, including the greatest physical mediums, to produce that with which Messrs. Ellmore and Lessing credit their "juggler."

To those who are incapable of appreciating the all-importance of that psycho-spiritual power in man which the *Tribune* calls so ignorantly and so foolishly "hypnotism," all we may say would be useless. We simply refuse to answer them. As to those others who will understand us, we say yes; it is *glamour*, fascination, psychology, call it what you will, but it is not "hypnotism." The latter is an aberration produced on several persons in turn by another person, through contact, through gazing at a bright spot or manipulation; but what is it in comparison with the collective and instantaneous *fascination* produced on hundreds by one passing gaze of the "juggler" (*Vide supra*), even though the gaze did "take in every man" "from sole to crown." No Theosophist who understands anything of Occultism, has ever explained such phenomena on any principle but that of *magic-spell and fascination*; and to claim for them anything else would amount to teaching supernaturalism and miracle, *i.e.*, an impossibility in nature. There is a host of Theosophists in England alone, who would testify any day that they have been taught for many years now that physical phenomena in India are due to glamour and the psychological powers of the performers. Yet no one in the Theosophical Society ever thought of claiming for himself the discovery and explanation of the mango tree mystery, as it is a teaching known

for long ages, and now once more taught to all *who want to know*.

Nevertheless, as said at the beginning of this article, we all owe a debt of gratitude to Mr. Ellmore and his friend, for their clever idea of applying to these tricks, the photographic test; as, no glamour (or, as the reporter makes Ellmore say, "hypnotism") could affect the camera. Moreover, both the young traveller and the *Tribune* reporter seem to have worked only for the Theosophical Society. Indeed, it is safe to prophesy that no one, including the Society for Psychical Research, will pay much attention to Mr. Ellmore's "discovery" - since the latter, the erroneous name of hypnotism notwithstanding, is only a fact and a truth. Thus, it is the Theosophical Society alone which will benefit by having one more of its teachings corroborated by independent and undeniable evidence. (2)

(1) *Vide Isis Unveiled*, I, p. 73, 495 *et seq.*

(2) Additional corroboration of occult teaching is given in a pamphlet entitled *Materialism, Agnosticism, and Theosophy* issued by the Pacific Coast Committee for Theosophical Works: "In connection with this very point (*i.e.*, nebulae), some three years ago, Madame Blavatsky, that b?te noire of both religion and science, declared that if scientists could perfect instruments sufficiently powerful to penetrate these nebulae, they would perceive the falsity of this assumption of the universal action of gravitation. It passed without notice.

... But quite recently a California scientist has most unexpectedly confirmed this seemingly idle statement. One of the first results of the inspection of the heavens through the great Lick telescope was the cautious announcement by Professor Holden that the arrangement of matter of the nebulae would seem to point directly to the conclusion

that some other force than gravitation was the active agent."

Bibliographical source:

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Burial and Resuscitation of Fakirs

Some persons have the natural and some the acquired power of withdrawing the *inner* from the *outer* body, at will, and causing it to perform long journeys, and be seen by those whom it visits. Numerous are the instances recorded by unimpeachable witnesses of the "doubles" of persons having been seen and conversed with, hundreds of miles from the places where the persons themselves were known to be. Hermetimus, if we may credit Pliny and Plutarch,[1] could at will fall into a trance and then his second soul proceeded to any distant place he chose.

The Abbe Tritheim, the famous author of *Steganographie*, who lived in the seventeenth century, could converse with his friends by the mere power of his will. "I can make my thoughts known to the initiated," he wrote, "at a distance of many hundred miles, without word, writing, or cipher, by any messenger. The latter cannot betray me, for he knows nothing. If needs be, I can dispense with the messenger. If any correspondent should be buried in the deepest dungeon, I could still convey to him my thoughts as clearly and as frequently as I chose, and this quite simply, without superstition, without the aid of spirits." Cordanus could also send his spirit, or any messages he chose. When he did so, he felt "as if a door was opened, and I myself immediately passed through it, leaving the body behind me." [2] The case of a high German official, a counsellor Wesermann, was mentioned in a scientific paper.[3] He claimed to be able to cause any friend or acquaintance, at any distance, to dream of

every subject he chose, or see any person he liked. His claims were proved good, and testified to on several occasions by skeptics and learned professional persons. He could also cause his double to appear wherever he liked; and be seen by several persons at one time. By whispering in their ears a sentence prepared and agreed upon beforehand by unbelievers, and for the purpose, his power to project the double was demonstrated beyond any cavil.

According to Napier, Osborne, Major Lawes, Quenouillet, Nikiforovitch, and many other modern witnesses, fakirs are now proved to be able, by a long course of diet, preparation, and repose, to bring their bodies into a condition which enables them to be buried six feet under ground for an indefinite period. Sir Claude Wade was present at the court of Rundjit Singh, when the fakir, mentioned by the Honorable Captain Osborne, was buried alive for six weeks, in a box placed in a cell three feet below the floor of the room.[4] To prevent the chance of deception, a guard comprising two companies of soldiers had been detailed, and four sentries "were furnished and relieved every two hours, night and day, to guard the building from intrusion. ... On opening it," says Sir Claude, "we saw a figure enclosed in a bag of white linen fastened by a string over the head. . . . the servant then began pouring warm water over the figure . . . the legs and arms of the body were shrivelled and stiff, the face full, the head reclining on the shoulder like that of a corpse. I then called to the medical gentleman who was attending me, to come down and inspect the body, which he did, but could discover no pulsation in the heart, the temples, or the arm. There was, however, a *heat about the region of the brain*, which no other part of the body exhibited."

Regretting that the limits of our space forbid the quotation of the

details of this interesting story, we will only add, that the process of resuscitation included bathing with hot water, friction, the removal of wax and cotton pledgets from the nostrils and ears, the rubbing of the eyelids with ghee or clarified butter, and, what will appear most curious to many, the application of a hot wheaten cake, about an inch thick "to the top of the head." After the cake had been applied for the third time, the body was violently convulsed, the nostrils became inflated, the respiration ensued, and the limbs assumed a natural fulness; but the pulsation was still faintly perceptible. "The tongue was then anointed with ghee; the eyeballs became dilated and recovered their natural color, and the fakir recognized those present and spoke." It should be noticed that not only had the nostrils and ears been plugged, but the tongue had been thrust back so as to close the gullet, thus effectually stopping the orifices against the admission of atmospheric air. While in India, a fakir told us that this was done not only to prevent the action of the air upon the organic tissues, but also to guard against the deposit of the germs of decay, which in case of suspended animation would cause decomposition exactly as they do in any other meat exposed to air. There are also localities in which a fakir would refuse to be buried; such as the many spots in Southern India infested with the white ants, which annoying termites are considered among the most dangerous enemies of man and his property. They are so voracious as to devour everything they find except perhaps metals. As to wood, there is no kind through which they would not burrow; and even bricks and mortar offer but little impediment to their formidable armies. They will patiently work through mortar, destroying it particle by particle; and a fakir, however holy himself, and strong his temporary coffin, would not risk finding his body devoured when it was time for his resuscitation.

Then, here is a case, only one of many, substantiated by the testimony of two English noblemen - one of them an army officer - and a Hindu Prince, who was as great a skeptic as themselves. It places science in this embarrassing dilemma: it must either give the lie to many unimpeachable witnesses, or admit that if one fakir can resuscitate after six weeks, any other fakir can also; and if a fakir, why not a Lazarus, a Shunamite boy, or the daughter of Jairus?[5]

And now, perhaps, it may not be out of place to inquire what assurance can any physician have, beyond *external* evidence, that the body is really dead? The best authorities agree in saying that there are none. Dr. Todd Thomson, of London,[6] says most positively that "the immobility of the body, even its cadaverous aspect, the coldness of surface, the absence of respiration and pulsation, and the sunken state of the eye, are no unequivocal evidences that *life* is wholly extinct." Nothing but total decomposition is an irrefutable proof that life has fled for ever and that the tabernacle is tenantless. Demokritus asserted that there existed no *certain* signs of real death.[7] Pliny maintained the same.[8] Asclepiades, a learned physician and one of the most distinguished men of his day, held that the assurance was still more difficult in the cases of women than in those of men.

Todd Thomson, above quoted, gives several remarkable cases of such a suspended animation. Among others he mentions a certain Francis Neville, a Norman gentleman, who twice apparently died, and was twice in the act of being buried. But, at the moment when the coffin was being lowered in the grave, he spontaneously revived. In the seventeenth century, Lady Russell, to all appearance died, and was about to be buried, but as the bell was tolling for her funeral, she sat up in her coffin and exclaimed, "It is time to go to church!" Diemberbroeck mentions a

peasant who gave no signs of life for three days, but when placed in his coffin, near the grave, revived and lived many years afterward. In 1836, a respectable citizen of Brussels fell into a profound lethargy on a Sunday morning. On Monday, as his attendants were preparing to screw the lid of the coffin, the supposed corpse sat up, rubbed his eyes, and called for his coffee and a newspaper.[9]

Such cases of apparent death are not very infrequently reported in the newspaper press. As we write (April, 1877), we find in a London letter to the *New York Times*, the following paragraph: "Miss Annie Goodale, the actress, died three weeks ago. Up to yesterday she was not buried. The corpse is warm and limp, and the features as soft and mobile as when in life. Several physicians have examined her, and have ordered that the body shall be watched night and day. The poor lady is evidently in a trance, but whether she is destined to come to life it is impossible to say."

Science regards man as an aggregation of atoms temporarily united by a mysterious force called the life-principle. To the materialist, the only difference between a living and a dead body is, that in the one case, that force is active, in the other latent. When it is extinct or entirely latent the molecules obey a superior attraction, which draws them asunder and scatters them through space.

This dispersion must be death, if it is possible to conceive such a thing as death, where the very molecules of the dead body manifest an intense vital energy. If death is but the stoppage of a digesting, locomotive, and thought-grinding machine, how can death be actual and not relative, before that machine is thoroughly broken up and its particles dispersed? So long as any of them cling together, the centripetal vital force may

overmatch the dispersive centrifugal action. Says Éliphas Lévi: "Change attests movement, and movement only reveals life. The corpse would not decompose if it were dead; all the molecules which compose it are living and struggle to separate. And would you think that the spirit frees itself first of all to exist no more? That thought and love can die when the grossest forms of matter do not die? If the change should be called death, we die and are born again every day, for every day our forms undergo change." [10]

The kabalists say that a man is not dead when his body is entombed. Death is never sudden; for, according to Hermes, nothing goes in nature by violent transitions. Everything is gradual, and as it required a long and gradual development to produce the living human being, so time is required to completely withdraw vitality from the carcass. "Death can no more be an absolute end, than birth a real beginning. Birth proves the preexistence of the being, as death proves immortality," says the same French kabalist.

While implicitly believing in the restoration of the daughter of Jairus, the ruler of the synagogue, and in other Bible-miracles, well-educated Christians, who otherwise would feel indignant at being called superstitious, meet all such cases as that of Apollonius and the girl said by his biographer to have been recalled to life by him, with scornful skepticism. Diogenes Laertius, who mentions a woman restored to life by Empedocles, is treated with no more respect; and the name of Pagan thaumaturgist, in the eyes of Christians, is but a synonym for impostor. Our scientists are at least one degree more rational; they embrace all Bible prophets and apostles, and the heathen miracle-doers in two categories of hallucinated fools and deceitful tricksters.

But Christians and materialists might, with a very little effort on their part, show themselves fair and logical at the same time. To produce such a miracle, they have but to consent to understand what they read, and submit it to the unprejudiced criticism of their best judgment. Let us see how far it is possible. Setting aside the incredible fiction of Lazarus, we will select two cases: the ruler's daughter, recalled to life by Jesus, and the Corinthian bride, resuscitated by Apollonius. In the former case, totally disregarding the significant expression of Jesus - "*She is not dead but sleepeth*," the clergy force their god to become a breaker of his own laws and grant unjustly to one what he denies to all others, and with no better object in view than to produce a useless miracle. In the second case, notwithstanding the words of the biographer of Apollonius, so plain and precise that there is not the slightest cause to misunderstand them, they charge Philostratus with deliberate imposture. Who could be fairer than he, who less open to the charge of mystification, when, in describing the resuscitation of the young girl by the Tyanian sage, in the presence of a large concourse of people, the biographer says, "she had *seemed* to die."

In other words, he very clearly indicates a case of suspended animation; and then adds immediately, "as the rain fell very fast on the young girl," while she was being carried to the pile, "with her face turned upwards, this, *also*, might have excited her senses." [11] Does this not show most plainly that Philostratus saw *no* miracle in that resuscitation? Does it not rather imply, if anything, the great learning and skill of Apollonius, "who like Asclepiades had the merit of distinguishing at a glance between real and apparent death"? [12]

A resuscitation, after the soul and spirit have entirely separated from the body, and the last electric thread is severed, is as

impossible as for a once disembodied spirit to reincarnate itself once more on this earth, except as described in previous chapters. "A leaf, once fallen off, does not reattach itself to the branch," says Éliphas Lévi. "The caterpillar becomes a butterfly, but the butterfly does not again return to the grub. Nature closes the door behind all that passes, and pushes life forward. Forms pass, thought remains, and does not recall that which it has once exhausted." [13]

Why should it be imagined that Asclepiades and Apollonius enjoyed exceptional powers for the discernment of actual death? Has any modern school of medicine this knowledge to impart to its students? Let their authorities answer for them. These prodigies of Jesus and Apollonius are so well attested that they appear authentic. Whether in either or both cases life was simply suspended or not, the important fact remains that by some power, peculiar to themselves, both the wonder-workers recalled the *seemingly dead* to life in an instant. [14]

Is it because the modern physician has not yet found the secret which the theurgists evidently possessed that its possibility is denied?

Neglected as psychology now is, and with the strangely chaotic state in which physiology is confessed to be by its most fair students, certainly it is not very likely that our men of science will soon rediscover the lost knowledge of the ancients. In the days of old, when prophets were not treated as charlatans, nor thaumaturgists as impostors, there were colleges instituted for teaching prophecy and occult sciences in general. Samuel is recorded as the chief of such an institution at Ramah; Elisha, also, at Jericho. The schools of *hazim*, prophets or seers, were celebrated throughout the country. Hillel had a regular academy, and Socrates is well known to have sent away several of his

disciples to study *manticism*. The study of magic, or wisdom, included every branch of science, the metaphysical as well as the physical, psychology and physiology in their common and occult phases, and the study of alchemy was universal, for it was both a physical and a spiritual science. Therefore why doubt or wonder that the ancients, who studied nature under its double aspect, achieved discoveries which to our modern physicists, who study but its dead letter, are a closed book?

Thus, the question at issue is not whether a *dead* body can be resuscitated - for, to assert that would be to assume the possibility of a miracle, which is absurd - but, to assure ourselves whether the medical authorities pretend to determine the precise moment of death. The kabalists say that death occurs at the instant when both the astral body, or life-principle, and the spirit part forever with the corporeal body. The scientific physician who denies both astral body and spirit, and admits the existence of nothing more than the life-principle, judges death to occur when life is apparently extinct. When the beating of the heart and the action of the lungs cease, and *rigor mortis* is manifested, and especially when decomposition begins, they pronounce the patient dead. But the annals of medicine teem with examples of "suspended animation" as the result of asphyxia by drowning, the inhalation of gases and other causes; life being restored in the case of drowning persons even after they had been apparently dead for twelve hours.

In cases of somnambulant trance, none of the ordinary signs of death are lacking; breathing and the pulse are extinct; animal-heat has disappeared; the muscles are rigid, the eye glazed, and the body is colorless. In the celebrated case of Colonel Townshend, he threw himself into this state in the presence of three medical men; who, after a time, were

persuaded that he was really dead, and were about leaving the room, when he slowly revived. He describes his peculiar gift by saying that he "could die or expire when he pleased, and yet, by an effort, or *somehow* he could come to life again."

There occurred in Moscow, a few years since, a remarkable instance of apparent death. The wife of a wealthy merchant lay in the cataleptic state seventeen days, during which the authorities made several attempts to bury her; but, as decomposition had not set in, the family averted the ceremony, and at the end of that time she was restored to life.

The above instances show that the most learned men in the medical profession are unable to be certain when a person is dead. What they call "suspended animation," is that state from which the patient spontaneously recovers, through an effort of his own spirit, which may be provoked by any one of many causes. In these cases, the astral body has not parted from the physical body; its external functions are simply suspended; the subject is in a state of torpor, and the restoration is nothing but a recovery from it.

But, in the case of what physiologists would call "real death," but which is not actually so, the astral body has withdrawn; perhaps local decomposition has set in. How shall the man be brought to life again? The answer is, the interior body must be forced back into the exterior one, and vitality reawakened in the latter. The clock has run down, it must be wound. If death is absolute; if the organs have not only ceased to act, but have lost the susceptibility of renewed action, then the whole universe would have to be thrown into chaos to resuscitate the corpse - a miracle would be demanded. But, as we said before, the man is not dead when he is cold, stiff, pulseless, breathless, and even showing signs of decomposition; he is not dead when buried,

nor afterward, until a certain point is reached. That point is, *when the vital organs have become so decomposed, that if reanimated, they could not perform their customary functions*; when the mainspring and cogs of the machine, so to speak, are so eaten away by rust, that they would snap upon the turning of the key. Until that point is reached, the astral body may be caused, without miracle, to reenter its former tabernacle, either by an effort of its own will, or under the resistless impulse of the will of one who knows the potencies of nature and how to direct them. The spark is not extinguished, but only latent - latent as the fire in the flint, or the heat in the cold iron.

In cases of the most profound cataleptic clairvoyance, such as obtained by Du Potet, and described very graphically by the late Prof. William Gregory, in his *Letters on Animal Magnetism*, the spirit is so far disengaged from the body that it would be impossible for it to reenter it without an effort of the mesmerizer's will. The subject is practically dead, and, if left to itself, the spirit would escape forever. Although independent of the torpid physical casing, the half-freed spirit is still tied to it by a magnetic cord, which is described by clairvoyants as appearing dark and smoky by contrast with the ineffable brightness of the astral atmosphere through which they look. Plutarch, relating the story of Thespesius, who fell from a great height, and lay three days apparently dead, gives us the experience of the latter during his state of partial decease. "Thespesius," says he, "then observed that he was different from the dead by whom he was surrounded. ... They were transparent and environed by a radiance, but he seemed to trail after him a dark radiation or line of shadow." His whole description, minute and circumstantial in its details, appears to be corroborated by the clairvoyants of every period, and, so far as this class of testimony can be taken, is important. The

kabalists, as we find them interpreted by Éliphas Lévi, in his *Science des Esprits*, say that, "When a man falls into the last sleep, he is plunged at first into a sort of dream, before gaining consciousness in the other side of life. He sees, then, either in a beautiful vision, or in a terrible nightmare, the paradise or hell, in which he believed during his mortal existence. This is why it often happens, that the affrighted soul breaks violently back into the terrestrial life it has just left, and why some who were really dead, *i.e.*, who, if left alone and quiet, would have peaceably passed away forever in a state of unconscious lethargy, when entombed too soon, reawake to life in the grave."

In this connection, the reader may perhaps recall the well-known case of the old man who had left some generous gifts in his will to his orphaned nieces; which document, just before his death, he had confided to his rich son, with injunctions to carry out his wishes. But, he had not been dead more than a few hours before the son, finding himself alone with the corpse, tore the will and burned it. The sight of this impious deed apparently recalled the hovering spirit, and the old man, rising from his couch of death, uttered a fierce malediction upon the horror-stricken wretch, and then fell back again, and yielded up his spirit - this time forever. Dion Boucicault makes use of an incident of this kind in his powerful drama *Louis XI.*; and Charles Kean created a profound impression in the character of the French monarch, when the dead man revives for an instant and clutches the crown as the heir-apparent approaches it.

Lévi says that resuscitation is not impossible while the vital organism remains undestroyed, and the astral spirit is yet within reach. "Nature," he says, "accomplishes nothing by sudden jerks, and eternal death is always preceded by a state which partakes somewhat of the nature of lethargy. It is a torpor which

a great shock or the magnetism of a powerful will can overcome." He accounts in this manner for the resuscitation of the dead man thrown upon the bones of Elisha. He explains it by saying that the soul was hovering at that moment near the body; the burial party, according to tradition, were attacked by robbers; and their fright communicating itself sympathetically to it, the soul was seized with horror at the idea of its remains being desecrated, and "reentered violently into its body to raise and save it." Those who believe in the survival of the soul can see in this incident nothing of a supernatural character - it is only a perfect manifestation of natural law. To narrate to the materialist such a case, however well attested, would be but an idle talk; the theologian, always looking beyond nature for a special providence, regards it as a prodigy. Eliphas Lévi says: "They attributed the resuscitation to the contact with the bones of Elisha; and worship of relics dates logically from his epoch."

Balfour Stewart is right - scientists "know nothing, or next to nothing, of the ultimate structure and properties of matter, whether organic or inorganic."

We are now on such firm ground, that we will take another step in advance. *The same knowledge and control of the occult forces, including the vital force which enabled the fakir temporarily to leave and then reenter his body, and Jesus, Apollonius, and Elisha to recall their several subjects to life, made it possible for the ancient hierophants to animate statues, and cause them to act and speak like living creatures.*

[1] Pliny: "Hist. Nat.," vii., c. 52; and Plutarch: "Discourse concerning Socrates' Daemon," 22.

[2] "De Res. Var.," v. iii., i., viii., c. 43. Plutarch: "Discourse concerning Socrates' Daemon," 22.

[3] Nasse: "Zeitschrift für Psychische Aerzte," 1820.

[4] Osborne: "Camp and Court of Rundjit Singh"; Braid: "On Trance."

[5] Mrs. Catherine Crowe, in her "Night-Side of Nature," p. 118, gives us the particulars of a similar burial of a fakir, in the presence of General Ventura, together with the Maharaja, and many of his Sirdars. The political agent at Loodhiana was "present when he was disinterred, ten months after he had been buried." The coffin, or box, containing the fakir "being buried in a vault, the earth was thrown over it and trod down, after which a crop of barley was sown on the spot, and sentries placed to watch it. "The Maharaja, however, was so skeptical that in spite of all these precautions, he had him, twice in the ten months, dug up and examined, and each time he was found to be *exactly in the same state* as when they had shut him up."

[6] Todd: Appendix to "Occult Science," vol. i.

[7] A Cornel. Cels., lib. ii., cap. vi.

[8] "Hist. Nat.," lib. vii., cap. lii.

[9] "Morning Herald," July 21, 1836.

[10] "La Science des Esprits."

[11] "Vit. Apollon. Tyan.," lib. iv., ch. xvi.

[12] Salverte: "Sciences Occultes," vol. ii.

[13] "La Science des Esprits."

[14] It would be beneficial to humanity were our modern physicians possessed of the same inestimable faculty; for then we would have on record less horrid deaths after inhumation. Mrs. Catherine Crowe, in the "Night-Side of Nature," records in the chapter on "Cases of Trances" five such cases, in England alone, and during the present century. Among them is Dr. Walker of Dublin and a Mr. S-, whose stepmother was accused of poisoning him, and who, upon being disinterred, was found lying on his face.

Bibliographical reference:

Isis Unveiled by H.P. Blavatsky, Vol. I, pp. 476-485.



Yakshni

[Thakur Ganesh Sing Jinan Varnia, comments by H. P. B.]

In the year 1861, I was with my father who was then the Tehsildar of Jahanabad in the Bareilly district (the tehsil has since been abolished). I witnessed myself some performances done by one who claimed ability to command the Yakshni.

Now, my father found one evening a young man of about 30 years of age proudly seated on a chair in the market of that place. He wore a gaudy apparel and had his long hair tied behind his neck. His peculiar attitude excited the attention of my father who went over to the fakir (as he so wished himself to be known), and asked him a few questions, but he replied in a vague and proud manner, pretending that he was a good Yogi. My father though not a Yogi himself, can still well distinguish them as he has been a constant visitor to these men since his boyhood, and therefore, he doubted this man's sanctity.

When he reached his tehsil he sent him word to leave the Parganá [1] and earn his living elsewhere. But, instead of going out of Parganá, the fakir went to the *marghat* of the town (a place set apart by the Hindus to burn their dead), put himself over a *jhula* with his head downward, supported by a stick both ends of which were tied to a rope, - a foot high from the ground - and the rope slung over the branches of a tree, and with his toes upwards, grasping the rope on either sides, said that he would thus bring a curse on the Tehsildar.

On seeing this, many persons were frightened and reported the matter to my father who, thereupon, ordered four peons to apprehend the fakir and bring him to the tehsil.

Finding the fakir in the above posture, none of the peons dared speak to him. On the one hand, they dreaded the curse of the fakir, and on the other, the risk of losing their situations. The latter consideration, however, asserted itself. They took courage and begged the fakir to come down the *jhula*. After a short pause, he obeyed and accompanied them to the tehsil in quite a different attitude. He besmeared his whole body with ashes of his *dhuni*, (this the Baigari fakirs of this country generally burn before them as a part of their Yoga), covered himself with a few rags, and took a portmanteau in his hand.

Soon after the apprehension of the fakir, it was whispered in town that he owed certain sums to some bazaar shop-keepers - confectioners, *puri* vendors, and the like - and in the meanwhile a number of claimants gathered round him and claimed their dues.

My father inquired of them why they sold their things to a wandering fakir of no means before getting anything in return.

They said but hesitatingly that he knew how to turn baser metals into gold and silver, and that thus he had been paying all of them since his arrival there. They also added that he had lately made an anklet, and that on its disposal he was to discharge his liabilities. The fakir was immediately put into custody, and the anklet sought after. It was brought after a diligent search, and on test found to have a coating of silver and nothing but lead inside.

The report of this being thus caught and found an impostor spread abroad. In a few days, a heap of silver ornaments which on test were all found base was brought in. As my object is not

to enumerate the particulars of the case, I turn to my narrative. The fakir who remained for a time in custody, began to request the watchmen and other persons who occasionally visited him to get him released and, in return, promised that he would show them wonderful *tamashas*. I mention a few of them here which he did. One day one of the compartments of the sepoy's line was cleaned at his request and nothing was left inside. A curtain was then hung over the door. The fakir went inside the compartment almost naked, and, to the astonishment of all present, brought a *pattal* full of cooked rice and put it before them. Presently he produced another of the same kind with a number of fresh flowers and fruits which that neighbourhood did not yield in that season.

The very evening perhaps he was seated near the well inside the tehsili enclosure, and a few men were drawing water from it. He went to them and asked one of them whether he would like to see some *tamasha*. On his answering in the affirmative, he took from his hand the *lofa* (pot) full of water just then drawn out of the well, shook it a few seconds and gave its contents to many present who to their great astonishment found it to be *sharbat* (syrup). I did not taste it myself, and he refused to allow me to do so when I asked him.

Another night almost all the tehsili officials were assembled in my father's waiting-room, my father not being excepted. The fakir was also called in. Some of them, who were Kaith (a caste), requested him to show them some wonderful performance suited to their taste. He said "all right," and asked them to send a man to have a *lofa* full of fresh water drawn out by only one hand. This being done, the *lofa* thus brought was given to the fakir who simply handed it over to one of the officials, a Kaith, who was sitting close to him, and asked him to

pour it out in a shallow broad vessel. A small quantity of it thus poured appeared to all present like deep red wine, and smelt similarly. The fakir then told the same official to put on his hand inside. On doing this he found a piece of raw liver and showed it to all who were present.

Many other similar things were done by him. He had further promised to show a grand mina-bazaar (fancy market) when a tiger would also make his appearance without injuring anybody. This was delayed for some time in order to finish some preliminary ceremonies which, he said, he was required to do. Meanwhile, somebody treated him that his head would be chopped off if he did such things anymore. This frightened him so much that he never did anything after that, till he was sent over to Bareilly for his trial in the criminal court.

My grandfather, who was present on the above occasion, said that these performances can be done by obtaining control over Yakshni, but that men acquiring such powers are required to do some filthy practices for a short time only and, therefore, good men never attempt it. As in those days I was quite young, and did not have understanding enough to learn from him more in the subject, the thing remained buried in my heart. But now I see great efforts are being made on all sides to solve the nature of such phenomena. Your journal being the chief organ devoted to such topics, I beg leave to solicit a short space for it on one of its columns. Would any the learned readers of your journal be willing to waste a few moments to say what this Yakshni is, and whether it is worth aspiring to?

H.P.B.'s comment - It certainly is not worth the while of any sensible man to spend time in learning such puerilities as are above described. There are the baser branches of occultism. A

Yogi who gets frightened at any threat is *no* Yogi, but one of those who learn to produce effects without knowing or having learnt what are the causes. Such men, if not tricksters, are simply *passive* mediums - not adepts! - **End of comment.**

Bibliographical source:

The Theosophist, April, 1881, pp. 143-44.



A Musulman Abdal (Yogi)

[By Syed Mahmood, Esq., District Judge at Rai-Bareilly (Oudh),
comments by H.P.B.]

The original of the following narrative will be found among the anecdotes in Chapter III. of the 'Bostan,' one of the most celebrated poems in Persian, by the world-renowned Sadi of Shiraz, who is regarded by Musalmans not only as a great poet, but also as a very pious and holy man. The original anecdote in Persian is found at page 213 of the Edition of Ch. H. Graf, and was printed at Vienna in 1858. I am afraid the translation is not a very good one, but I have attempted to make it literal. The narrative runs thus: -

It so happened, once, that myself and an old man from Faryab arrived at a river in the West. I had a diram (silver coin) which the boatman took from me and allowed me to enter the boat, but they left the Dervesh behind. The blacks (*i.e.*, the boatmen) rowed the boat - it glided like smoke. The head boatman was not a God-fearing man. I felt sore at heart at parting from my companion; but he laughed at my sorrow and said "Be not sorry for me my good friend - He will take across who lets the boat float." Therefore he spread his *Sajjada* (*i.e.*, a small carpet used by Mahomedans while repeating their prayers) on the face of the water. - It appeared to be an imagination or a dream. I slept not the whole of that night, thinking of the wonderful occurrence. On the morrow he looked at me and said: "You were struck with wonder my good friend; but the boat brought you over, and God me."

Why do the opponents not believe that *abdals* [1] can go into water or fire? For an infant, that does not know the effect of fire, is looked after by his loving mother. Similarly those who are lost in contemplation (of the Deity) are day and night under the immediate care of the Deity. He it is who preserved *Khallil* [2] from fire, and Moses from the water of the Nile. Even a little child, supported on the hands of a swimmer, does not care how swollen the Tigris is. But how can you walk on water with a manly heart, when even on the dry land you are full of sin?

H.P.B.'s comment - This anecdote, kindly furnished by the accomplished Mr. Mahmood, has a real interest and value, in that it reminds the student of psychological science that a certain range of psycho-physiological powers may be developed, irrespective of creed or race, by whoever will undergo a certain system of training, or, as Mr. Mahmood expresses it in his note to his translation, who lead holy lives and so overcome the ordinary, that is, the more familiar, laws of matter. Mahommedan literature teems with authentic accounts of psychical phenomena performed by devotees and ascetics of that faith; and it is to be hoped that a portion, at least, may find their way into these columns through the friendly aid of Persian and Arabic scholars. - **End of comment.**

[1] Persons who by leading holy lives overcome the ordinary laws of matter.

[2] The Mahommedan name for Abraham, to whom the miracle of being saved from fire, when thrown into it, is attributed.

Bibliographical reference:

The Theosophist, VI, February, 1880, p.130.

The Mystery of Levitation - Why Do Birds Fly, and Fishes Swim?

[By W.R. Frink, comments by H.P.B.]

About four years ago, I took quite an interest in spiritualism and pursued my investigations in Philadelphia, with the two mediums, Mrs. Bliss and Henry Gordon; at *Terré Haute*, with Mrs. Stewart and Laura Morgan, for "materialization" so called. At St. Louis, I held séances with a Mrs. Sawyer, for tipping, raps, clairvoyance, etc., I got communications from persons who I then thought to be dead, but in a short time learned that they were still living. Never being very credulous this made me doubt, not so much the integrity of the mediums, as the forces that produced the phenomena. I soon came to the conclusion, that there was more fraud with the invisibles than with the mediums. I then got *Isis Unveiled*, read and re-read it, and pondered on the Yoga-philosophy, which interested me very much, as it opens to the trained power of man, a field not even hinted at in our Christian teachings. I have since followed your writings and teachings in the *THEOSOPHIST* from first to last, and the powers of the Yogi still seem to me most important and mysterious. If it is a fact, that man can, by study and training, become able to project his simulacrum, or astral body, to any distance and make it visible at his pleasure, or can walk on the surface of water, levitate himself at pleasure, or throw himself

into a cataleptic state at will and remain in it for months without food - it certainly opens up to the minds of the Western peoples, an idea of the capabilities of man, in an entirely new light. And, if, as you say, it is in accordance with natural law, we certainly should find somewhere in nature parallel phenomena. In regard to the cataleptic state, we find that in frogs and other hibernating reptiles and animals. As to the overcoming of gravity, I have often wondered as the flight of the birds, the philosophy of which has never been explained satisfactorily to my mind. I have often, when at sea, watched birds, and seen them sail in the air twice the length of the ship, or more than a thousand feet, without the slightest motion of their wings, and changing in many directions by a simple motion of their heads. Yet those birds weight ten pounds or more. What overcomes gravity? Often, too we will see them rise from the water against the wind, without any sufficient visible motion of the wings to propel them, if it were only a question of mechanical action. But if we take the position that birds have the power to make themselves light or heavy at *will*, the phenomenon of their flight becomes easy to comprehend.

Take, for example, the bird, called by sailors, the man-of-war hawk. He is seen leisurely sailing high in the air, as though he were meditating on the vanities of this world, like a good philosopher, but when he sees a laboring bird which has been fishing, return with his wages in his mouth, this monstrous eagle seems to drop with the velocity of a leaden ball, the fisher-bird drops the prey from its mouth, and its a caught by the thief before it strikes the water. If the eagle were shot dead in the air, he would not fall with nearly the velocity that he does. Naturalists say he only folds his wings, so as to cause the least resistance from the atmosphere; he does not propel himself with them. A fat turkey that will weigh twenty pounds, will fly with the same

ease as a lean one, that will not weigh more than five or six, and yet the breadth of wing is as great in the one as in the other, and apparently the muscular exertion is no greater with the fat one than with the lean one; whereas, if flying is merely mechanical, the one should exert more than twice the force of the other. There is a little animal here in America called the flying squirrel. *The Scientific America*, of December 24, 1881, gives a beautiful cut and description of him, and says he will "climb up fifty or more feet and project himself off towards an objective point eighty or a hundred yards distant, without any motion of his expanded membrane, or, in other words, he floats off in a curve and lights ascending." The writer fails to give the scientific explanation of the animal's floating through the air *in an ascending curve*. With the hypothesis that the animal can make himself heavy or light at will, all his motions are consistent. Whales will come up to breath after spouting, one-half of their ponderous bodies will be above water, but after filling their capacious lungs with air they will sink at will. Dr. E. K. Kane, the Artic navigator, says it is hard to account for the walrus being able to break the ice for breathing-holes, in the Artic seas, except upon the theory of their buoyancy. An eagle will take up a lamb that will weigh ten pounds; hawks will carry off chickens that are as heavy as themselves. Can you explain the mysteries of the birds flying? If the power of Yogis are what they are reported to be (and there is little room to doubt without discrediting all human testimony), the Christians miracles are only Yogism, in a perverted dress; and, in fact all the gods of history must have been types of ancient Yoga. Establish the fact that an adept can control a medium, and show his material apparition in Australia or America, and it relegates the theory of human spirits of the dead to the realms where credulity reigns triumphant. In my observations and experiences I have come to

the conclusion that mediumship is very common, but the invisible forces need testing.

Among the Mormons here, half of them are mediums, controlled by all sorts of invisible forces, which they attribute direct to God. Mormonism is made up, from first to last of crank minds controlled by Diakas (Pisachas) with an underlying motive of percentage of selfishness and a desire to rule or ruin. I take great pleasure in reading the *THEOSOPHIST* - as it open the doors to a realm of thought beyond anything hitherto taught by Western philosophers. What surprises me most is the learning and erudition of your native writers. We have always been led to believe that the climate was against deep study and that the so-called learned were not really students. But their writings have created here a different impression. As metaphysians, they excel us, Westerns in my judgment. Their minds seem to be more free to grasp a wider range of thought. I have always been by nature almost a theosophist. My motto has ever been, that "a new fact is worth more than an old error." I have always desired to live free from creeds and the narrow restraints of dogmas. Two years ago I was in Japan, and, among many strange things I came across, where the so-called *magic* mirrors - of which I have two - wherein the figures of the back are reflected from the bright polished surface. I presume you have seen them. They are an enigma to me - and all the scientists, that I have shown them to. The Mormon Bishop priests and prophets are equally unable to explain them. Are they a Yoga "miracle" - or can you explain them in any way? I would be glad to see in the *THEOSOPHIST* the explanation given by occult philosophy of the flight of birds.

H.P.B.'s comments: - We would fain answer the friendly voice from the Mormon metropolis to the full satisfaction of the writer,

did he but deal with problems demanding less elaborate explanation. In view of the fact that occult science explains the mysteries of bird-flying and fish-swimming on principles entirely opposed to the accepted scientific theory of the day, one might well hesitate before putting out the true explanation. However, since we already stand so low in the favour of the orthodox scientists, we will say a few words upon the subject; but they must be few indeed. "If," writes our correspondent, "we take the position that birds have the power to make themselves light or heavy at *will*, the phenomenon of their flight becomes easy to comprehend."

And why not take up such a position? Whether by *instinct* or *will*, whether an effect identical with another is produced consciously or unconsciously, by animal or man, the cause underlying that invariable and identical result must be one and the same, barring diversity of conditions and exceptions as to unimportant details. The action of certain fishes which, by swallowing large draughts of air, distend an internal bag and thereby, becoming specifically lighter, float above the surface of the water, does not militate against the scientific theory of swimming, when it concerns such fish, man or a bladder filled with air. But we are left as wise as ever, when it is a question of rapid sinking, to the bottom, whether by man or whale. In the former case such sinking might be ascribed to *volition*. But man's inability to sink as rapidly and to such a depth, even though a most experienced diver, - who *has* to sink himself by a stone - proves that there must be something more than blind instinct or conscious volition. What is it? Occult science tells us the word: it is "a change of polarity and of normal gravity," not yet admissible by science. With birds and animals - as instinctive a mechanical action as any other they execute; with man, when he thus defies the familiar conditions of gravity, it is something he can acquire,

in his training as a Yogi. Though the former act unconsciously, and he changes his polarity *at will*, the same cause is made operative, and both produce an identical effect. There are certainly alternating changes of polarity going on in the bird while ascending or dropping, and a maintenance of the same polarity while sailing at any given altitude.

Bibliographical source:

The Theosophist, August, 1882, pp. 271-272.

Whipped into Admission

When the Heliocentric system was finally and irretrievably established, and no escape from it was found possible, the Church, letting go the "Joshua stopping the sun" *miracle*, passed the word among the faithful, and the-"We have always said so" - policy was swiftly adopted. When, after denying point-blank occult phenomena, denouncing them from first to last as an out-and-out jugglery, and calling names all those who believed in them, the *Civil and Military Gazette* of Lahore found itself badly cornered by the determined testimony of a clever, professional conjurer, who, refusing to make his good faith subservient to public prejudice, confessed to Mr. Eglinton's phenomena being "genuine," it forth with turned round and declared that it is all as it should be, and that the *Gazette* had never denied it. Like the "five foolish virgins" of the parable, who forgot their oil and fell asleep over their lamps, it now knocks at the door, and tries to assure the public that it has always kept "wide awake" over the subject, and that it has never been caught nodding or kicking in its beatific sleep of blank denial. Of course not: it was but collecting its thoughts. And now that the "Bridegroom" in the shape of an undeniable phenomenon is there, the outcome of the *Gazette's* profound meditations may be found in the following ungraceful admission, and the still more clumsy attempt at an explanation.

"Mr. Kellar, the conjuror," says the *Gazette*, "is very much surprised by what he experienced at a spiritualist *séance* held

recently at No. 1, Commercial Buildings, Calcutta. Mr. Kellar has himself been doing some very surprising things in the way of rivalling the spiritualist feats but what he saw on this occasion in the matter of flying, or floating, as he terms it, beats anything that could be achieved, he says, even by Messrs. Maskelyne and Cook. Among other things, he describes how he held on to a Mr. Eglinton, who, rising into the air, actually lifted Mr. Kellar several inches off his feet! This case of the conjuror out-conjured, has occurred before in the ancient times, as no doubt our readers may remember having read, and when such a one finds himself beaten at his own weapons, we can understand his feeling surprised and overcrowded. As far as we can gather from his description of the *séance* in the *Indian Daily News*, the position of these floating gentlemen is not so safe as it might be. For instance, Mr. Eglinton, while high in air, 'fell heavily on the table' owing to another gentleman who held Mr. Kellar's left hand having let go. Nor, indeed, have the neophytes quite a pleasant time of it, for Mr. Kellar says that at one time his chair was jerked from under him with great force, a rude practical joke which shows that the spirits have not, at any rate, learned manners in their disembodied state. We cannot understand that, in the present stage of scientific progress, a man like Mr. Kellar, presumably familiar with all the actual and possible developments of hanky-panky, should be surprised at anything. He has probably seen and heard a good deal of mesmerism and electro-biology. He no doubt can himself practice that familiar feat of the power of will called forcing a card. He knows that we are at present in the A. B. C. of the science of Electricity and Magnetism, of which one of the less-known developments is called odyllic force. If the magnetic power of some men can be supposed to actually mould living beings to their will, and act at pleasure on all their nerves and

senses, making them smell, taste, see, feel, speak, move - actually think - at the fantasy of the operator, there should be nothing wonderful in another development of the same galvanic power, moving tables and chairs, carrying pianos through the air, or playing violins. When Mr. Eglinton has discovered the means of applying the magnetic current of many joined hands and many subdued wills to overcoming the power of gravity on his own person, before many years are out, doubtless, this development of galvanic science will be applied to some useful purpose, instead of being merely an instrument of hanky-panky. At present it is doubtless in the awkwardness of its extreme infancy, for it exposes the operator to the risk of breaking his neck, and it is applied in such an exhausting and inartistic way as to leave those who exercise it, utterly prostrate, at the end of an exhibition, like an exhausted Dufaure box. The human mind appears unable to realize that there are as good fish in the sea of nature as ever came out of it. One would have supposed that, at the present stage of scientific discovery, our minds would have been in a receptive state, ready to admit any wonder sufficiently proved by evidence - say by the same amount of evidence on which we would hang a man. But no. A says to B: 'I have never seen a sea-serpent, have you?' 'No,' says B 'and no more has C' - so the rest of the alphabet, all grave, discreet, respectable letters may swear to the sea-serpent, of whose existence they have been eye-witnesses; but A and B 'who would believe them in a matter of murder' will not believe them regarding the existence of a monster conger eel. We only say this by way of example. Far be it from us to assert the existence of this eel, though Major Senior, the Humane Society Medallist, saw, described, and drew it in the Gulf of Aden. But incredulity, be it remembered, existed in the case of the Kraken, till two fishermen one day cut off and brought to the Savants eighteen

feet of one of that disagreeable Calamery's tentacles. And so it is, and will be, in the matter of the floating and banjo-playing of Mr. Eglinton and his brother spiritualists, till some fine day one of the scientific electricians takes out a patent for charging human beings with galvanic power, after the same manner that a Dufaure box is charged with electricity."

This is what we should call "a turning-coat policy" effected with the dexterity of a "Davenport Brother." To hear the *Civil and Military Gazette* reproaching other people for not keeping their minds "in a receptive state, ready to admit any wonder sufficiently proved on evidence" is as amusing as to read of the converted wolf in the *golden legend* preaching in the Desert Christianity. Not later back than in July last, the *Gazette* sweepingly proclaimed every experimenter in occult science and medium - an impostor and a juggler, as every Theosophist, and Spiritualist - a deluded fool. And now it admits that the world is "in the A. B. C. of the Science of Electricity and Magnetism"! - a fact enounced and repeated in our journal ad *nauseam usque*; - and, falls back upon "the less-known developments of odylic force" - we spell it *odylic* - with a readiness quite proportionate to its denial of that force but a few months back. In the cases of levitation, however, we suspect the *Gazette's* scientifically trained mind would find itself at sea altogether; and our benevolent contemporary would have to seek, in its great perplexity, counsel with the Theosophical Society. The levitation phenomenon has nought to do with the odylic freaks of the electricity known to orthodox science, but everything with the mystery of the interchange of correlative forces. We published the key to it four years ago in *Isis Unveiled* (Vol. I, pp. xxiii-xxiv, Art. Aethrobacy) [1]. Let any man's body be charged (whether consciously or otherwise) with the polarity of the spot which supports him (be it a natural soil, or a floor of whatever

description) and the similar polarity will shoot his body off in the air like a child's balloon. It is no reason because the possibility of such a polaric assimilation has not yet come under the observation of the Royal Society, why some descendants of those whose forefathers have experimented for numberless ages upon the hidden powers of the human body - should not have cognizance of it. Naturally - the power manifests itself, but in extremely rare cases - in some nervous diseases of that kind which baffle science in all its phases; to produce it artificially, the person who guides it must be partially, if not wholly, acquainted with that which, in the Sanskrit works on Occultism, is called the "Nava Nidhi" or the *nine jewels* of Raja-Yoga.[1] The most perfect "Samadhi," the highest of the "Siddhis" of "Hatha-Yoga" can at best guide the subject to the threshold of the world of *invisible* matter, not to those of the world of spirit, where the hidden and subtler potencies of nature lie dormant until disturbed ...

But as this will prove Greek to the *Civil and Military Gazette*, we have to speak to it in its own language. By saying that the day may come when human beings will be charged with galvanic power-"after the same manner that a Dufaure box is charged with Electricity," - it enounces a piece of news which is one but to itself. Besides which, it sounds like prophesying the discovery of gun-powder during the middle ages. The "Scientific electricians" will come a cycle too late. The "charging of human beings" with a power of which the *Civil and Military Gazette* has not even dreamt of, was discovered ages ago, though the discoverers thereof have never claimed recognition at the "Patent-office."

[1] The student of Yoga philosophy must not confound these nine degrees of Initiation with the "Ashta Siddhis" or the minor eight degrees

of "Hatha-Yoga." In knowledge and powers, the latter stand in the same proportion to the former as rudiments of Arithmetic to the highest degrees of Mathematics. - H.P.B.

Editor's Notes:

[1] See *Aethrobat*.

Bibliographical source:

The Theosophist, March 1882, pp. 163-164.

Aethrobat

AETHROBACY, is the Greek name for walking or being lifted in the air; *levitation*, so called, among modern spiritualists. It may be either conscious or unconscious; in the one case, it is magic; in the other, either disease or a power which requires a few words of elucidation.

A symbolical explanation of aethrobacy is given in an old Syriac manuscript which was translated in the fifteenth century by one Malchus, an alchemist. In connection with the case of Simon Magus, one passage reads thus:

"Simon, laying his face upon the ground, whispered in her ear, 'O mother Earth, give me, I pray thee, some of thy breath; and I will give thee mine; *let me loose*, O mother, that I may carry thy words to the stars, and I will return faithfully to thee after a while.' And the Earth strengthening her status, none to her detriment, sent her genius to breathe of her *breath* on Simon, *while he breathed on her*, and the stars rejoiced to be visited by the mighty One."

The starting-point here is the recognized electro-chemical principle that bodies similarly electrified repel each other, while those differently electrified mutually attract. "The most elementary knowledge of chemistry," says Professor Cooke, "shows that, while radicals of opposite natures combine most eagerly together, two metals, or two closely-allied metalloids, show but little affinity for each other."

The earth is a magnetic body; in fact, as some scientists have found, it is one vast magnet, as Paracelsus affirmed some 300 years ago. It is charged with one form of electricity - let us call it positive - which it evolves continuously by spontaneous action, in its interior or centre of motion. Human bodies, in common with all other forms of matter, are charged with the opposite form of electricity - negative. That is to say, organic or inorganic bodies, if left to themselves will constantly and involuntarily charge themselves with, and evolve the form of electricity opposed to that of the earth itself. Now, what is weight? Simply the attraction of the earth. "Without the attractions of the earth you would have no weight," says Professor Stewart; [1] "and if you had an earth twice as heavy as this, you would have double the attraction." How then, can we get rid of this attraction? According to the electrical law above stated, there is an attraction between our planet and the organisms upon it, which holds them upon the surface of the ground. But the law of gravitation has been counteracted in many instances, by levitations of persons and inanimate objects; how account for this? The condition of our physical systems, say theurgic philosophers, is largely dependent upon the action of our will. If well-regulated, it can produce "miracles"; among others a change of this electrical polarity from negative to positive; the man's relations with the earth-magnet would then become repellent, and "gravity" for him would have ceased to exist. It would then be as natural for him to rush into the air until the repellent force had exhausted itself, as, before, it had been for him to remain upon the ground. The altitude of his levitation would be measured by his ability, greater or less, to charge his body with positive electricity. This control over the physical forces once obtained, alteration of his levity or gravity would be as easy as breathing.

The study of nervous diseases has established that even in ordinary somnambulism, as well as in mesmerized somnambulists, the weight of the body seems to be diminished. Professor Perty mentions a somnambulist, Koehler, who when in the water could not sink, but floated. The seeress of Prevorst rose to the surface of the bath and could not be kept seated in it. He speaks of Anna Fleisher, who being subject to epileptic fits, was often seen by the Superintendent to rise in the air; and was once, in the presence of two trustworthy witnesses (two deans) and others, raised two and a half yards from her bed in a horizontal position. The similar case of Margaret Rule is cited by Upham in his *History of Salem Witchcraft*. "In ecstatic subjects," adds Professor Perty, "the rising in the air occurs much more frequently than with somnambulists. We are so accustomed to consider gravitation as being a something absolute and unalterable, that the idea of a complete or partial rising in opposition to it seems inadmissible; nevertheless, there are phenomena in which, by means of material forces, gravitation is overcome. In several diseases - as, for instance, nervous fever - the weight of the human body seems to be increased, but in all ecstatic conditions to be diminished. And there may, likewise, be other forces than material ones which can counteract this power."

A Madrid journal, *El Criterio Espiritista*, of a recent date, reports the case of a young peasant girl near Santiago, which possesses a peculiar interest in this connection. "Two bars of magnetized iron held over her horizontally, half a metre distant, was sufficient to suspend her body in the air."

Were our physicians to experiment on such levitated subjects, it would be found that they are strongly charged with a similar form of electricity to that of the spot, which,

according to the law of gravitation, ought to *attract* them, or rather prevent their levitation. And, if some physical nervous disorder, as well as spiritual ecstasy produce unconsciously to the subject the same effects, it proves that if this force in nature were properly studied, it could be regulated at will.

[1] "The Sun and the Earth."

Bibliographical source:

Isis Unveiled, Vol. 1, p. xxiii

Arya PRAKASH Yoga Vidya

By an F. T. S.

... Look where we will around us, in every direction the sources of pure spiritual life appear to be either altogether stagnant, or else trickling feebly in shrunken and turbid streams. In religion, in politics, in the arts, in philosophy, in poetry even - wherever the grandest issues of Humanity are at stake, man's spiritual attitude towards them, is one either of hopeless fatigue and disgust, or fierce anarchical impatience. And this is the more deplorable, because it is accompanied by a feverish materialistic activity. Yes, this age of ours is materialist; and perhaps the saddest and dreariest thing in the ever-increasing materialism of the age, is *the ghostly squeaking and gibbering of helpless lamentation made over it by the theologians, who croak about their old dry wells wherein no spiritual life is left*. Meanwhile society appears to be everywhere busily organizing animalism. (Lord Lytton - in *Fortnightly Review* for 1871.)

His Lordship paints the spiritual darkness of Kali-Yuga with realistic fidelity. The reading of this paragraph has suggested the making of an effort to bring back to India, to some extent at least, the ancient light of Aryâvarta. With his lordship's sympathetic co-operation, much would be possible. Let us begin with an attempt at explaining what is the almost forgotten science of Yogism.

No man can understand the meaning of Patanjali's aphorisms of the Yoga Philosophy, who does not perfectly comprehend what the soul and body are and their respective powers. The

locubrations of commentators, for the most part, show that when their author is thinking of one, they fancy he means the other. When he describes how the latent psychical senses and capabilities may be brought out of the bodily prison and given free scope, he appears to them to be using metaphorical terms to express an utopy of physical perceptions and powers. The 'organized animalism' of the 19th century, which Lord Lytton stigmatizes, in the paragraph from the *Fortnightly Review* above quoted - would have totally obliterated, perhaps, our capacity to grasp the sublime idea of Yoga, were it not for the glimpses that the discoveries of Mesmer and Reichenbach and the phenomena of mediumship, have afforded of the nature of the Inner World and the Inner Man. With these helps most of what would be obscure is made plain. These give us definite appreciation of the sure and great results that the *Yogi* ascetic strives for, and obtains by his self-discipline and privations. For this reason, the Theosophical Society insists that its Fellows who would comprehend alike the hidden meaning of ancient philosophies, and the mysteries of our own days, shall first study magnetism, and then enter the 'circle-room' of the spiritualists.

May we not compare the unveiling of the soul's senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch, and the awakening of its will-power, which result from Yoga training, with that change which comes to the bodily senses and will, when the child emerges from its fetal home into the outer world? All the physical faculties it will ever exercise were potentially in the babe before birth, but latent. Given scope and exercise, they became developed in proportion to their innate energies - more in some people than in others. How vastly different they are in *posse* and in *esse*! And yet this contrast affords but a very meager idea of that between the dormant powers of the soul in the man of

matter, and the transcendent reach of these same powers in the full-trained *Yogi*. Rather compare the shining star with a yellow taper. The eye of the body can at best see only a few miles, and its ear hear but what is spoken near by; its feet can carry it but ploddingly along the surface of the ground, a step at a time; and its hands grasp nothing that is more than a yard off. If securely locked in a closet, the body is powerless to effect its deliverance, and can neither see, hear, touch, taste, nor smell what is outside its prison wall. But the unbound soul of the *Yogi* is limited by neither time nor space; nor obstructed by obstacles; nor prevented from seeing, hearing, feeling or knowing anything it likes, on the instant; no matter how distant or hidden the thing the *Yogi* would see, feel, hear or know. The soul has potentially, in short, the qualities of omniscience and omnipotence, and the object of Yoga-Vidya is to develop them fully.

We have a great desire that the Yoga philosophy should be familiarized to students of psychology. It is particularly important that spiritualists should know of it; for their numbers are so large that they could, by united action, counteract in large degree the 'organized animalism' that Lord Lytton complains of. Give the century a worthy ideal to aspire to, and it would be less animal: teach it what the soul is, and it will worship the body less. As a commencement in this direction, we begin in this number of the *THEOSOPHIST*, a translation of part of the 15th chapter of the eleventh *Skandha* of the *Śrimad Bhagavatam*. The authorship of this important Sanskrit work is so disputed as by some to be ascribed to Bopadeva, the celebrated grammarian of Bengal, thus giving it an age of only eight centuries, by others to Vyāsa, author of the other Purana, and so making it of archaic origin. But either will do; our object being only to show modern psychologists that the science of soul was better understood,

ages ago, in India than it is to-day by ourselves. Sanskrit literature teems with proofs of this fact, and it will be our pleasure to lay the evidence supplied to us by our Indian brothers, before the public. Foremost among such writings stand, of course, Patanjali's own philosophical teachings, and these will come later on.

The student of Yoga will observe a great difference in *Siddhis* ('Superhuman faculties,' this is rendered but not correctly, unless we agree that 'human' shall only mean that which pertains to physical man. 'Psychic faculties' would convey the idea much better: man can do nothing *superhuman*.) that are said to be attainable by Yoga. There is one group which exacts a high training of the spiritual powers; and another group which concerns the lower and coarser psychic and mental energies. In the *Śrimad Bhagavatam*, Krishna says; "He who is engaged in the performance of Yoga, who has subdued his senses and who has concentrated his mind in me (Krishna), such Yogis (all) the Siddhis stand ready to serve."

Then Udhava asks: "Oh Achyuta (Infallible One) since thou art the bestower of (all) the Siddhis on the Yogis, pray tell me by what *dharana* [1] and how, is a Siddhi attained, and how many Siddhis there are." Bhagavatam replies: "Those who have transcended the dharana and yoga say that there are eighteen Siddhis, eight of which contemplate *me* as the chief object of attainment (or are attainable through me), and the (remaining) ten are derivable from the gunas;" - the commentator explains - from the preponderance of *satwa gunâ*. These eight superior Siddhis are: *Anima*, *Mahima*, *Laghima* (of the body), *Praptih* (attainment by the senses), *Prakamyam*, *Isitvam*, *Vasitvam*, and an eighth which enables one to attain his every wish. "These," said Krishna, "are my Siddhis".

The Siddhis of Krishna may be thus defined:

1. *Anima* - the power to atomize "the body," to make it become smallest of the smallest.
2. *Mahima* - the power to magnify one's body to any dimensions.
3. *Laghima* - the power to become lightest of the lightest.

These three, the commentator says, relate to "the body;" but he does not enlighten us as to whether the outer or inner - the physical or astral - body is meant. Turning to Bhoja Raja's commentary on Patanjali (Govinda Deva Sastri's translation, in *Pandit*, Vol. V. p. 206), we find *Anima* explained as a "Minuteness - attainment of an atomic form, or the power of becoming as minute as an atom; (by this power the ascetic can enter into a diamond, etc)."

Gariman - is the obtaining of control over the attraction of gravitation, so that one's body may attain such great heaviness as to weigh tons if one chooses; or acquire such levity as to be like a flake of cotton in lightness.

Let the reader observe that here are two Siddhis (*anima* and *mahima*); which can only refer to conditions of the astral body, and a third which may be applicable to either the astral or physical body of the ascetic. Whenever we have such instances coming under notice, our first thought must be that *there is no such thing possible as a miracle; whatever happens does so in strict compliance with natural law*. For instance; knowing what we do of the composition and structure of a man's body, - a mass of bioplastic matter - it is unthinkable that he should make it small enough to enter into an atom or a diamond-grain. So, also, that he should illimitably swell it out and stretch it, so as to "occupy as much space as he likes." A living adult man cannot

be compressed into a speck. But as to the inner body, or soul, the case is different. By 'soul' we mean, in this instance, the plastic, ethereal inner-self, that which corresponds to the western idea of a "double," [2] and, in the ancient Indian philosophy is known as the - *Mayavi-rupa* - (illusionary form), and as the *Kama-rupá* - (WILL-form). These are identical, for the *double* exists in its latent state in every living being, as it is the exact ethereal counterpart of the outer body. The difference in name but indicates the different circumstances under which it is at times made to become objective - that is visible. In the case of mediums, or when, as a result and the unconscious effect of an intense desire which attracts a person's thoughts to a certain place, or prompts him to a certain action, it thus oozes out of its envelope of flesh, it then is called *Mayavi-rupa* (illusionary form). It made itself visible because compelled to it by the law of inter-magnetic action, which, when left to itself, acts blindly. But when it is projected by the trained will of an adept, a Yogi, who directs it at his own convenience, then it is designated as *Kama-rupá*, - WILL-form, or Desire-form; *i.e.*, so to say, created, or called forth into objective shape, by the will, and at the desire of its possessor.

This "dual-soul," must not be confounded with either *Jivatman* (the vital principle resident in inert matter) or, the *Linga-Sarira*. This last named is the subtle, ethereal element of the ego of an organism; inseparably united to the coarser elements of the latter; it never leaves it but at death. While its functionary principle - the *Linga-Deha* - is the executive agent, through which it works; the objective formation of *Kama-rupá* being performed by the power of *Yoga-balla*.

This "dual-soul," possesses properties peculiar to itself, and as distinctly its own as those of the physical body are peculiar to it.

Among these properties are compressibility, the power of passing through the most solid substances, infinite expansibility, and many more that might be enumerated. These are not idle words, but facts derived from the experiences of many yogis, adepts, ascetics, mystics, mediums, etc. of many different classes, times and countries. We may think, therefore, of the capacity of the *Kama-rupá* to become a mere speck or enlarge itself to enormous dimensions; entering a grain of diamond-dust, and the next moment filling every pore of the entire globe: for thought is unparticled and illimitably elastic. And, we could apprehend how, when once in the grain or in the globe, our trained *thought* can act there as if it were our own whole *self*. So, too, we may conceive of the astral body - or *Kama-rupá*, which, although material as compared with pure spirit, is yet immaterial in comparison with the dense physical body - having like properties, and thus come to an understanding of the esoteric (secret) meaning of *Anima* and *Mahima*.

Whole libraries have been written to define what soul is, and yet for our practical purpose, it will suffice to sum up the definition in a word: man's soul is the aggregate of all the above given sub-divisions. This "self," through the *Linga-Deha*, is ever conscious during the sleep of the body, and transfers the sense of this inner consciousness into the waking brain; so that the Yogi may, at will, be informed of what is transpiring in the outer world, through his physical organs, or in the inner world, through his soul perceptions. While average mortals maintain their perceptions only during the day, the initiated Yogi has an equally real, undimmed, and perfect appreciation of his individual existence at night, even while his body sleeps. He can go even further: he can voluntarily paralyze his vital functions so that his body shall lie like a corpse, the heart still, the lungs collapsed, animal heat transferred to the interior surfaces; the vital machine

stopped, as it were, like a clock which waits only the key that re-winds it, to resume its beating. What nature does for the scores of hibernating quadrupeds, reptiles and insects under the spontaneous action of her established laws, the Yogi effects for his physical body by long practice, and the intense concentration of an undaunted will. And what he can do for himself the magnetizer can do for his cataleptic subject, whose body in the state of *ecstasis*, the highest in the range of mesmeric phenomena, presents all the physical appearances of death, including even *rigor mortis*; while the active vitality of the soul is shown in the descriptions given by the ecstatic either of distant events on the earth, or the scenes in which he is taking part in the world of the invisible. The records of a thousand such cases, occurring in every part of the world, combine to show (a) that the soul has the capacity of a conscious existence separate from the body; (b) that it is limited by neither time nor space, it being able to visit and return in an instant from the farthest localities, and to reach such - the tops of mountains, for instance, or the centres of deserts, or the bottoms of rivers or lakes, as the waking man could either not exist in or could only visit with the most tedious exertions and the greatest precautions; (c) that it can penetrate closed rooms, rocky walls, iron chests, or glass cases, and see and handle what is within. All these, if it were particled and unyielding like the physical body, would be impossibilities; and so, seeing what our modern experience has taught us, we can readily comprehend Patanjali's meaning and avoid the absurd conclusions which some of his materialistic and inexperienced commentators have reached. "Hundreds of times," says Professor Denton, "have I had the evidence that the spirit (meaning 'soul' - the two words are most unhappily, and we fear inextricably confounded - *Ed.*) can smell, hear, and see, and has powers of locomotion."

Cicero calls the soul *spiritus* (a breathing), as also does Virgil, and both regard it as a subtle matter which might be termed either *aura* (a breeze), or *ignis* (fire), or *aether*. So that here again we are assisted to the conception that *Anima* applies only to a certain portion of the soul - (*psyche*) and not to the body. And, we thus find that this Siddhi is entirely possible for one who has learnt the manifold faculties of the *inner* man, and knows how to apply and utilize the manifold functions of *Jivatman*, *linga-sarira*, and the *mayava* and *kama-rupá*. Plutarch makes pretty nearly the same division of the functions of the "Soul." The *linga-sarira* he calls *psyche* (physical entity), and teaches that it never leaves the body but at death; *mayava* and *kama-rupá* answer to his daemon, or spiritual-double, one-half of which is *irrational* and called by him *eidolon*, and the other *rational* and usually termed "blessed god."

But, while the physical body may not be atomized or magnified illimitably, *its weight may be voluntarily changed without transcending natural law in the slightest degree*. Hundreds, if not thousands, are living in India to-day, who have seen ascetics, while in the state of dharana, rise from the ground and sit or float in the air without the slightest support. We doubt if a phenomenon seen by so many reputable persons will be seriously denied. Admitting, then, that this levitation does happen, how shall we explain it? That has already been done in "Isis Unveiled," where the author shows that by simply changing the polarity of his body, so as to make the latter similarly electrified to the spot of ground upon which he stands, the ascetic can cause himself to rise perpendicularly into the air. This is no miracle, but a very simple affair of magnetic polarity. The only mystery is as to the means by which these changes of polarity may be effected. This secret the Yogi learns, and Patanjali's name for the Siddhi is *Gariman*, which includes

Laghima. It follows, of course, that he who knows how to polarize his body so as to cause himself to be "light as a flake of cotton" and rise into the air, has only to reverse the process, to make his body abnormally heavy. We stick to the surface of the earth because our bodies are of an opposite polarity to the ground on which we stand. Science explains that we are attracted towards the centre of the earth by gravity, and our weight is the measure of the combined attraction of all the particles of our physical body towards the central point at the earth's centre. But if we double the intensity of that attraction, we become twice as heavy as we were before; if we quadruple it, four times as heavy; centuple it, one hundred times as heavy. In short, by a mere alteration of our polarity, we would be giving our flesh the weight of an equal bulk of stone, iron, lead, mercury, etc. And the Yogi has this secret, or Siddhi, also.

Many Hindus - who admit that their sacred books contain accounts of the phenomena of levitation, that is, of walking or floating in the air - affirm that the power has been lost, and that there are none living who can exhibit it, or even the appearance of it, save through the help of jugglery. This false conclusion is assisted by the tendency of Western education, which but reflects the materialism of modern experimental science - so misnamed, for it is but partly experimental and preponderatingly inferential guess-work. Forgetting that the law of gravitation is, after all, but an incomplete hypothesis which holds its ground for the want of a better one, - our young men say that science has defined the laws of gravity, hence levitation is an absurdity, and our old books teach nonsense. This would be sufficient if the premises were not false. Science has but noted the more familiar phenomena of gravity, and knows nothing whatever of its nature, or its variable manifestations under the impulse of the undiscovered primal force. Open any book on any branch of

physical science, and the author, if he have any professional reputation to lose, will be detected in the confession of his ignorance of the ultimate cause of natural phenomena. Superficial readers will be deceived by glittering generalizations from partially proved data, but the thoughtful student will ever find the empty void at the bottom. Huxley sums it all up in the self-condemnatory sentence, "we" - that is we scientists, we men who talk so glibly about ancient superstition and ignorance, and would impress Indian youth with the notion that we are the very High Priests of nature, the only competent instructors of her mysteries, the key to which we all carry in our vest pockets - "*we know nothing* about the composition of any body whatever, as it is."

But supposing that not one witness could be found in all our India to-day to prove the fact of levitation, would we have to let the case go by default? By no means; for, to say nothing of the unbroken chain of lay testimony that stretches from the earliest historic period to our times, we can take that of eminent Western physicians who have witnessed such levitations in the cases of patients afflicted with certain nervous diseases; - Professor Perty, of Geneva, and Dr. Kerner, of Wurtemberg, among others. If a phenomenon of such nature takes place in a diseased body, without being regarded as a violation of the "laws of nature," why should it not occur - provided the same conditions, *i.e.*, a reversed polarity, are furnished it - in a body free from disease? This testimony of science secured, we need not hesitate to cull from contemporaneous records the mass of available proof that the bodies of living man can be and are floated through the air. Who shall deny it? Science? No, for we have seen that it is attested by some of the most eminent scientific men of our day; and to these we may add Lord Lindsay, President of the Royal Astronomical Society, and one

of the Council of the Royal Society itself. One witness of his stamp is enough, and he is on record (London Dialect. Soc. "Report," p. 215) as saying that he had seen a certain medium not only float through the air of a drawing-room but carry with him the chair upon which he had been sitting and with it "pushing the pictures out of their places as he passed along the walls." They were far beyond the reach of a person standing on the ground. And he adds the highly important fact - "The light was sufficient to enable me to see clearly." This same medium he saw floated horizontally out of the window in one room of a house, in Victoria Street, London, and again at the window of the adjoining room. "I saw him," says Lord Lindsay, "outside the other window (that in the next room) floating in the air. *It was eighty-five feet from the ground.* There was no balcony along the windows, I have no theory to explain these things. I have tried to find out how they are done, but the more I studied them, the more satisfied was I that they could not be explained by mechanical trick. I have had the fullest opportunity for investigation." When such a man gives such testimony, we may well lend an attentive ear to the corroborative evidence which has accumulated at different epochs and in many countries.

The case of the levitated 'medium' of the modern spiritualist, affords us an example of a phase of *Laghima* of which no mention is made in the portion of the *Śrimad Bhagavatam* under consideration, but may be found in many other manuscripts. We have seen that a Yogi may reverse his corporeal polarity at pleasure, to make himself light as a cotton flake or heavy as lead; and that he acquires this Siddhi by long self-discipline, and the subordination of the general law of matter to the focalized power of spirit. It has also been affirmed that the cataleptic similitude to death, which in India is called Samadhi, may be produced in the mesmerised, or magnetized, subject by the

magnetizer. We have the report of the late William Gregory, Professor of Chemistry in Edinburgh University, (*Animal Magnetism; or Mesmerism and its Phenomena*, pp. 154, 155) of one of many experiments, at his own house, by M. Lewis, a famous negro mesmerizer:

"Case 5. - Mr. J. H., a young and healthy man, could be rendered instantly and completely cataleptic by a glance, or a single pass. He could be fixed in any position, however inconvenient, and would remain ten or fifteen minutes in such a posture, that no man in a natural state could have endured it for half a minute. When Mr. L. stood on a chair and tried to draw Mr. H., without contact, from the ground, he gradually rose on tiptoe, making the most violent efforts to rise, till he was fixed by cataleptic rigidity. Mr. Lewis said that, had he been still more elevated above Mr. H., he could have raised him from the floor without contact, and held him thus suspended for a short time, while some spectator should pass his hand under the feet. Although this was not done in my presence, *yet the attraction upwards was so strong that I see no reason to doubt the statement made to me by Mr. Lewis, and by others who saw it that this experiment has been successfully performed. Whatever be the influence which acts, it would seem capable, when very intense, of overpowering the law of gravity.*"

Let us first clearly comprehend the meaning of the word gravity, and then the inference of Professor Gregory will not seem too extravagant after all. In this phase of *Laghima*, observe that the changed polarity of the human body is effected by the magnetiser's will. We have, therefore, one class of cases where the effect is self-produced by the conscious will of the Yogi; another where it occurs involuntarily in the subject as the result of an outside will directed upon him. The third class is illustrated in the example of the floating medium, which Lord Lindsay

attests. Here the *aethrobat* - as air-walkers were called by the Greeks - neither practises Yoga-Vidya, nor is visibly depolarized by a living magnetiser, and yet his body also rises from the earth, light as a cotton flake or thistle-down. If this happens, where is the cause: for cause there must be, since miracle is an impossibility? Modern Spiritualists, as we are informed, vaguely ascribe the fact to the agency of the disembodied spirits of their dead friends, but have given no sufficient explanation of the method employed. One of their most intelligent writers - Miss Blackwell who won the gold medal of the British N. A. S. for her essay on Spiritualism - attributes it to "jets or currents of magneto-vital force," which sounds vaguely scientific, to say the least. To follow out this branch of the subject would cause too wide a digression for our present purpose. Suffice it that the medium's body is depolarized, or differently polarized, by some force external to him, which we have no warrant for ascribing to the voluntary action of living spectators.

Another branch of this great subject of *Laghima* is reserved for our next article. The more it is studied, the more cumulative is the proof that Patanjali was a master of Psychology.

History affords many proofs that even inanimate objects, such among others, as huge bronze and marble statues, may be differently polarized, and illustrate the condition of *Laghima*. It being an established maxim that it is easy to learn from an enemy, let us first call the Heathen-hating, Pope-adoring bigot Des Mousseaux of France, to the witness-stand. This contemporary champion of Roman Catholicism is a voluminous and sharp writer, but in his eagerness to prove the divinity of his own religion unwittingly gives the most numerous proofs of the superiority of the despised Heathen in psychological science. True, he ascribes every phenomenon to the Devil, but few readers of this journal will be frightened by this poor tattered

'bogey.' In his "Les Hauts Phenomenes de la Magie" he admits that "several thousand" of these animated statues are noticed by unexceptionable witnesses, and bids us stand aghast at these evidences of diabolical interference in the affairs of men. He quotes from Titus Livy the account of the statue of Juno at Veii - the Etruscan rival of Rome - which miraculously answered the taunting question of a Roman soldier at the sack of the city by Camillus. "Juno," said the soldier, "will it please you to quit the walls of Veii and settle yourself at Rome?" The statue inclined its head to signify assent, and then audibly replied, "Yes, I will;" whereupon, being lifted upon the shoulders of the conquerors, the huge image "seemed instantly to lose its weight, and rather follow them, as it were, than make itself carried." According to Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Ant.*, book I, ch. xv.) the household gods (*penates*) carried away from the Troad to Lavinium and placed in a new temple rose from their pedestals and floated back to their old places, though the temple doors were fast shut, and this happened a second time. In M. Brasseur de Bourbourg's "Histoire de Mexique" (Vol. II, p. 588, and Vol. III, p. 664) is mentioned a curious building - no less than a prison for gods. Herein were confined by chains and under secure bolts and locks, the tutelar gods of the people conquered by the Mexicans, under the belief that as long as these images could be prevented from transporting themselves back to their own countries, their several ward-nations would be kept under subjection; which proves that under its local Mexican name Patanjali's *Laghima* science was generally known to those ancient people of India's antipodes.

Lucian (*de Syria Dea*) describes a scene of which he was eye-witness in a temple of Apollo. When the god wished to express his will his statue would move on its pedestal; if not immediately taken, upon their shoulders, by the priests, it would

sweat, and "come forth into the middle of the room." When being carried, the statue would become preternaturally light in weight, and once Lucian, the sceptic and priest-scoffer saw it levitated. "I will relate," says he, "another thing also which he did *in my presence*. The priests were bearing him upon their shoulders - he left them below upon the ground, while he himself was borne aloft and alone into the air." In the mouth of such an unbeliever and shrewd observer as Lucian is known to have been, this testimony is of great importance.

We have thus purposely drawn upon other than Aryan or other cis-Himalayan sources for the proof we needed of the existence of a Laghima property in nature. Since our Indian youth are having so poor an opinion of their own literature, they may be willing to see the case proved without recourse to it. And doubtless, after running around the circle of foreign authority, and then stooping to consult some humble shastri about the contents of the Veda and later home writings, they may discover that their own ancestors were not such superstitions fools, after all, but did, in fact give the Western world its entire patrimony of philosophy and spiritual science. Following out the same policy, let us transfer to these pages from those of the Quarterly Journal of Science (February, 1875), a list of aethrobats whom the Roman Catholics have canonized into saints, and which the Editor (Mr. Crookes) takes from the Bolandists' Acta, giving volume and page in each instance. Before doing so, however, we will premise by saying, for the benefit of our Oriental readers, who this Mr. William Crookes is. This gentleman is one of the most eminent living chemists of England, and among the best known throughout the western world. His attention has for years been largely given to the application of chemical science to the development of the useful art, and in this direction has done a deal of important and valuable work. He discovered (in 1863) the

new metal Thallium, and gave to modern science that delicate little instrument, the Radiometer, which measures the force in the heat rays of a beam of light. One of the cleverest of the Fellows of the Royal Society, and Editor of the Quarterly Journal of Science, he felt it his bounden duty, in the Summer of 1870, to investigate mediumistic phenomena and expose the fraud, if such it should prove to be. Before entering upon the inquiry, he laid down with minute particularity the tests that exact science would demand before accepting the phenomena as manifestations that a new force had declared itself. So sternly exacting did they seem, the whole scientific body applauded his intention, and prematurely rejoiced over the certain exposure of the 'humbug.' But the end was not to be as expected; the 'new force' beat Mr. Crookes completely, upset all his theories, confounded and shocked the Royal Society, immeasurably strengthened the spiritualist party, and gave such an impetus to this branch of scientific enquiry as to threaten a total reconstruction of Western ideas of Force and Matter. Though Mr. Crookes' inquiry first occupied itself with the simple percussive sounds, called 'raps,' it soon widened so as to embrace the visible apparition of 'materialized spirits,' and, later, the question of levitation.

The consideration of this part of the subject led to the appearance of the article from which we will now quote the above mentioned list of aethrobats whom the Roman Catholic church has crowned as 'saints'!

The compiler, Mr. Crookes, adds the following reflections:

"As the lives of all these are pretty fully recorded, we have the means of drawing several generalizations. It is plain that all displayed the qualities most distinctive of the present "spirit-mediums," and many were accompanied from childhood by some of the same phenomena, though I find nothing

Forty Levitated Persons, Canonized or Beatified

Name	Country and Condition	Date of Life	Acta Sanct.	Vbl.	Pages
Andrew Salus	Scythian Slave	880-946	May	VI	16*
Luke of Soterium	Greek Monk	890-946	Feb.	II	85
Stephen I	King of Hungary	978-1038	Sept.	I	541
Ladislau I	Ditto (his grandson)	1041-1096	June	V	318
Christina	Flemish Nun	1150-1220	July	V	656
St. Dominic	Italian Preacher	1170-1221	Aug.	I	405,573
Lutgard	Belgian Nun	1182-1246	June	III	238
Agnes of Bohemia	Princess	1205-1281	March	I	522
Humiliana of Florence	Widow	1219-1246	May	IV	396
Jutta	Widow Hermit	1215-1264	May	VI	606
St. Bonaventure	Italian Cardinal	1221-1274	July	III	827
St. Thomas Aquinas	Italian Friar	1227-1274	March	I	670-1
Ambrose Sansedonius	Italian Priest	1220-1287	March	III	192
Peter Armengol	Spanish Priest	1238-1304	Sept.	I	334
St. Albert	Sicilian Priest	1240-1306	Aug.	II	236
Princess Margaret	Hungary	1242-1270	Jan.	II	904
Robert of Solentum	Italian Abbot	1273-1341	July	IV	503
Agnes of Mt. Politian	Italian Abbess	1274-1317	April	II	794
Bartholus of Vado	Italian Hermit	1300-	June	II	1007
Princess Elizabeth	Hungary	1297-1338	May	II	904
Catharine Columbina	Sp. Abbess	1387-	July	VI	352
St. Vincent Ferrer	Sp. Missionary	1359-1419	April	I	497
Coleta of Ghent	Flemish Abbess	1381-1447	March	I	559,576
Jeremy of Panormo	Sicilian Friar	1381-1452	March	I	297
St. Antonine	Archbp. of Florence	1389-1459	I 335	I	335
St. Francis of Paola	Missionary	1440-1507	April	I	117
Osanna of Mantua	Italian Nun	1450-1505	June	III	703,705
Bartholomew of Anghiera	Friar	1510-	March	II	685
Columba of Rieti	Italian Nun	1468-150	May	V	332*-4*,360*
Thomas	Archbishop Valencia	1487-1555	Sept.	V	832,969
St. Ignatius Loyola	Sp. Soldier	1491-1556	July	VI	432
Peter of Alcantara	Spanish Friar	1499-1562	Oct.	VII	672,673,687
St. Philip Neri	Italian Friar	1515-1595	May	VI	590
Salvator de Horta	Spanish Friar	1520-1567	March	II	679-80
St. Luis Bertrand	Sp. Missionary	1526-1581	Oct.	V	407-483
St. Theresa	Spanish Abbess	1515-1582	Oct.	VI	399
John a Cruce	Spanish Priest	1542-1591	Oct.	VI	239
J. B. Piscator	Roman Professor	1586-	June	IV	976
Joseph of Cupertino	Italian Friar	1603-1663	Sept.	V	1020-2
Bonaventure of Potenza	Italian Friar	1651-1711	Oct.	XII	154-157-9

resembling the "raps." The hereditary nature of their gifts is shown by the Hungarian royal family producing five examples; and it is also notable, on this head, that out of 40 there should not be one of British or French birth, although some of the most remarkable spent much of their lives in France, and all other Christian races seem represented. A feature absolutely common to the whole 40 is great asceticism. Only four married, and all were in the habit of extreme fasting, "macerating" their bodies either with hair shirts or various irons under their clothes, and many of submitting to bloody flagellations. Again, all, without exception, were ghost-seers, or second-sighted; and all subject to trances, either with loss of consciousness only, or of motion and flexibility too, in which case they were often supposed dead; and the last in our list, after lying in state for three days, and being barbarously mutilated by his worshippers, for relics, was unquestionably finally buried alive. [3] Many were levitated only in these unconscious states; others, as Joseph of Cupertino (the greatest aethrobat in all history), both in the trance and ordinary state, and (like Mr. Home) most frequently in the latter; while a very few, as Theresa, seem to have been always conscious when in the air. Several were, in certain states, fire-handlers, like Mr. Home. The Princess Margaret was so from the age of ten. Many had what was called the "gift of tongues," that is, were caused (doubtless in an obsessed state) to address audiences of whose language they were ignorant. Thus the Spaniard, Vincent Ferrer, is said to have learnt no language but his own, though he gathered great audiences in France, Germany, England, and Ireland. Connected with this, we should note how general a quality of these persons was eloquence. All the men (unless the two kings), and most of the women, were great preachers, though few wrote anything, except Bonaventure and Thomas in the thirteenth century, and Theresa in the sixteenth,

who were the greatest Catholic writers of their ages. It is also very notable that the list contains the founders of six religious orders - the first special preaching order, Dominicans, the Jesuate Nuns, Minim Friars, Jesuits, Carmelite Nuns, and Oratorians; and all of these, except the second, great and durable.

"The great majority of them, though often seen suspended, were at heights from the ground described only as 'a palm,' half a cubit, a cubit, and thence up to five or six cubits, or, in a few cases, ells. But the Princess Agnes and the Abbess Coleta were, like Elijah, carried out of sight, or into the clouds; and Peter of Alcantara and Joseph of Cupertino to the ceilings of lofty buildings. The times that these and others were watched off the ground often exceeded an hour; and the Archbishop of Valencia (1555) was suspended in a trance 12 hours, so that not only all the inmates of his palace and clergy, but innumerable lay citizens, went to see the marvel. On recovery, with the missal he had been reading in his hand, he merely remarked he had lost the place [4] In this and all cases the subjects were either praying at the time, or speaking or listening to a particular religious topic that, in each case, is recorded to have generally affected that person either with trance or levitation. We have seen that Apollonius vanished on declaiming his favorite verse of Homer. So the topic of the Incarnation would cause Peter of Alcantara to utter a frightful cry, and shoot through the air "*ut sclopeto emissus videretur*"; that of Mary's birth would have a like effect on Joseph of Cupertino; and Theresa, after obtaining by prayer the cessation of her early levitations, was yet obliged to avoid hearing John á Cruce on the Trinity, finding that this topic would cause both him and her to be raised with their chairs from the floor. A contemporary painting of them in this position, beside the grating where it occurred,

has been engraved in the volume above cited. Joseph of Cupertino, on entering any church having a Madonna or his patron, St. Francis, as an altarpiece, would be borne straight thereto, crying, "My dear mother!" or "My father!" and remain with his arms and robe so among the candles as to alarm all with the danger of his catching fire; but always flying back to the spot whence he had risen. Others were raised up to images or pictures, as the Abbess Agnes in early girlhood, often before a crucifix, "*in tantum eam arripuit amor Sponsi sui, quôd relictâ terrâ tam alté fuit corpus suum purissimum sublevatum in aère, quôd ipsi imagini, supra altare in eminenti loco positæ, se pari situ conjunxit; ubi osculans et amplexans, visa est super Dilectum suum innixa.*"

"Of invisible transfers to a distance, the only subjects seem to have been Columba of Rieti, said to have been carried from her mother's house in that town to the nunnery that afterwards received her at Spoleto, 20 miles distant; and the river transits of Peter of Alcantara. The lives of Joseph of Cupertino, indeed, allege that the rare miracle of "*geminatio corporis*," or bodily presence in two distant places the same day, was twice vouchsafed to him while dwelling at Rome - once to assist at the death-bed of a named old man of his native village, whom he had promised to attend if possible; and again at the death of his mother. It is also related of the great Spanish aethrobat that, while the business of a jubilee detained him at Madrid (1556-9), a lady, Elvira de Caravajal, in Estremadura, declared her resolve to have no other confessor till Father Peter might be within reach; and the same day he presented himself at her castle, announcing that he had been brought expressly from Madrid, and that she ought not to choose confessors so distant. There is doubtless plenty of exaggeration, and many stories of this kind must be apocryphal, but the notable fact is that they are told only

of the same persons as the fully-attested levitations and other phenomena parallel to the modern so-called Spiritism."

The student of Patanjali will remark two facts in connection with these air-walkers, - *they were all ascetics*, and not only were all but four unmarried, and, presumably, chaste, but inflicted upon their bodies the extreme rigors of maceration, that is to say that same stern repression of the physical appetites and desires which is common among our Indian Yogis and Samnyasis.

Though they knew not the fact, they were in reality practicing the extremest austerities of the Yoga system. Another fact will not fail to be observed, *viz.*, that the thaumaturgic power was in several cases hereditary. We of the East know how often it happens that this abundance of psychical power passes down the generations in certain families - that, in short, there are 'born magicians' as certainly as there are born poets, painters, or sculptors. If we may credit the records of Western Spiritualism the quality of 'mediumship' is also known to run in families.

Neither of these examples of heredity will surprise any student of either physiology or psychology, for the annals of the race are full of proof that the child is but the evolution of his double line of ancestors, with, in individual cases, a tendency to 'breed back' to some one relative on either the paternal or maternal side.

Among the most interesting of English medical writers upon this subject is Dr. Charles Elam, of London. Though not a professed psychologist, he has collected in his "A Physician's Problems" some most valuable data for the student of that science, supplementing them with judicious and intelligent criticism. "The various races of men," he says, (*Op. cit.*, p. 33) "have characteristics quite as distinctly marked ... But *races consist of individuals*; it is clear therefore, that to a certain extent individuals have the power of *transmitting their own specific psychical nature*." M. Giron, a great physiologist, remarks that

"acquired capacities are transmitted by generation, and this transmission is more certain and perfect in proportion as the cultivation has extended over more generations." Sir H. Holland, Esquirol, Dr. Virey, Montaigne, Riecken, Boethius, among moderns, and Hippocrates, Homer, Horace, Juvenal, among ancients, are a few of the great authorities who have noticed the constant assertion of this law of nature. Herodotus, the 'Father of History' to Western people who know nothing of our Indian literature, mentions the heritage of caste, of profession, and of moral and intellectual qualities. He speaks of Evenius as possessing the power of divination and transmitting it, *as a natural consequence*, to his son, Deiphonus. Men of Eastern birth may, in considering these facts, the more readily understand why so many more great psychologists and philosophers have flourished in this part of the world than at the West, where the rugged conditions of life, especially the climate, food, and the common use of stimulating beverages, have so largely tended to the development of the animal at the expense of the spiritual nature, ever since the exodus of people from the warm Eastern climes to settle those countries. The love of mystical study, and the tendency to practice ascetism are inherent in our blood, and absorbed through our mothers' milk. Generations after generations of white men pass away without producing a single adept of the Secret Science, while it could be hard to find a parallel to this in India - even in these degenerate days, when our cleverest young scholars are worshipping Western idols, and it almost seems as if the very recollection of Yoga and the Yogis were dying out of the popular mind.

[1] *Dharana*. The intense and perfect concentration of the mind upon one interior object; - accompanied by complete abstraction from things of the external world.

[2] The *double* which appears under two aspects at times as - a dull non-intelligent form or animate statue, at other times as an intelligent entity. More than anyone else, the spiritualists ought to be aware of the difference.

[3] This appalling story of insane superstition, to be paralleled probably among no non-Catholic people on earth, will be found in *Acta Sanctorum Octobris*, Vol. XII, p. 158-60.

[4] This prelate, the annual income of whose see was 18,000 ducats, had no sooner settled in his palace than he got rid of all luxurious furniture, and made it a hospital or poor-house; himself often sleeping on straw, if beds ran short for the paupers. Charles V. had named another person for this see, but the secretary to whom he was dictating mistook the name, and taking another paper said, "I imagined your Majesty to have said Thomas of Villanova, but the error will soon be rectified." The emperor said, "By no means; the mistake was providential, let it stand."

Bibliographical reference:

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An Indian Aethrobat

[A letter from Babu Krishna Indra Sandyal (Allahabad, 27th December 1879.), comments by H.P.B.]

In the November issue of this journal, I read an interesting article on Yoga-Vidya by F.T.S. ..., based upon the *Siddhis* of Bhagwán Sri Krishna. It is of course well known to Hindu readers that although the Yoga philosophy was first taught by Patanjali in times immemorial, yet the subject was not more fully discussed elsewhere than in the theologistic discourses between Sri Krishna and his friend Arjuna (*Gita*, chapter VIII.) Indeed it is true that in the course of this time this *Yoga-Vidya* has been entirely lost to us, and in the present skeptical age of Materialism it is almost impossible to have even a conception of that philosophy. But if we are to believe the sacred writings of the Hindu sages, it is quite clear that the Sidhis *Anima* and *Mahima* pertain to the conditions of even the physical body as was manifest in *Virat Rupa darshana* ('*Gita*', chap. xi.); and here I differ from the contributor F.T.S. ..., through I follow him in other respects.

H.P.B.'s comments: - Babu Krishna is wrong. It is impossible to so inflate the extremities of the human body with simple air as to cause it to float in air. A body floats in water because it displaces an equal bulk with its own of that denser element. If he will but figure to himself a vessel of any material as dense as human flesh and bone, filled ever so compactly with common air and left lying on the ground, he will see that his theory of aethrobacy

is untenable; for, just as the vessel in question would lie on the ground, where placed, an indefinite time without showing the slightest tendency to rise, so would the ascetic's body, though pumped full of air from crown to toes. No, there is another cause for this aethrobacy and it is the one described by F.T.S. ... as "altered polarity." The system of inhalations and exhalations practiced in Yoga effect the polaric change by alterations produced, of both a physiological and psychological character.

The Babu is also mistaken in supposing that this body of flesh can be separated into atoms and made to fill the whole void of space, or compressed into one infinitesimal atomic point like a diamond-grain. Let him reflect but one instant upon the nature of bioplastic matter and he will see the fact as it is. It is the inner self which, by virtue of its ethereal nature and its relationship to the all-pervading 'Anima Mundi' or World-Soul, is capable of exhibiting the properties of *Anima* and *Mahima*. Anything in Aryan literature seeming to convey a contrary idea may be at once taken as figurative language intended to be understood only by the wise. The sages who wrote these books were adepts in psychological science, and we must not take them to have been ignorant of its plainest laws. - **End of the comment.**

As to the other Sidhi, *Laghima*, which that writer says, pertains to the physical as well as to the astral body, I can bear my personal testimony to the phenomenon. About 30 years ago, whilst I was a little boy of ten at Benares, I saw an old relative of mine, Amarchand Maitreya, who was widely known throughout Benares, practicing *Yoga Dharana*. This venerable old gentleman could raise his body in the air about a foot and half from the ground, and remain so suspended for more than a quarter of an hour. Myself and his two grandsons who were of about the same age with me, out of curiosity and childish

inquisitiveness sometimes asked him the secret of this phenomenon, and I have a distinct recollection that he said that by *Kumbhaka Yoga* (suspension of breath) the human body becomes lighter than the surrounding air and thus it floats upon it. To our small minds this explanation seemed quite satisfactory, for it was not only reasonable but scientific too, that according to the laws of Dynamics the atmospheric pressure on the body being ascertained to be 132 lbs. upon every square inch, any process of complete inhalation of air would produce an effect of gravitational and levitation which the Hindu philosophers call *Gariman* and *Laghima* respectively.

I have not come across the proper theory of *Anima* and *Mahima*, but if the other two Siddhis were possible to the conditions of the physical body, I do not see any reason to disbelieve the other two as mentioned in the Bhagavad-gita above quoted. Bhagwán Sri Krishna, however, says to Arjuna that he (Arjuna) will not be able to behold him in this Rupa (Mahima) with these eyes, and therefore ("Gita," chap. ix., verse 8), and here by the words "I understand" or "knowledge." It is therefore quite clear that with the knowledge of the *Yoga-Vidya*, Arjuna really saw the Bhagavan in his "thousand heads, thousand eyes, thousand feet, etc., etc., etc."

Your skeptic readers may not readily believe in the power of suspension of breath for a considerable time, but for their benefit I shall mention a case which really occurred some 33 years ago in the metropolis of Calcutta. The discover was a Christian and an Englishman by birth, and the story as narrated to me goes on to say that a Mr. Jones, who was an iron manufacturer at Howrah, one day with a party of workmen, went to the jungles of Sunderbans (the Delta of the Ganges) to cut fuel. Having entered the forests he discovered from a distance three men

seated in a posture of devotional meditation. Upon hearing them, two of the devoted disappeared in the midst of a sudden dust-cloud; but the third did not and could not leave his position, as his thighs were entwined with the roots of a banyan tree under which he had taken his seat. Our Christian adventurer went nearer and nearer, and found the *Yogi* in a state of coma, his eyes shut, his right hand fastened with the Brahmanical sacred thread made of skin, and the great finger of his left hand indication the or the ordinal number of. The banyan roots were dissevered and the *Yogi* was brought into the metropolis as though a statue. In Mr. Jones' compound he was kept for 13 days, and many thousand men, women and children went thither to see him. But no change was found in him. Ultimately the Raja of Bhu Kailas, on whose property the *Yogi* was found, brought him to his house, and many attempts were made to bring him to his senses. He was thrown in the tide of the Ganges with a rope fastened to his body. And there submerged four days and nights. Afterwards the services of Dr. O'Shaughnessy were called for, who administered carbonate or salt (*sic*) in its crude state, which made the *Yogi* open his eyes. On seeing around him the scene, his eyes flooded with tears and he exclaimed "I have not molested any man, why did you molest me." Shortly after, he opened his mouth as a sign of hunger, and a good deal of *meat* and *drink* was put into his mouth, which he mechanically swallowed. In the course of two months from the date of his return to the land of the living, he was dead, the immediate cause of death being produced by an immense quantity of unaccustomed meat and ardent spirits, taken into an empty stomach. Your readers, who may be very curious to have a more authentic account of this *Yogi*, may with advantage rummage through the old files of the 'Friend of India' of that time, or enquire from Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra, still living in

Calcutta. And as regards Amarchand Maytreya, I can refer you, amongst hundred of others, to the partners of the house of James Proudie & Co of Allahabad, whose almost next door neighbor the said Maytreya was.

Bibliographical source:

The Theosophist, Vol. I, February 1880, p. 120.

Another Aethrobat

Joshi Ootamram Doolabhram

Guru of the School of Astrology and Astromy in Baroda.



The statement in the November number of the *THEOSOPHIST* that the levitation of the human body has been seen by many reputable witnesses in India, is strictly correct. I myself am able to testify to the fact. In the year of Samvat 1912 (1856) I was making an investigation into ancient chemistry and sought out a competent instructor who could give me some of the information which I desired. After much search I found at the city of Broach, in a temple of Mahadeva, situated on the banks of the river Narbada, an ascetic (*samnyasin*) who was practising "yog," and enlisted myself as his disciple. He was a man of apparently 35 years of age, above the average size of man and with a beautiful countenance animated with a great intelligence of expression and cheeks suffused with a very peculiar roseate hue which I have never seen on any mortal's face before or since. His head was shaved, and he wore a saffron robe of a *sanyasi*. He was a native of Panjab. He was known to us under the name and title of Narayenanand. Like all men of his class, he was exceedingly difficult to approach, and would neither accept me as a pupil, nor allow me to put myself on terms of any intimacy until he had satisfied himself by the closest questioning as to my real intentions and capacity to learn the science of Yog. I will pass over these details and simply state that, at last, I gained my object, was accepted as a pupil, received his blessing, and served him, first and last, for more than two years. During this time I learnt many things practically, which I had previously known only from reading our sacred *Śāstras*. I discovered many

secrets of nature, and saw ample proof of the power in man to control the forces of nature, my preceptor among other things practicing "*pranayama*" or the suspension of the breath. I will not pretend to explain, in the language of Western science, the effect produced in the human body by this branch of Yoga Vidya. But this much I will say that, while the Samnyasin was absorbed in contemplation, during his performance of "*pranayama*" sitting in the prescribed posture of "Padmasana," his body would rise from the ground to the height of four fingers, and remain suspended in the air for four and five minutes at a time, while I was allowed to press my hand beneath him three or four times, to satisfy myself beyond a doubt that the levitation was a positive fact.

Bibliographical reference:

The Theosophist, Vol. I., No. 7 - April 1880.

Levitation

Levitation may be produced consciously or unconsciously to the subject. The juggler determines beforehand that he will be levitated, for how long a time, and to what height; he regulates the occult forces accordingly. The fakir produces the same effect by the power of his aspiration and will, and, except when in the ecstatic state, keeps control over his movements. So does the priest of Siam, when, in the sacred pagoda, he mounts fifty feet in the air with taper in hand, and flits from idol to idol, lighting up the niches, self-supported, and stepping as confidently as though he were upon solid ground. This, persons have seen and testify to. The officers of the Russian squadron which recently circumnavigated the globe, and was stationed for a long time in Japanese waters, relate the fact that, besides many other marvels, they saw jugglers walk in mid-air from tree-top to tree-top, without the slightest support.[1] They also saw the pole and tape-climbing feats, described by Colonel Olcott in his *People from the Other World*, and which have been so much called in question by certain spiritualists and mediums whose zeal is greater than their learning. The quotations from Col. Yule and other writers, elsewhere given in this work, seem to place the matter beyond doubt that these effects are produced.

Such phenomena, when occurring apart from religious rites, in India, Japan, Tibet, Siam, and other "heathen" countries, phenomena a hundred times more various and astounding than

ever seen in civilized Europe or America, are never attributed to the spirits of the departed. The Pitris have naught to do with such public exhibitions. And we have but to consult the list of the principal demons or elemental spirits to find that their very names indicate their professions, or, to express it clearly, the tricks to which each variety is best adapted. So we have the Madan, a generic name indicating wicked elemental spirits, half brutes, half monsters, for Madan signifies one that looks like a cow. He is the friend of the malicious sorcerers and helps them to effect their evil purposes of revenge by striking men and cattle with sudden illness and death.

The *Shudala-Madan* [1], or graveyard fiend, answers to our ghouls. He delights where crime and murder were committed, near burial-spots and places of execution. He helps the juggler in all the fire-phenomena as well as Kutti Shattan, the little juggling imps. Shudala, they say, is a half-fire, half-water demon, for he received from Śiva permission to assume any shape he chose, transform one thing into another; and when he is not in fire, he is in water. It is he who blinds people "to see that which *they do not see*." *Shula Madan*, is another mischievous spook. He is the *furnace-demon*, skilled in pottery and baking. If you keep friends with him, he will not injure you; but woe to him who incurs his wrath. Shula likes compliments and flattery, and as he generally keeps underground it is to him that a juggler must look to help him raise a tree from a seed in a quarter of an hour and ripen its fruit.

Kumil-Madan, is the *undine* proper. He is an elemental spirit of the water, and his name means *blowing like a bubble*. He is a very merry imp; and will help a friend in anything relative to his department; he will shower rain and show the future and the present to those who will resort to hydromancy or divination by water.

Poruthu Madan, is the "wrestling" demon; he is the strongest of all; and whenever there are feats shown in which physical force is required, such as levitations, or taming of wild animals, he will help the performer by keeping him above the soil or will overpower a wild beast before the tamer has time to utter his incantation. So, every "physical manifestation" has its own class of elemental spirits to superintend them.

Returning now to levitations of human bodies and inanimate bodies, in modern circle-rooms, we must refer the reader to the Introductory chapter of this work. (See "Aethrobacy.") In connection with the story of Simon the Magician, we have shown the explanation of the ancients as to how the levitation and transport of heavy bodies could be produced. We will now try and suggest a hypothesis for the same in relation to mediums, i.e., persons supposed to be unconscious at the moment of the phenomena, which the believers claim to be produced by disembodied "spirits." We need not repeat that which has been sufficiently explained before. Conscious aethrobasy under magneto-electrical conditions is possible only to *adepts* who can never be overpowered by an influence foreign to themselves, but remain sole masters of their WILL.

Thus levitation, we will say, must always occur in obedience to law - a law as inexorable as that which makes a body unaffected by it remain upon the ground. And where should we seek for that law outside of the theory of molecular attraction? It is a scientific hypothesis that the form of force which first brings nebulous or star matter together into a whirling vortex is electricity; and modern chemistry is being totally reconstructed upon the theory of electric polarities of atoms. The waterspout, the tornado, the whirlwind, the cyclone, and the hurricane, are all doubtless the result of electrical action. This phenomenon has been studied from above as well as from below, observations having been

made both upon the ground and from a balloon floating above the vortex of a thunder-storm.

Observe now, that this force, under the conditions of a dry and warm atmosphere at the earth's surface, can accumulate a dynamic energy capable of lifting enormous bodies of water, of compressing the particles of atmosphere, and of sweeping across a country, tearing up forests, lifting rocks, and scattering buildings in fragments over the ground. Wild's electric machine causes induced currents of magneto-electricity so enormously powerful as to produce light by which small print may be read, on a dark night, at a distance of two miles from the place where it is operating.

As long ago as the year 1600, Gilbert, in his *De Magnete*, enunciated the principle that the globe itself is one vast magnet, and some of our advanced electricians are now beginning to realize that man, too, possesses this property, and that the mutual attractions and repulsions of individuals toward each other may at least in part find their explanation in this fact. The experience of attendants upon spiritualistic circles corroborates this opinion. Says Professor Nicholas Wagner, of the University of St. Petersburg: "Heat, or *perhaps the electricity of the investigators* sitting in the circle, must concentrate itself in the table and gradually develop into motions. At the same time, or a little afterward, the psychical force unites to assist the two other powers. By *psychical force*, I mean that which evolves itself out of all the other forces of our organism. The combination into one general something of several separate forces, and capable, when combined, of manifesting itself in degree, according to the individuality." The progress of the phenomena he considers to be affected by the cold or the dryness of the atmosphere. Now, remembering what has been said as to the subtler forms of energy which the Hermetists have proved to exist in nature, and

accepting the hypothesis enunciated by Mr. Wagner that "the power which calls out these manifestations is centred in the mediums," may not the medium, by furnishing in himself a nucleus as perfect in its way as the system of permanent steel magnets in Wild's battery, produce astral currents sufficiently strong to lift in their vortex a body even as ponderable as a human form? It is not necessary that the object lifted should assume a gyratory motion, for the phenomenon we are observing, unlike the whirlwind, is directed by an intelligence, which is capable of keeping the body to be raised within the ascending current and preventing its rotation.

Levitation in this case would be a purely mechanical phenomenon. The inert body of the passive medium is lifted by a vortex created either by the elemental spirits - possibly, in some cases, by human ones, and sometimes through purely morbid causes, as in the cases of Professor Perty's sick somnambules. The levitation of the adept is, on the contrary, a magneto-electric effect, as we have just stated. He has made the polarity of his body opposite to that of the atmosphere, and identical with that of the earth; hence, attractable by the former, retaining his consciousness the while. A like phenomenal levitation is possible, also, when disease has changed the corporeal polarity of a patient, as disease always does in a greater or lesser degree. But, in such case, the lifted person would not be likely to remain conscious.

[1] Our informant, who was an eye-witness, is Mr. N—ff of St. Petersburg, who was attached to the flag-ship *Almaz*, if we are not mistaken.

Bibliographical source:

Isis Unveiled, H.P.Blavatsky, Vol. I, pp. 495-498.

The Rational of Fasts

[A letter form H. Hardy, comments by H.P.B.]

Knowing the interest you take in Oriental philosophy, will you kindly allow me to ask you or any of your brethren, through your wide circulating journal, certain questions? The Solution whereof will throw much light upon some of the mysterious ceremonies performed generally, not only among Hindus but among all Oriental nations. It is a well known fact that the Hindus, the Mahomedans and the Roman Catholic Christians observe fasts for certain days. The Mahomedans during those days do not eat animal food, and if I am not mis-informed, the Christians do the same. The Hindus, to which class I have the honor to belong, do not eat cow, but subsist themselves on fruits, vegetables, and milk. What philosophy is hidden in this custom is a mystery not only to me, but to most of us. On consulting a Brahman I was informed that when the old Rishis taught us to abstain from solid food they had some medical advantage in view. What was that advantage? Can any of your readers throw some light on this subject?

I remain, yours obediently,
H. Hardy.

H.P.B.'s comments: - "The *rationale* of fasts lies on the surface. If there is one thing more than another that paralyses the will power in man and thereby paves the way to physical and

moral degradation it is intemperance in eating: "Gluttony, of seven deadly sins the worst." Swedenborg, a natural-born seer, in his "Stink of Intemperance," tells how his spirit friends reproved him for an accidental error leading to over-eating. The institution of fasts goes hand in hand with the institution of feasts. When too severe strain is made on the vital energies by over-taxing the digestive machinery, the best and only remedy is to let it rest for some time and recoup itself as much as possible. The exhausted ground must be allowed to lie fallow before it can yield another crop. Fast were instituted simply for the purpose of correcting the evils of over-eating. The truth of this will be manifest from the consideration that the Buddhist priests have no institution of fasts among them, but are enjoined to observe the medium course and thus to "fast" daily all their life. A body clogged with an overstuffing of food, of whatsoever kind, is always crowned with a stupefied brain, and tired nature demands the repose of sleep. There is also a vast difference between the psychic effect of nitrogenised food, such as flesh, and non-nitrogenous food, such as fruits and green vegetables. Certain meats, like beef, and vegetables like beans, have always been interdicted to students of occultism, not because either of them were more or less holy than others, but because while perhaps highly nutritious and supporting to the body, their magnetism was deadening and obstructive to the "psychic man."

Bibliographical source:

The Theosophist, Vol. IV, No 4, January 1883, p. 88.

How They Fast in India?

By a Marathi Medical Man

The Śravaka, a sect of the Jains of India, are in the habit of fasting annually during the holy week of Pachosan. The fast of the week is observed by different persons in several different ways, according to the power one may possess of enduring it. The less pious live on one meal a day for the week. Others fast and eat alternately. The more pious abstain from food for one, three, five, or eight days successively. A very few, under a religious vow made before a priest, give out as their determination to carry on the fast for thirty days, provided the state of their health should permit the starvation without material injury to life. They proceed by instalments, so as to terminate the fast at regulated periods of five, eight, ten, fifteen, or twenty days, according to circumstances. Those, who determine on a month, commence the fast on such a date that the thirty-first day may fall on the 5th of Bhadrapada, a day sacred to the Rishis or ancient sages of India. On this day, the fast is broken and gruel of boiled Moong (*Phaseobus Mungo*) is chosen for the breakfast. This is followed by a soft pudding of wheaten flour, and a small quantity of boiled rice, until the usual diet is resumed in the course of fifteen or twenty days.

During the fast, boiled water, cooled down, is taken *ad libitum* [at (one's) pleasure], to which in certain cases some infusion of *chireta* is added when nausea and vomiting occur. Daily ablutions are performed, and a visit to the temple made regularly as long as the strength permits. A female devotee, aged

forty-five years, under a fast for thirty days, is said to have performed her daily ablutions, carrying a pitcher of water on her head, to the temple in the vicinity of her house, without much effort on her part. She died five months after the observance of the fast, of an attack of fever. As a rule, deaths do not occur during the fast; but a Śravaka, aged fifty-three, has within his recollection two instances, both of females, who died after the fast of thirty days, within fifteen or twenty day respectively, undoubtedly from the effects of starvation.

A case of abstinence, extending over fifty-eight days, is on record; and, in view of what may be seen among the Jain Shravaks, Dr. Tanner, of Minnesota, in achieving his forty-days' starvation, only proved that in the matter of human endurance, which has been known among Asiatics from time immemorial — though the blind and groping doctors of Europe and America appear to have overlooked the fact.

Had he determined to carry on the experiment until life ceased, the scientific interest would be certainly great, inasmuch as it would determine the fact, at least in a single instance, of the possible duration of life without food and water in a human body subjected to self-willed starvation. And it is to be borne in mind, that self-imposed starvation with some object in view, scientific or religious, must differ in its effects from involuntary starvation caused by either disease, ship-wreck or other circumstances. In the one case, complete rest of mind is secured, preventing undue waste of tissues, whereas in the other, the troubled mind and efforts to obtain food, causing rapid waste of tissues, would materially hasten the fatal termination.

Bibliographical source:

The Theosophist, Vol. I., No. 12 - September 1880.

Dr. Tanner and the Vedic Doctrines about Fasts

Rao Bahadur Janardan S. Gadgil, LL.B.,
– *Concillor of the Theosophical Society*

Now that Dr. Tanner's forty days' fast is exciting public attention in America and Europe, it may not be inopportune to notice the Vedic doctrine on the subject of the capability of the human body to bear fast, and the theory on which it is founded. In the Chandogya Upanishad of the SamVeda, sixth Prapathaka, there is a dialogue between Svetaketu and his father on the subject. The following is a free rendering of it, as explained by Śankaracharya in his Bhashya on the Upanishad.

The father says to the son - "The food, which a human being eats, becomes transformed after various processes into three substances, viz., the heaviest part of it becomes *faeces*, the middling part of it becomes *flesh*, and the nicest part of it becomes the *mind*. The water, which is drunk, becomes transformed into three substances, viz., the heaviest part of it becomes *urine*, the middling part of it becomes *blood*, and the nicest part of it becomes the *prāṇā*, that is, the vital breath. The substances, in which the element of fire predominates, such as oil, ghee, &c., when taken into the human system, become transformed into three substances, viz., the heaviest part of it becomes the *bones*, the middling part of it becomes the *brain*, and the nicest part of it becomes the *vach* or the organ of speech. Therefore, Oh son, the mind consists of food, the

prâná, or vital breath, of water, and the *vach*, or organ of speech, of fire." The son says: - "Oh father, explain the same again by an illustration," to which the father thus replies: - "Just as, when the curd is churned, the nicest part rises up and becomes butter, so the nicest part of the food, which is eaten, rises up (is sublimated) and becomes the *mind*. The nicest part of the water, which is drunk, rises up and becomes the *prâná* or vital breath. The nicest of those things, in which the element of fire predominates, rises up and becomes *vach* or the organ of speech, Therefore, Oh son, the *mind* consists of food, the *prâná* of water, and the *vach* of fire." The son says: - "Explain, Oh father, the same subject still further." The father thereupon proceeds: — "This human being has sixteen capacities or degrees, which wax or wane according as the mind receives strength or is deprived of strength by the accession or the deprivation of the nicest part of eaten food. If you want to know this by actual experience, take no food for fifteen days. You may drink water as much as you like; as the *prâná* or the vital breath consists of water, you will die if you do not drink water." The son accordingly ate no food for fifteen days, and, on the sixteenth day, he approached his father, and said: - "What shall I say now?" The father said - "Repeat the Rik, Yaju and Sam Vedas, which you have studied." The son said - "Oh father, I do not recollect them." The father then said to him: - "Just as a glow-worm-like ember, which remains out of a large fire that was kindled, is not able to burn much in that state, so only one, out of the sixteen degrees of your mind, is now remaining, and, therefore, you are not able to recollect the Vedas. Follow my advice and you will again know everything. You should now recommence to eat." The son did so, and then again approached his father. The father asked him to repeat and explain the Rig-Veda, &c., and he did repeat and explain

everything that was asked. Whereupon the father said to him: - "Oh son, just as when the glow-worm-like ember, out of the large fire, when fed by (dry) grass, grows again into a large fire and is then able to burn a great deal; in the same manner, one, out of your sixteen degrees, was still existing, and, when it was fed by food and thus made to grow, you then could recollect the Vedas. Thus then, Oh son, the mind consists of *food*, the *prâná* or the vital breath of *water*, and the *vach* or the organ of speech, of *fire*."

As Dr. Tanner has now finished his self-imposed ordeal, he will probably let the world know whether he found his memory or other mental faculties impaired or affected, and whether he found it necessary to drink water, etc. [1]

[1] * Dr. Tanner did use water throughout his long fast. - ED. TH.

Bibliographical source:

The Theosophist, Vol. I., No. 12, September 1880.



Mantra

Is a Sanskrit word conveying the same idea as the "Ineffable Name." Some mantras, when pronounced according to magical formula taught in the Atharva-Veda , produce an instantaneous and wonderful effect. In its general sense, though, a mantra is either simply a prayer to the gods and powers of heaven, as taught by the Brahmanical books, and especially Manu, or else a magical charm. In its esoteric sense, the "word" of the mantra, or mystic speech, is called by the Brahmans Vach. It resides in the mantra, which literally means those parts of the sacred books which are considered as the Śruti, or direct divine revelation.

Bibliographical source:

Isis Unveiled, Vol. 1, p. xxxvi, Before the Veil.

Tharana or Mesmerism

[N. Chidambaram, ESQ., B.A., comments by H.P.B.]

In the June number of the *Theosophist*, Babu Purno Chandra Mukerjee enumerates certain processes resorted to by persons practicing Tharana, in their treatment of sick patients. I adopt a certain method of curing persons suffering from sprain, and I wish to know whether the cure thus effected can be regarded as effected by mesmerism.

I cause the patient to be seated at some distance before me, and on learning what part of his body is affected, I simply rub with my hand the corresponding part of *my* own body, pronouncing a *mantra* at the same time. This rubbing I continue for less than five minutes. The patient finds himself perfectly cured in less than six hours after he leaves me. It is now four years since I learned the *mantra* and, if I may trust my memory, I think I have successfully treated about 20 cases, having failed in only one instance, in which I have had reasons to suspect that there had been some serious injury to the part affected. Some of the cases treated by me have been rather acute ones, and, in some, the patients had suffered for over a fortnight before they came to me. In only two cases, have I had to treat the patients for two or three consecutive days.

If any credit is due to me for possessing any innate knowledge of mesmerism, the following will show that I never for a moment sat down to practice the art to become successful in it: -



Four years ago, a Brahman offered to teach me the *mantra* if I would teach him in return a *mantra* for the cure of scorpion-bite, in which I was considered an adept. I agreed to do so; but when the Brahman said that I should not expect to achieve anything like success if I did not, as a preliminary measure, repeat the *mantra* a hundred thousand times, I told him that I should like to learn it only if he would kindly make over to me the effect of a hundred thousand of his own repetitions. This he did by pouring into my hand a quantity of water - a process by which, according to the Hindus, gifts are effected. From this time forth I have been successful in curing persons suffering from sprains without touching or even approaching them.

Now two questions will naturally occur to the reader: *firstly*, whether I may be considered to have acquired any knowledge of mesmerism in the case stated above; and, *secondly*, whether the effect or the power which one acquires by practicing *mantra* is really transferable.

All that I have stated is perfectly correct, and I make no secret of the affair, but am perfectly willing to teach the *mantra* to anyone wishing to learn it.

In one place you say that, when a cure is effected by a *mantra*, what really effects the cure is what you call the "will power." I wish to know whether, in the described case, I exercise any "will power" unknown to me, and whether I can at all be considered to exercise such power, when it has not been acquired, but only transferred to me by another person. Will you kindly consider the subject and render some explanation as to what has taken place.

Before pronouncing an off-hand denunciation against the possibility, or conceivability, of a connection between cause and effect in cases like the above, sceptics will do well to give the

matter a trial themselves by learning some *mantras* and observing its effect on patients.

H.P.B.'s comment: - It is extremely difficult to say, after hearing, for the first time, and so superficially, a case like the one in hand, whether it is, or is *not*, "mesmerism," and "will power." It is a well-ascertained fact that, by means of the former, hundreds of thousands have been cured, and by using the latter, people, given up for years by physicians as incurable, have gone on living, despite professional prognostications. As to the recitation of *mantras* producing an immediate relief, this is quite a different thing. We cannot call their effect "mesmerism" - since the curative agency in that is an animal aura, force, or fluid in one person, by means of which a peculiar action is set up in the physical system of another - whether without or with direct contact. We confess, we do not see, how anything of that kind - we mean a nervous fluid or force - can be said to reside in a *mantra*, even as a potentiality, since a *mantra* is simply a recitation of certain verses held sacred among the Hindus. Yet, if repeated loudly and after a certain rule of phonetics, *i.e.*, chanted in a peculiar way, we do not know why the resultant sound could not possess as curative a power in itself as a mesmeric "force." The latter is neither more ponderable, nor more visible, than the former, and is certainly not *audible*, which sound is. If the dulcet tones of a flute have been known to soothe, and in many instances to arrest for a considerable time the throbbings of the nerves in fits of *sciatica* - why not the rhythmic sounds of a Sanskrit *mantra*? The forefathers of many Brahmans, - if not the latter the themselves - must have certainly known more of the mystery of sound than Professor Tyndall, even though that learned gentleman has succeeded in drawing musical sounds from fire and imponderable gases. It is

the God Sabda Brahman called also *Kala Bramham Gouri* - one of the mystic names for AKAŚA, which gives rise to occult sound - the initiates say. And the ancient Greek mystics, equally with the Western occultists and the adept Brahmans, agreed all in teaching that sound emanated from the Astral Light, or *Akaśa*, in its purest essence. The Hindu occultist, or devotee, while practising Raja-Yoga, hears the occult sounds as emanating from his own *Muladhara* - the first of the series of six centres of force in the human body (fed at the inexhaustible source of the *seventh* or the UNITY, as the sum total of all) and *knows* that it emanates from there, and from nowhere else. But, before our correspondent can realize fully our meaning, he will have to learn the important difference between *Astral Fire* and *Astral Light*. Does he know it? Has he assured himself personally of this difference? It is not sufficient to know a thing theoretically, as it will be only leading to eternal confusion, even "by learning some *mantra*, and trying its effects on patients," unless one knows the philosophy - so to say, the rationale of the cure. Even success is no proof that it may not turn out very injurious some day. Therefore, before one becomes a practitioner, he ought to become a student.

And now arises the question: Did the Brahman - who transferred the gift of curing by a certain *mantra* to our correspondent - know himself anything of the power he was so transferring, or did he simply do that *mechanically*?

If he was an *initiate* - well and good; but, in such case, how happened it that he asked one, who was *not* an adept, to *teach him* in return? Such are not the ways of initiates. An adept, acquainted with one CENTRE, knows them all - since there is but one centre, of Occult Force in nature. He knows that in the centre of the Astral Fire must he search in nature for the origin

of every sound - and it is sound - the Vach - that is the curative agent in a *mantra*. Such a man knows that it is from this centre alone, never from the circumference of the SHATKONO CHAKRA,[1] that the sounds transmitted (even by the external currents of Astral Light or Ether) proceed, while the six diverging points (which represent the radiations of this central point), but convey and echo them *from within without*, and *vice versa*, in every occult process of nature. It is within and from a given point in space (which must always be central, wheresoever it is placed) that the force which is at the basis of any phenomena, in whatsoever element, proceeds from; for this centre is the "seat" of the unmanifested deity, - says the esoteric Brahmanical doctrine - of the "Avyaktabrahm," and stands for the *seventh* principle within the six points of the *chakra*. All the forces in nature, whether great or small, are trinities completed by quaternaries; *all* - except the ONE, the CROWN of the Astral Light. If we say that nature has in reality *seven*, not five or even four, elements, some of our readers may laugh at our *ignorance*, but an initiate would never do so, since he knows very well what we mean. He knows that, in the case in point (the power of a *mantra*), it is through occult sounds that the *adept commands* the elemental forces of nature. SABDABRBAHM'S vehicle is called *Shadjam*, and the latter is the *basic tone in the Hindu musical scale*. It is only after reaching the stage called Tribeni and passing through the study of preliminary sounds, that a Yogi begins to see *Kala Brahma*, i.e., perceives things in the Astral Light. When our correspondent will have mastered the *nadis* and *niddhis* of the Raja-Yoga, and reached at least the above-named stage, then will he comprehend what we mean in saying, that a gradual development of the mental and physical occult faculties is the method used by the true adept in studying the Raja-Yoga. The practice of blindly "transferring" and

"receiving" - is that of sorcerers, whether they are so consciously or unconsciously. Moreover, the ignorant practice of Hatha-Yoga leads one invariably into that undesirable acquisition. The Hatha-Yogi either becomes a sorcerer, or learns practically *nothing*; or more frequently yet, kills himself by such an injudicious practice. The *mantra* ignorantly employed may, and often has, proved a treacherous weapon, whose mystical power has caused it to turn and *stab the user*.

[1] The hexagonal wheel, or six-pointed star - the wheel of Vishnu with the Hindus; Solomon's seal - with the Western Kabalists. It is, in this case, the representation of the Astral Fire, the *seventh* being represented by the *central point*. In this connection, one would do well to study the article on the five and six-pointed star in the 26th number of *The Theosophist*, November, 1881.

Bibliographical Source:

The Theosophist, August 1882, pp. 268-69.

The Magnetic Chain

We have read with great interest the first number of a new French journal devoted to the science of Mesmerism, or, as it is called Animal Magnetism, which has been kindly sent us by that venerable and most illustrious practitioner of that science, the Baron du Potet, of Paris. Its title is *La Chaîne Magnétique* (the Magnetic Chain). After long years of comparative indifference, caused by the encroachments of sceptical science, this fascinating subject is again absorbing a large share of the attention of Western students of Psychology. Mesmerism is the very key to the mystery of man's interior nature; and enables one familiar with its laws to understand not only the phenomena of Western Spiritualism, but also that vast subject - so vast as to embrace every branch of Occultism within itself - of Eastern Magic. The whole object of the Hindu Yogi is to bring into activity his interior power, to make himself ruler over physical self and over everything else besides. That the developed yogi can influence, sometimes control the operations of vegetable and animal life, proves that the soul within his body has an intimate relationship with the soul of all other things. Mesmerism goes far towards teaching us how to read this occult secret; and Baron Reichenbach's great discovery of *Odyle* or *Od* force, together with Professor Buchanan's *Psychometry*, and the recent advances in electrical and magnetic science complete the demonstration. The *THEOSOPHIST* will give great attention to all these - Mesmerism, the laws of *Od*, Psychometry, etc. In this

connection we give translated extracts from *La Chaîne Magnétique* that will repay perusal. There is a great truth in what Baron du Potet says about the Mesmeric fluid: "It is no utopian theory, but a universal Force, ever the same; which we will irrefutably prove A law of nature as positive as electricity, yet different from it; as real as night and day. A law of which physicians, notwithstanding all their learning and science, have hitherto been ignorant. Only with a knowledge of magnetism does it become possible to prolong life and heal the sick. Physicians must study it some day or — cease to be regarded as physicians." Though now almost a nonagenarian, the Baron's intellect is as clear and his courageous devotion to his favourite Science as ardent as when, in the year 1826, he appeared before the French Academy of Medicine and experimentally demonstrated the reality of animal magnetism. France, the mother of many great men of science, has produced few greater than du Potet.

A disciple of the Baron's - a Mr. Saladin of Tarascon-sur-Rhone - reporting to him the results of recent magnetic experiments for the cure of disease, says: Once, while magnetizing my wife, I made a powerful effort of my will to project the magnetic fluid, when I felt streaming from each of my finger-tips as it were little threads of cool breeze, such as might come from the mouth of an opened air-bag. My wife distinctly felt this singular breeze, and, what is still more strange, the servant girl, when told to interpose her hand between my own hand and my wife's body, and asked what she felt, replied that 'it seemed as though something were blowing from the tips of my fingers.' The peculiar phenomenon here indicated has often been noticed in therapeutic magnetization; it is the vital force, intensely concentrated by the magnetizer's will, pouring out of his system into the patient's. The blowing of a cool breeze over the hands

and faces of persons present, is also frequently observed at spiritualistic 'circles.'

Bibliographical Source:

The Theosophist, 1879, p. 30.



Occult Acoustics

[A letter from "A" F.T.S. , comments by H.P.B.]

In your instructive note to the article headed, "Tharana or Mesmerism," published in the *THEOSOPHIST* for August, you say that the Hindu Occultist while practicing Raja-Yoga hears the occult sounds as emanating from "Moola Adharam."

I hear the occult sounds steadily and very clearly; and they constitute a powerful agency in concentrating my mind. One of the Upanishads, which specially treat of them designated them (collectively) as Brahma Târântara Nâdana; but I feel exceedingly anxious to know whether the venerable Himalayan Adepts recognize this practice as a mode of Raja-Yoga; and, if so, what are the advantages, physical, mental and psyquical, derivable from the hearing to its thoroughly matured state? I, therefore, beg to be enlightened on the subject, as it is probable that many of our brethren would thankfully accept the information above solicited.

"A." F.T.S.
15th August 1882.

H.P.B.'s Comments: - Knowing very little (from the description given) of the nature of the "occult sounds" in question, we are unable to class them with any degree of certainty among the practices adopted by Raja-Yoga. "Occult sounds" and occult or "Astral Light" are certainly the earliest form of manifestation

obtained by Raja-Yoga; but whether in this particular case it is the result of heredity or otherwise we of course cannot decide from the scanty description given by our corresponded. Many persons are born with the faculty of clairaudience, other with that of clairvoyance, - some with both.

Bibliographical source:

The Theosophist, January 1883, p. 90.

Prayer

Prayer opens the spiritual sight of man, for prayer is desire, and desire develops WILL; the magnetic emanations proceeding from the body at every effort - whether mental or physical - produce self-magnetization and ecstasy. Plotinus recommended solitude for prayer, as the most efficient means of obtaining what is asked; and Plato advised those who prayed to "remain silent in the presence of the divine ones, till they remove the cloud from thy eyes, and enable thee to see *by the light which issues from themselves*." Apollonius always isolated himself from men during the "conversation" he held with God, and whenever he felt the necessity for divine contemplation and prayer, he wrapped himself, head and all, in the drapery of his white woolen mantle. "When thou prayest *enter into thy closet*, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father in secret," says the Nazarene, the pupil of the Essenes .

Bibliographical reference:

Isis Unveiled, Vol I. chapter XII, p. 434.

The Life of Śankaracharya, Philosopher and Mystic

[By Káshinath Trimbak, Telang, MA., L.L.B., comments by H.P.B.]

I might well plead the multitudinous engagements of a busy professional and literary life as an excuse for not complying with the respect to briefly notice in the *THEOSOPHIST* the incidents of Śankaracharya's illustrious career. But I am, first and last, a Hindu, and my sympathies and humble cooperation are pledged in advance to every legitimate attempt to elucidate the history of India or better the intellectual or physical condition of my countrymen. From the earliest time the study of philosophy and metaphysics has been prized and encouraged in this country, and high above all other names in its history are written those of our people who have aimed to help men to clearer thinking upon the subjects embraced in those categories, whether by their writings, discourses or example. The life which forms my present theme is the life of one of the greatest men who have appeared in India. Whether we consider his natural abilities, his unselfish devotion to the cause of religion, or the influence he has exerted upon his countrymen, this splendid ascetic stands *facile princeps*.

So enchanting in fact, are all his surroundings, that it is no wonder that the admiration of an astonished people should have euhemerized him into an incarnation of the Deity. Our ignoble human nature seems ever so conscious of its own weakness and imperfection, as to be prone to deify whomsoever exemplifies its higher aspirations; as though the keeping of him



on the human plane made other men seem meaner and more little by contrasts.

Śankaracharya's biographers apotheosized their hero, as Alexander's and Cicero's and those of Apollonius, Jesus and Mahomet did theirs. They made his advent presaged by a heavenly vision - of Mahadeva, to his father, Śivaguru - and his career attended by miracles which no theory of interior, or physical, development can cover. A lenient posterity may well pass over these pious embellishments as the fruit of an exuberant partiality, for after all these have been stripped away, the true grandeur of the pandit, philosopher, and mystic is only the more plainly revealed to us.

We are, unfortunately without the necessary data to enable us to precisely fix the epoch in which this great teacher flourished. Some ascribe it to the second century before, others would bring him down to the tenth after, Christ. Most modern scholars agree in locating him in the eighth century of the Christian era; and, since we have for this opinion the concurrent authority of Wilson Colebrooke, Rammohan Roy, Yajnesvar Shastri, and Professor Jayanarayan Tarkapanchanam, the Bengali editor of Anandagiri's *Śankara Vijaya*, and it is less important, after all, to know when he taught than what he taught and did, we may as well accept that decision without debate. No more certainly can his birth-place be determined. As seven cities competed for the honor of having produced a Homer, so five biographies ascribe his nativity to as many different localities. Sringeri is commonly believed to have been the favored town; [2] but a passage from the Śivarahanja quoted in the Kavicharitra, would indicate a town in the Kerala district Sasalagrama; [3] Anadagiri's Life of Śankara names Chidambarapura [4]; Madhev puts forward Kalati, [5] and lastly Yajnesvai Shastri, in his Aryavidya Sudhakara, tells us that Śankara first saw the light at Kalpi. [6]

Taking no notice of the portents and wonders said to have said to have occurred in the animal and vegetable kingdoms at his birth - such as the fraternizing together of beasts ordinarily hostile to each other, the uncommon pellucidity of the streams, the preternatural shedding of fragrance by trees and plants, nor of the joy of the Upanishads or the glad paeans of the whole celestial host, we find our hero here displaying a most wonderful precocity. In his first year he acquired the Sanskrit alphabet and his own language; at two, learned to read; at three, studied the Kavyas and Puranás - and understood many portions of them by intuition. [7] Anandagiri, less circumstantial, merely states that Śankara became conversant with Prakrit Magadha and Sanskrit languages even in *śaiśava*, infancy.

Having studied the *Itihasa*, the Puranás, the Mahabharata, the Smritis, and the Śastras, Śankara, in *his seventh year*, returned from his preceptor to his own home. Madhav narrates that the mother of his hero being, one day, overpowered by the debility resulting from the austerities she had practiced before his birth to propitiate the gods and make them grant her prayer for a son, as well as by the torrid heat of the sun, fainted; whereupon Śankara, finding her in the swoon, not only brought her back to consciousness but drew the river up, as well, a circumstance which of course spread his fame as a thaumaturgist far and wide! The king of Kerala vainly offering him presents of gold and elephants, through his own minister, came himself to pay reverence, and disclosing his longing for a son like himself, was made happy by the sage, who *taught the king privately* the rites to be performed in such cases. I must not lose the opportunity to point, in passing, to the two things implied in this biographical scrap, viz., that [8] it was believed that the birth of progeny may be brought about by the recitation of mantras and the performance of ceremonial rites, and [9] that the secret is never

publicly taught, but privately conveyed from adept to disciple. I shall not dwell upon these facts but leave them to be disposed of as they will by our new friends, the Theosophists, for whom the mystical side of nature offers most enticements.

About this same time the great sage Agastya, visiting him with other sages, prophesied to his mother that he would die at the age of thirty-two. Feeling that this world is all a passing show, this boy of eight years determined to embrace the life of a holy Samnyasin, but his mother objected, her motherly pride doubtless craving a son to her son who should inherit his own greatness of soul and mind. The lad's determination was not to be shaken however, and the maternal consent was obtained, as the biographers tell us by the working of a prodigy.[10] Bathing in the river, one day, his foot was caught by an alligator. He wailed so loud that his mother ran to the spot, and being told that the alligator would not leave go his hold until she had agreed to her son's becoming an ascetic, felt coerced into giving consent. Śankaracharya thereupon came out of the river, and confiding her to the care of relatives and friends, and telling her he would come back to her whenever she should need his presence, he went away and took up the career for which he had so strong a natural bent.

As if drawn by some irresistible magnetic attraction towards a certain spot, Śankara travelled for several days, through forests, over hills, by towns, and across rivers, yet all the while unconscious of all, and oblivious to the men and beasts that went by him on his way, he arrived at the cave in a hill on the banks of the Nerbudda, where Govind Yati had fixed his hermitage. After the usual preliminaries the sage accepted the lad as a pupil and taught him the Brahma out of the four great sentences. - Knowledge is Brahma; This soul is Brahma; Thou art that; and I am Brahma.[11] It is related by Madhav that,

immediately after he had entered upon this discipleship, Śankara performed, - one day, when his guru was immersed in contemplation, or, as we should say *dharana*, - the prodigy of quelling a furious tempest or rain, accompanied by awful thunder and lightning, by pronouncing certain mystic verses. Hearing, upon returning to consciousness of external things, what his illustrious pupil had done Govind Natha was overjoyed, as this very event had been foretold to him by Vyasa at a sacrifice celebrated, long before, by the sage Atri. Bestowing his benediction upon Śankara, he made him to go to Holy Benares and receive there the blessing of the Deity.

'On thy glorious work
Then enter, and begin to save mankind'. [12]

Thus admonished, Śankara proceeded to Benares where, after a residence for some time, he is said to have received his first pupil, Sanandana - the same who afterwards became celebrated as his greatest favorite under the title of Padmapada. I confess to a doubt of the accuracy of this date, though I quote the circumstance from Madhav's book, for it does seem impossible that Śankara should have begun to get pupils at such a very tender age as, upon Madhav's own showing, he must have reached at the time. However, be this as it may, Padmapada was duly enrolled as a disciple at Benares, and there most of the others also joined him.

In this twelfth year Śankara removed to Badari, on the banks of the Ganges, where he composed his masterpiece the commentary on the Brahma-Sutras. Here also, he wrote the commentary on the Upanishads, on the Bhagavad Gita, on the Urisimhatapaniya (so called by Madhav), and on the Sanatsujatiya, besides other works. He then taught his great

commentary to his numerous pupils, but always reserving his greatest powers of instruction for Padmapada. This excited envy in the breasts of the other pupils, to dispel which Śankara, once standing on one shore of the river which flowed by his residence called to Padmapada to come over to him directly from the opposite bank. The latter obeyed, and dauntlessly walked over on the surface of the waters, which sent up a lotus at each step he took. It was on this occasion that the name Padmapada was given him by Śankara as he warmly embraced him in recognition of his enthusiastic devotion.

While teaching his pupils the youthful teacher did not fail of adversaries among the learned men who held tenets different to his own, but he always came off victor. He drew, says Madhav, from the arsenal of a vast Vedic learning, the weapons with which to combat his powerful assailants. We are treated to the description of an eight days' debate between himself and Vyasa, who appeared under the guise of an aged Brahman but whose identity was intuitively recognized at least by Padmapada. The biographer tells us that the spirit, in his assumed guise of the living Brahman, propounded a thousand objections to Śankara's great Bhashya on the Brahma-Sutras, which were all triumphantly answered, and in the end, gave to the latter an extension of sixteen years of life over and above the set term of sixteen that he was to have lived, and after binding him undertake a refutation of all other philosophic systems in vogue, blessed him and then disappeared.

After this Śankara set out for Prayaga in search of Bhatta Kumarila, whom he wished to ask to write vartikas on his Bhashya, but found that he was upon the point of self-cremation in disgust with the world. Vainly entreating him to reconsider his determination, Śankara nevertheless was permitted to explain

his commentaries, which Kumarila praised unstintingly; and after the latter had accomplished his act of self-immolation, proceeded on to Mahishmati, the city where as Kumarila had informed him, he would find Mandana Miśra who would undertake the work Śankara had requested him to perform. Arrived at the place, he was directed to the sage's house by parrots miraculously endowed with human speech and able to discuss most recondite questions of philosophy! He found the house but found it closed, so that to obtain entrance he had to raise himself up into the air and alight, a *deus ex machina*, in Mandana's hall. An animated and, at first, even acrimonious discussion ensued between the host and his unexpected and unwelcome guest, the two finally deciding to make the wife of Mandana Miśra umpire between them. But she, having other matters to attend to, gave each a garland, stimulating that he should be deemed vanquished whose garland withered. I will not attempt in such time and space as I now command, to even epitomize this wonderful debate, but refer to Madhav (VIII. 34) for particulars adding that they will richly repay study, Śankara won, and in winning, under the terms of the debate, claimed his antagonist as a disciple and required him to abandon the domestic life and become an ascetic. He consented, and the wife - who was an incarnation of *Sarasvati*, as we are told - started for the other world. But before she had quite departed she was prevailed upon Śankara to tarry while he should hold debate with her also. Then commenced the second discussion, but the ready answer of the former to all questions put to him foiled *Sarasvati*, as she may now be called, until she struck into a path to which Śankara was a total stranger. *She asked him a question of the science of love*. He was, of course, unable to answer it at once, being a Samnyasin and a celibate all his life; so he craved a respite of one month, which being granted, he

left Mahishmati. The sequel will be told in my next paper.

The question of *Sarasvati* as to the true nature of Love must be answered though he were ten times a Yogi or Samnyasin, so Śankara journeyed on to find the means of learning the truth. As he was going out with his pupils, they met the corpse of a certain king named Amaraka (of Amritapura, to the west of Mandana Miśra's city, according to Anandagiri [13] lying at the foot of a tree in the forest surrounded by males and females mourning his death. Taking advantage of the opportunity, Śankara entrusted his own body to the charge of his pupils, and caused his soul to enter the corpse of the king. The supposed resuscitation which followed delighted the people, and king Śankara was taken in triumph from the forest of the death to the throne of royalty.

H.P.B.'s Comment - This incident is too important to pass by without editorial comment. The power of the Yogi to quit his own body and enter and animate that of another person, though affirmed by Patanjali and included among the Siddhis of Krishna, is discredited by Europeanized young Indians. Naturally enough, since, as Western biologists deny a soul to man, it is an unthinkable proposition to them that the Yogi's soul should be able to enter another's body. That such an unreasoning infidelity should prevail among the pupils of European schools, is quite reason enough why an effort should be made to revive in India those schools of Psychology in which the Aryan youth were theoretically and practically taught the occult laws of Man and Nature. We, who, have at least some trifling acquaintance with modern science, do not hesitate to affirm our belief that this temporary transmigration of souls is possible. We may even go so far as to say that the phenomenon has been experimentally proved to us - in New York, among other places.

And, since we would be among the last to require so marvelous statement to be accepted upon any one's unsupported testimony, we urge our readers to first study Aryan literature, and then get from personal experience the corroborative evidence. The result must inevitably be to satisfy every honest enquirer that Patanjali and Śankaracharya did, and Tyndall, Carpenter and Huxley do not, know the secret of our being. -

End of the comment.

There, king Śankara, standing as it were in the shoes of Amaraka, and, indeed Amaraka himself so far as the eye could discern, and passing as such, learned practically all that pertained to the science and art of Love, and fitted himself to answer the query of the cunning wife of Mandana. He also studied the theory of the subject in Vatsyayana, and made progress enough to write an original treatise upon it himself.[14] Meanwhile, however, the ministers of the State, finding their resuscitated raja a far wiser and better man than ever before, suspected that there had been some transmigrations of souls, and so, *to prevent the return of this intruder to his own body, secretly issued an order that all corpses in the city should be burnt: but they took good care that the order should not come to the knowledge of the king.*[15]

In the meantime the pupils of Śankara who had charge of his body, finding that the limit of time fixed by him for his return had already been passed, grew very uneasy. While the others were giving up to their grief, Padmapada suggested a plan which was unanimously adopted, and they started out to discover the whereabouts of their preceptor. The stories of Madhav and Anandagiri do not agree as to this quest of the pupils after their master, the former making them wander from province to province, while the latter tells us that Śankara's body was

deposited in the outskirts of the King's own city. In fact Madhav himself elsewhere describes the circumstances of Śankara's soul not finding the body in the appointed place, then animating it on the funeral pyre, and Śankara's then returning with his pupils to Mandana as a work of but short duration: - but we are interrupting the sequence of our narrative. Padmapada's plan was for them to first discover the whereabouts of their master, and then gaining access to his presence under the disguise of singers, express to him their sorrow at his absence and recall him to his own body and to the prosecution of his labors. Arrived at King Amaraka's city, they heard the story of the preternatural resuscitation, and satisfied that they were on the right tract, carried out their affectionate plot. Their music not only held their audience spell-bound, but reached the inner consciousness of Śankara in his borrowed body. He dismissed the singers, retransferred himself to his own body, and left the empty raja to die once more, and this time effectually. He found his own body already amid the flames but having his armor of proof against fire it was uninjured, and he rejoined his devoted pupils, singing the praises of Nrisemha. Returning to the residence of Mandana, Sarasvati was answered and Mandana Miśra converted to Vedantism.

Traveling southwards, Śankara published his works in Maharashtra, and took up his residence at Srisaila, where a strange proposal was made to him. A Kapalika called on him and besought him to give him his head, which he said he wanted to offer up as a sacrifice as he had been promised by Mahadeva a residence in Kaisala in his human body, if he offered up the head of either a king or an omniscient person. Śankara agreed on condition that the Kapalika should come for it without the knowledge of his pupils, who might interfere. This was done, but before the decapitation could be effected,

Padmapada learnt the thing through his interior consciousness, and assuming the form of a Man-lion fell upon Kapalika, and rent him joint by joint. He had then to be appeased and brought back to himself.

The next miracle attributed to Śankara was the bringing back to life at Gokarna, of a child greatly beloved by its parents. (Madhav xii, 24). To Srivalu - where he got a new pupil in the person of a Hastamalakacarya, a lad supposed to be an idiot, but in fact something very different - and Sringagiri, he then went. At the latter place Mandana Miśra, who had taken the name of Sureshvar (see p. 251. of Anandagiri, whose account leaves it a matter of doubt as to the identity of Mandana with Sureshvar) wrote at Śankara's command an independent treatise on the Brahma, which surprised the other pupils and equally pleased the master.

At this time Śankara learning in some supernatural way of his mother's being at the point of death, hastened to her side, and at her request for spiritual counsel, instructed her, or rather attempted to instruct her, in the formless Brahma. She could not comprehend his teachings, but he tranquilized her until the moment of her dissolution. His relatives refused to aid him in performing the usual funeral ceremonies on the ground that he, being an ascetic, was not competent to perform the offices in question. Hereupon he produced a fire from his right hand, wherewith he burned the corpse. (Madhav 29-56).

H.P.B.'s comment - We must take issue with our distinguished contributor upon this point. We do not believe in "supernatural ways," and we do believe and know that it was not at all difficult for an initiate like Śankara to learn by his interior faculties, of his mother's state. We have seen too many proofs of this faculty to doubt it. - **End of the comment.**

At this time, Padmapada who had been absent on a pilgrimage returned, and told Śankara how a commentary on the Bhashya which he had composed and deposited with his uncle when he went on his pilgrimage, was destroyed by that person as it contained a refutation of the doctrines he held. To the great joy Padmapada, Śankara dictated the whole from memory, as he had once read it himself, and from his dictation Padmapada rewrote it. Rajasekhar, also, who had lost his dramas, had them dictated to him in the same manner.

And now accompanied by his pupils and by king Sudhanvan, Śankara started on his tour of intellectual conquest. The *redargutio philosophiarum*, which Vyasa had suggested to him, and for which his original lease of life had been extended, now commenced. He first directed his steps towards the Setu - the Bridge - then passing through the countries of the Pandyas, the Cholas, and the Dravidas, he went to Kanchi where he erected a temple and established the system of the adoration of Devi. Having then favored with a visit the people called Andhras, and having looked in at the seat of Venkatchalesa, he proceeded to the country of the Vidarbhas. On hearing that Śankara wished to go into the Karnata country, the king of the Vidarbhas warned him of the mischievous character of the people generally, and their envy and hatred of Śankara particularly. Śankara went into that country nevertheless, and the first person of note he came across was a Kapalika named Krakacha, whose exposition of his own doctrines so disgusted all who heard it that Sudhanvan caused him with all his followers to be ignominiously driven away. They went breathing vengeance and returned armed in hundreds. They were however destroyed by king Sudhanvan - all but the first Kápálika Krakácha, who came up to Śankara, and addressed him saying, "Now taste the fruit of thy deeds." He then prayed to Bhairava and as soon as he appeared, asked

him to destroy the destroyer of his followers. But Bhairava killed Krakácha himself, exclaiming, "Dost thou offend even me?"

Onward went Śankara to the Western ocean, and to Gokarna, where he vanquished Nilakantha, a philosopher who thought himself perfectly invincible. Śankara thence went into the Saurashtra country and published his Bhashya there. Then he went to Dvaravati or Dvarka and thence to Ujjayini where he challenged and conquered Bhattabhaskar. Thence he went "conquering and to conquer" into the countries Balhikas, Bharatas, Surasenas, Kurus, Daradas, Panchalas, and so forth. In the country of the Kama-rupás, Śankara encountered and defeated Abhinavagupta, a doctor of the Śakta school. Having however more worldly wisdom than philosophy or love of truth, and finding that he could not compete with Śankara, that personage got his pupils to hide his works for a period, and passed himself off as belonging to Śankara's school, all the while maturing a plot of which the sequel will be presently narrated.

The north thus disposed of, and accepting the respect and veneration of the Videhas, the Kosalas, the Angas and the Bangas, Śankara went into the country of the Gandas. It was then that the nefarious designs of the discomfited doctor of the Śakta School - mentioned in my last - culminated. Śankara suddenly caught the disease, called Bhagandara ["A terrible form of ulcerated sore, or fistula". - H.P.B.] which had been sent upon him by the necromantic spells of Abhinavagupta, who had performed a special sacrifice to accomplish his malicious plot. The greatest physicians attended on Śankara, but in vain. Meanwhile the patient himself behaved stoically or rather vedantically. But at last when the disease could not be cured, he prayed to Mahadeva to send down the Ashvinikumars, who were accordingly sent down disguised as Brahmans. But they

pronounced the disease to be beyond their powers of cure as it was caused by the act of another. On this communication the anger of Padmapada once more came to the relief of the Vedantism of Śankara. For, though dissuaded by Śankara himself, he muttered some mystic incantations which transferred the disease to Abhinavagupta himself who died of it.

H.P.B.'s comment - (Madhav XVI., 22-32.) An important point for the student of occult science is here made and should not be overlooked. The law of physics, that action and reaction tend to equilibrate each other, holds in the realm of the occult. This has been fully explained in "Isis Unveiled" and other works of the kind. A current of Akas, directed by a sorcerer at a given object with an evil intent, must either be propelled by such intensity of will as to break through every obstacle and overpower the resistant will of the selected victim, or it will rebound against the sender, and afflict him or her in the same way as it was intended the other should be hurt. So well is this law understood that it has been preserved to us in many proverbs, such as the English ones, 'Curses come home to roost,' 'The biter's bite,' etc., the Italian one 'La Bestemia gira, e gira e gira, e torna adosso a che la tira,' etc. This reversal of a maleficent current upon the sender may be greatly facilitated by the friendly interference of another person who knows the secret of controlling the Akaśic currents - if it is permissible for us to coin a new word that will soon be wanted in the Western parlance. -

End of the comment.

About this time Śankara heard of a temple in Kashmir, which none but an all-knowing person could open, which had been opened on its northern, eastern and western sides, but which had continued closed till then on its southern site. Śankara

accordingly went up to the temple, but the controversialists there would not allow him to enter before they examined him. He was examined accordingly, and was found, as one may say, not wanting. He then entered, but as he was going to take his seat on the stool within the Goddess of the temple - *Sarasvati* - said, "Your omniscience has been already more than sufficiently proved; but omniscience is not enough to entitle you to take your seat on this stool. Continence is also necessary. Bethink yourself of your acts, and say whether you can claim it under these circumstances." Śankara replied: - "This body is perfectly pure. It cannot be tarnished by the sins of another body." This was, of course, a clincher, and Śankara took his seat on the coveted stool! [16]

He thence went to the hermitage of the Rishyasringa, and, after staying there for sometime, to Badari. There he taught his Bhashya to some persons who were studying in the Patanjali School of philosophy. Thence he proceeded to Kedara - where he prayed to Mahadeva to send down warm water for his benumbed pupils. That was, of course, done; and Madhav says, the river still flows with hot water in that part of the country. [17]

He had now arrived at the close of his thirty-second year, and his term of live being over, all the Gods, and all the Siddhas, and all the Sages, came down in divine vehicles to escort him up to heaven. As soon as Śankara made up his mind, his vehicle appeared to him, and then "with his praises sung by the principal deities, headed by Indra and Upendra, and worshipped with heavenly flowers, supported by the arm of the Lotus-born God, he mounted his excellent Bull, and exhibiting his knots of hair with their ornament, the moon, he started for his own residence, hearing the word 'victory'! uttered by the sages." [18]

This does seem too materialistic and non-vedantic. Anandagiri

has the following account: - "Once in the city of Kanchi, the place of absolution, as he was seated, he absorbed his gross body into the subtle one and became existent; then destroying the subtle one into the body which is the cause (of the world) became 'pure intelligence'; and then (assuming the) size of a thumb, and attaining in the world of the Ísvara full happiness (unbroken) like a perfect circle, he became the intelligence which pervades the whole universe. And he still exists in the form of the all-pervading intelligence. The Brahmans of the place, and his pupils and their pupils reciting the Upanishads, the Gita, and the Brahma-sutras, then excavated a ditch in a very clean spot and offering to his body pigment, rice, etc., raised a tomb over it there." [19]

And here ends the story of the life of Śankaracharya. As I look back over the narrative thus given by me after Madhav, me thinks I hear the genius of nineteenth century skepticism whisper in my ears: - "All this is an absurd fable from first to last; it is the 'tinsel clink of compliment,' to one who a halo of glory surrounds. At the age of two, it is impossible to have learnt what Śankara is said to have learnt; those miracles, which he is reported to have performed, are 'mere and sheer' impossibilities - in a word all Madhav's narrative is fitter for the pages of a romance than of a work professing to be historical." Now though I confess that I do believe there is some force in this argument, I must also confess that I am not prepared to give it as much weight as those, who propound it, seem to claim for it. I am perfectly willing to grant that there is a considerable menstruum or poetry in this narrative: but I am not prepared to say that it is as much as may at first sight appear. Even in the skeptical nineteenth century, we have had accounts of historical personages, given as history, which bear in some points a very striking resemblance to Madhav's account of Śankaracharya. I

shall put forward two very good instances in point, which occur to me at this moment. Dr. Thomas Brown, a man who flourished in this nineteenth century, a man whose life has been written by a prosaic Western not guilty of Oriental hyperboles, is said to have been engaged in the fourth year of his age, in comparing the narratives of the evangelists in order to find out any discrepancies that there might be between them. To appreciate the full force of this example, it must be remembered that this critical spirit was brought to bear upon a work, on which an opinion out of the common rut would be - downright heresy. This circumstance, I may mention, is recorded in the memoir of Dr. Brown, prefixed to his eloquent lectures on the Philosophy of Mind. [20]

Mr. John Morley, the present Editor of the *Fortnightly Review*, has contributed to the pages of that publication a valuable life of Turgot. Here is his deliverance on the precocity of subject of his memoir. "It has been justly said of him that he passed at once from infancy to manhood, and was in the rank of sages before he had shaken off the dust of the playground." [21]

If more authority is necessary for refusing to subscribe to the theory that every statement which appears wonderful, is at once, and by reason of its being wonderful, to be put down as totally false, we have the authority of that prince of philosophic historians, Mr. George Grote. "In separating," says that great authority upon all matters of historic criticism, "between the marvelous and the ordinary, there is no security that we are dividing the fictitious from the real." [22] And not to depend on the *ipse dixit* even of a Grote, I would refer the skeptic to the wonders of science, which are "truths stranger than fiction," which yet we see performed before our eyes.

Before the fact, what would one have thought of the Electric

Telegraph? Before the fact, what was thought of the Railway? I would ask the skeptic to pause here, to consider these matters fully from this point of view, before at once arguing: "these circumstances are wonderful; ergo, they are impossible." They are not of a piece with the common run of occurrences; I am willing to concede also that they may be much exaggerated. But when I am told that they are wholly false, when I am told that no reasonable man can believe them, then I demur. I rather choose to hold myself in suspense.

I had intended in this paper to say something about the works of Śankaracharya, and about some other matters connected with him. But want of time the length to which this paper has already extended, have prevented me from incorporating those necessary portions of a biography into the present paper. I hope, however in another paper to treat of those matters, as leisure and the materials accessible to me will permit.

[1] At the request of Col. Olcott I have permitted the following paper to be published with materials collected by me for a paper read to the Student's Literary and Scientific Society, in 1871. I had intended to rewrite the life of Śankaracharya, with some additions and alterations, but as present pressing engagements do not leave me sufficient leisure for such an effort, I have thought it advisable to consent to my original Essay being utilized by Col. Olcott according to his own discretion. - K.T.T.

[2] See Pandit K.V. Ramaswami's sketches, p.4 and the Map at the end of the book.

[3] Kavicharita, p. 3, line 17.

[4] Ph. 9 and 19. It may be added here that I have grave doubts as to the Śankara Vijaya, published at Calcutta, really a work of Anandagiri, the pupil of Śankara.

[5] Madhavacharya, ll. 3.

[6] P. 226.

[7] Madhav IV. 1-3.

[8] Madhav V.I. Compare Anandagiri p. 11.

[9] Madhav V. 59

[10] Madhav V. 87. None of Madhav's details are to be found in Anandagiri, where we have but two lined in this subject altogether, p, 17.

[11] The originals are: प्रधानं ब्रह्म ॥ अथमात्म्याब्रह्म ॥ तत्परमार्थ ॥ अद्ब्रह्मसिम् ॥

[12] Madhav V. 53-61.

[13] Anandagiri 244.

[14] Madhav X, 18.

[15] Pandit Ramaswami says that the order was issued by the Queen herself, and in this pandit is at one with Anandagiri who also makes the Queen suspect the fact (p.245) and makes no allusion to the ministers.

[16] Madhav XVI.86.

[17] Madhav XVI. 101 According to Anandagiri the prayer for hot water was made to Narayana, p. 235.

[18] Madhav XVI. 107 (5). Anandagiri, p. 280.

[19] *Fortnightly Review*, August 1869.

[20] See, also the *Contemporary Review*, June 1872, Robert Leslie Ellis, Pro. Grote.

[21] *Fortnightly Review*, August 1869.

[22] See, too, the Duke of Somerset's recent book of Christianity and Skepticism, p. 46, and the Duke of Argyll's Reign of Law, *passim*.

Bibliographical Source:

The Theosophist, December 1879, January 1880, May 1880, pp. 203, 204.

Bráhmachári Báwá

[From an English Admirer, comments by H.P.B.]

More than twenty years ago, when the advocates of Christianity were less sensible than they now are that the tenets of their multiform religion were things to be screened from rude criticism, the missionary world was startled by the arrival in Bombay of a Brahman, who did not shrink from applying such criticism. Not then taught the better part of valor, as to the open profession of a knowledge of the unknowable, the missionaries met this rude person on the sea-shore, and there discussed, where the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway Trains now run, the peculiar arithmetic, astounding morals, and queer history, which they were in the habit of propounding as Christianity. There they found that glib assertions of intimate acquaintance with the inmost counsels of the Almighty were easier made than proved; and wider and sadder men, they decided that public discussion of the basis of what they professed as Christian belief, was no longer opportune in Bombay.

From that date all prospects of the conversion of any of the educated classes from Hinduism to any of the forms of Christianity presented to them for acceptance in Bombay, practically came to an end. Missionary enterprise has gathered some harvest here and there among the - from an intellectual point of view - riff-raff of the place; but all the efforts of the many

devoted, and some gifted, missionaries, to attack, or may we say, to comprehend, the trenchments of Vedantic and other Oriental Philosophy have failed.

This result is doubtless due in part to the deadening effect of the materialistic teaching of the West. Every pupil in those longitudes is brought up a practical materialist. He is taught that nothing exists beyond the cognizance of his material senses: the reality of the spirit world is merely taught as a make-believe branch of a doubtful archaeology; and any real belief in its existence is stifled in its birth. How then can the preacher on a materialist plane reach the Vedantic philosopher, to whom the visible, the tangible, and the audible, are the less real entities about him?

But the chief cause of the dead stop put to the Christian propaganda amongst the better instructed classes, was unmistakably the effect produced on his country-men by the Bráhmachári Bává. Some account of his personality will, therefore, interest our readers.

In person Vishnú Pant was a fine example of the more delicate Marátha Brahman type. His head was arched, and the brain highly developed. His figure was elegant and distinguished; and his oratory was set off by the graceful action with which it was accompanied. His delivery was almost too rapid, as he never had to pause for the right idea, and the word to express it. But his great charm was the expression of his face; cheerful contentment, a happy mirthfulness, and regard for others animated his features. It was a remarkable sensation to meet him, draped in the simplest garb, without purse or scrip, and to throw that he took literally no heed for the morrow; in that he depended for his food entirely upon the free gifts of the day. Beyond his gourd and his staff, he owned no "pro-perty." In

Western climes the communistic clauses of Christian obligation are so thoroughly explained away, that a living embodiment of them was sufficiently startling to the European mind. It became bewildering to find that as saints westward "found Jesus," so the Bramacárya had "found Paramátmá." As in the West, his "conversion" in his twentieth year had a specific date. Longer acquaintance with him made evident that the intolerant bigotry which would exclude him from a high place in the hierarchy of moral teachers, would have asked Melchizedek for his certificate of ordination by an Anglican Bishop. His pure and stainless memory is preserved by a small but affection-ate following, but as yet his mantle has fallen upon no one. Perhaps his special work was done, though the search, for which he gave up all, is still to make by each of us for himself. We may not all adopt his conclusions, but his manner of seeking the Truth, his self-sacrifice in its pursuit, and his purity of life, are beacons which all can see, and which convey a definite lesson to every one who will open his eyes to see it.

The following translation has been made for us from the Marathi, by a young Parsi, of **The Bramacárya Bawa's own Account of his life.**

I was born at sunrise on the 5th of Shráván Shuddha, in the year 1746 of Sháliván era, or 1882 of Samvát. My birth-place is the *gaum* Sirvallee, which is at the confluence of two rivers, in the plain, at the foot of the Sayádri range in the *faráti* (subdivision) of Devighát. It is in the Nizampura *pefa* (section) of the Rájápur *taluka* (division), at pre-sent called the Mangaon *taluka*, in the zilla (district) of Thána, Bombay Presidency. I was born in the Chitpávan caste of the Brahmans. My great grand-father's name was Ramchandrapant Gokhle; grand-father's Mahdájee Pant Gokhle; father's Bhicáji Pant Gokhle; mother's Ramábái Pant

Gokhle; and my own name is Vishnu Pant Gokhle. My mother gave birth to eleven children, (six sons and five daughters) of whom I was the tenth. I am called Bramacárya Bâwá because I am a celibate, and also on account of my strict observance of the laws of chastity.

Whatever I learned of reading, writing, the Śastras, and the Vedas, was acquired in the interval between my seventh (the year in which I received the sacred Brahmanical thread) and eighth years. In my ninth year, as by practice my handwriting had considerably improved, I began to work as a candidate in the British Land Revenue Department. After a year and a half of this service - my father had died in my fifth year - I was obliged by my mother to return home and engage in the care of our lands. ***** Having thus worked hard for a period of two years, in the twelfth year of my life I got myself employed in a grain-dealer's shop in the market place of Mabád, a town of Raighud *taluka*, about twenty-four miles from my birth-place. Thus, for a period of two years I worked hard in selling things by weight and measure. There I also sold cloth, changed monies, and kept accounts of bills of exchange and sales, as well as of interest on credit and debit accounts. At this time I became desirous to serve the British Government; but as my master would not let me resign his service, I was obliged to stop there as long as it was agreed upon between us. After that, in the fourteenth year of my life, I sailed from there in a ship to Ratnágiri, and engaged myself as a candidate in the British Customs Revenue Department at the port of Sangameshwar, in the Ratnâ-giri *taluka*. Then I served the British Government for two months as a substitute for an absent clerk, and after that went over to Thána. There I was examined by appointed examiners, and was found eligible for Government service. Immediately after this, between my 15th and 16th years, I

obtained a position in the Customs Department in the Salsette *taluka*, of the Thána Zilla. Thus, for a period of seven years subsequently, I served with great zeal, honesty and independence, in the Sea Customs Revenue Department of Salsette, Bassein, Kal-lyán, Bhinwadee, etc.

During all this time, as from my childhood, I had been in the habit of meditating upon the Vedic religion and my mind always shuddered at even the idea of sin. In my twentieth year I received the first warning of, and was allowed a glimpse into, my futurity, through the divine power manifested under the form of *Sákshátkár*.

Whenever before and after my personal experiences in the seclusion of self-initiation I addressed any of the Brahmans as to *this* truth, I was answered thus! "If you will worship us and learn our mantras and incantations from us, we will disclose to you the truth about the 'Self-existent'." And so, in order to try them, I learned their mantras and did all they bade me do, and then demanded that the true knowledge should be divulged to me. Their answers proved their selfish wickedness, foolishness and often entire ignorance of the subject. Many proved themselves impostors; some used intoxicating liquors; others, again, pursued the sacred knowledge only with the avaricious object of obtaining the secrets of alchemy; others, again, were in search of magic for selfish motives, such as striving to gratify their sensual desires, to obtain filthy lucre by pecuniary gains, and various others as interested motives. All those I have come in contact with I have tried; but most of these men were found by me full of doubt and ignorance, and therefore, unable to teach others. Having thus discovered that most of them were only hunting after fame and selfish ends, and yet dared to brand those, who questioned them as to their learning, "faithless infidels," a great aversion arose in my heart for them and I got

fully convinced that there was little in this world beyond imposture and selfishness. Thenceforth, I took a vow never to approach again such men. And as I had learned from the study of various religious works how to worship, reverence and commune with the only powerful universal Teacher, I then resolved to act accordingly, and betook myself to the jungles of the Saptangi mountains, relying fully on the protection and omniscience of the omnipotent Master (Ishwar).

H.P.B.'s comment - See Bulwer's *Zanoni* - the scene where Zanoni sees and meets with his "Adonai." - **End of comment.**

It was on the 23rd day of the 8th month of the 23rd year of my life, that giving up every worldly tie and possession, save a piece of loin-cloth, I retired to the dreary solitudes of Saptangi and its jungles to meditate in silence upon the mysteries of the universe and try to discover the truth as to the nature of our real inner-self ...

There, in those solitary and deserted places, for a number of days, months and years, I performed the prescribed acts of devotion (self-improvement). And, as the effect of my ardent desire, concentration, and perseverance to learn by personal experience the state of "Self-existence" (i.e., that state in which the astral man, or *kama-rupá* is independent in all its actions of the body), I finally succeeded in seeing and knowing practically the omnipotence of the Lord (the divine I, or Spirit, the *personal* God of every individual.)

H.P.B.'s comment - By Ishwar and Master is not meant the personal God, whom the believers in such God suppose to be the creator of the universe, and outside the universe -

Bramacárya Báwa does not recognize such a god in relation to the universe. His god is Brahma, the eternal and universal essence which pervades everything and everywhere and which in man is the divine essence which is his moral guide, is recognized in the instincts of conscience, makes him aspire to immortality and leads him to it. This divine spirit in man is designated Iswar and corresponds to the name Adonai - Lord, of the Kabalists, i.e., the Lord within man. - **End of comment.**

The Lord did manifest himself to me *in a certain way* which it is not lawful to describe - and revealed to me the various ways of bringing out my own "Self-existent" into action. And it is thus, at last, that I was convinced of the reality of the "Ever-existent." In my case, at least, my only teacher of the one Truth, my *Sat-guru* was the Lord.

H.P.B.'s comment - Known under the generic name of Ishwar, or personal God. - **End of comment.**

Perfectly assured of His power to sustain my life, I lived on the tubers and roots of wild plants and creepers and the water from the springs; going about in a state of entire nudity and inhabiting a solitary cave ... I thought and meditated and practiced perfect abstraction, *dhyana* and *dharana*, and with the help and protection of "My Power" - the Self-existent - I acquired the true knowledge of the Paramátma (the Universal and Highest Soul.)

Sometime later I was ordered by the Master of the universe to spread the true knowledge among mankind; and for this reason I went about from place to place, delivering lectures to the people to dispel their ignorance (*ajnana*).

I have passed my time among various exoteric religious bodies and sects to discover what they possessed of truth. After testing them, I was obliged to give them all up with disappointment. I have seen various kinds of men with (various) good and bad qualities. I have discussed the philosophy of religion, i.e., of truth, with lots of ignorant and presumptuous men, and have made them give up their false beliefs. Standing surrounded by thousands of questioners and inquirers, I could satisfactorily answer questions and problems of any nature, upon the instant. When I rose to lecture to the public, whatever was asked of me by any or all of the audience to solve and clear away their doubts, difficulties, and ignorance, flowed from my mouth as if spontaneously. I possessed this marked faculty through the special favor of Dattātraya, the universal Lord.

H.P.B.'s comments: - In the popular sense, *Dattātraya* is the Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu, and Śiva, incarnate in an *Avatār* - of course as a triple essence the esoteric and true meaning is the adept's own trinity of body, soul, and spirit; the three being all realized by him as real, existent and potential. By Yoga training, the body becomes pure as a crystal casket, the soul purged of all its grossness, and the spirit which, before the beginning of his course of self-purification and development, was to him but a dream, has now become a reality - the man has become a demi-god. - **End of comment.**

In short I could answer in a moment any question asked by anyone at any time. As I have been thus specially endowed by the omnipotent Lord of the universe, Dattātraya, no man can falsify what I say, and thus silence me. Many have satisfied themselves respecting this quality of mine, and whoever comes to me hereafter may be satisfied on the point over and over

again. I fear nothing. Not even the most mortal and fearful dangers and difficulties have the power to produce fear within me. *Whatever I say or speak is based upon my own personal experience, and it always tallies with reason, and the doctrines of the true śāstrās* (books of the religion of truth); therefore no one will ever be able to defeat and refute me on any point whatever. As I have served no one with a dependent and servile spirit, I am not in the habit of flattering any one. Therefore, the flatterers and the flattered, those foolish people who hunt after fame, though they undoubtedly know me to be a man of power, outwardly ridicule me in my absence. They dare not ridicule me in their hearts, for they too well see and know that I am in the possession of occult and unusual powers. While the impartial and independent who burn with the desire of obtaining the knowledge of truth, praise me in exact proportion to their abilities. Nevertheless I would impart such knowledge as I have of the truth with exact impartiality to my haters as well as those who applaud me ... This is my account of myself. Now pass on me whatever remarks you will.

Bibliographical source:

The Theosophist, November 1879, pp. 50-52.

Arya PRAKASH



[The Autobiography of Dayananda Saraswati Svamin with comments by H.P.B. - Written by him expressly for the THEOSOPHIST.]

It was in a Brahman family of the Oudichya caste, in a town belonging to the Rájáh of Morwee, in the province of Kattiawar, that in the year of Samvat, 1881, I, now known as Dayánanda Saraswati, was born. If I have from the first refrained from giving the names of my father and of the town in which my family resides, it is because I have been prevented from doing so by my duty. Had any of my relatives heard again of me, they would have sought me out. And then, once more face to face with them, it would have become incumbent upon me to follow them. I would have to touch money again, serve them, and attend to their wants. And thus the holy work of the Reform to which I have wedded my whole life, would have irretrievably suffered through my forced withdrawal from it.

H.P.B.'s comment - No Svamin or Samnyasin can touch money, or personally transact any monetary business. - **End of comment.**

I was hardly five years of age when I began to study the Devanagari characters, and my parents and all the elders commenced training me in the ways and practices of my caste and family, making me learn by rote the long series of religious hymns, mantras, stanzas and commen-taries. And I was but

eight when I was invested with the sacred Brahmanical cord (triple thread), and taught Gayatri Sandhya with its practices, and Yajurveda Samhita preceded by the study of the Rudradhyaya.

H.P.B.'s comment - Rudradhyaya is a chapter about Rudra (a name of Śiva). - **End of comment**.

As my family belonged to the Śiva sect, their greatest aim was to get me initiated into its religious mysteries; and thus I was early taught to worship the uncouth piece of clay representing Śiva's emblem, known as the Pārthiwa Lingám. But, as there is a good deal of fasting and various hardships connected with this worship, and I had the habit of taking early meals, my mother, fearing for my health, opposed my daily practising it. But my father sternly insisted upon its necessity, and this question finally became a source of everlasting quarrels between them. Meanwhile, I studied the Sanskrit grammar, learned the Vedas by heart, and, accompanied my father to the shrines, temples, and places of Śiva worship. His conversation ran invariably upon one topic: the highest devotion and reverence must be paid to Śiva, his worship being the most divine of all religions. It went on thus till I had reached my fourteenth year, when, having learned by heart the whole of the Yajurveda Samhita, parts of the other Vedas, of the Shabda Rupávali and the grammar, my studies were completed.

As my father's was a banking house and held, more- over, the office - hereditary in my family - of a Jamádár, we were far from being poor, and things, so far, had gone very pleasantly.

H.P.B.'s comment - The office of "Jamádár" answers to that of a town Revenue Collector, combining that of a Magistrate, at the

same time. - **End of comment**.

Wherever there was a Śiva Purán to be read and explained, there my father was sure to take me along with him; and finally, unmindful of my mother's remonstrances, he imperatively demanded that I should begin practising Pārthiwa Puja.

H.P.B.'s comment - Pārthiwa Puja is the ceremony connected with the worship of a línga of clay - the emblem of Siva. - **End of comment**.

When the great day of gloom and fasting - called Sivaratree - had arrived, this day following on the 13th of Vadya of Magh [The eleventh month of the Hindu year. - H.P.B.] my father, regardless of the protest that my strength might fail, commanded me to fast, adding that I had to be initiated on that night into the sacred legend, and participate in that night's long vigil in the temple of Siva.

H.P.B.'s comment - The Vishnavites or worshippers of Vishnu - the greatest enemies of the Sivaites or worshippers of Siva - hold on this day a festival, in derision of their religious opponents. - **End of comment**.

Accordingly, I followed him, along with other young men, who accompanied their parents. This vigil is divided into four parts called praharas, consisting of three hours each. Having completed my task, namely, having sat up for the first two praharas, till the hour of midnight, I remarked that the Pujaris, or temple desservants, and some of the laymen devotees, after having left the inner temple, had fallen asleep outside. Having been taught for years that by sleeping on that particular night,

the worshipper lost all the good effect of his devo-tion, I tried to refrain from drowsiness by bathing my eyes, now and then, with cold water. But my father was less fortunate. Unable to resist fatigue, he was the first to fall asleep, leaving me to watch alone

...
Thoughts upon thoughts crowded upon me, and one question arose after the other in my disturbed mind. Is it possible - I asked myself, - that this semblance of man, the idol of a personal God, that I see bestriding his bull before me, and who, according to all religious accounts, walks about, eats, sleeps, and drinks; who can hold a trident in his hand, beat upon his dumroo (drum), and pronounce curses upon me, - is it possible that he can be the Mahadeva, the great Deity? The same who is invoked as the Lord of Kailasa [A mountain peak of the Himalayas, - where Siva's heaven is believed to be situated. - H.P.B.] the Supreme Being and the divine hero of all the stories we read of him in his Puranas (Scriptures)? Unable to resist such thoughts any longer, I awoke my father, abruptly asking him to enlighten me; to tell me whether this hideous emblem of Siva in the temple was identical with the Mahadeva (great god) of the Scriptures, or something else. "Why do you ask?" said my father. "Because," I answered, "I feel it impossible to reconcile the idea of an Om-nipotent, living God, with this idol, which allows the mice to run over his body and thus suffers his image to be polluted without the slightest protest." Then my father tried to explain to me that this stone represen-tation of the Mahadeva of Kailasa, having been conse-crated by the holy Brahmans, became, in consequence, the god himself; and is worshipped and regarded as such; adding that as Siva cannot be perceived personally in this Kali Yuga - the age of mental darkness, - hence we have the idol in which the Mahadeva of Kailasa is imagined by his votaries; this kind of worship pleasing the great

Deity as much as if, instead of the emblem, he were there himself. But the explanation fell short of satisfying me. I could not, young as I was, help suspecting misinterpretation and sophistry in all this. Feeling faint with hunger and fatigue, I beg-ged to be allowed to go home. My father consented to it, and sent me away with a sepoy, only reiterating once more his command that I should not eat. But when, once home, I had told my mother of my hunger, she fed me with sweetmeats, and I fell into a profound sleep.

In the morning, when my father had returned and learned that I had broken my fast, he felt very angry. He tried to impress me with the enormity of my sin; but do what he could, I could not bring myself to believe that that idol and Mahadeva were one and the same god, and, therefore, could not comprehend why I should be made to fast for, and worship the former. I had, how-ever, to conceal my lack of faith, and bring forward as an excuse for abstaining from regular worship, my ordinary study, which really left me little or rather no time for anything else. In this I was strongly supported by my mother, and even my uncle, who pleaded my cause so well that my father had to yield at last and allow me to devote my whole attention to my studies. In consequence of this, I extended them to "Nighanta;" "Nirukta," "Purvamimansa," and other Sastras, as well as to "Karmakand" or the Ritual.

H.P.B.'s comment - (Nighanta): A medical work. There is a treatise entitled Nighanta in the Vedas. (Nirukta) Another Vedic treatise. (Purvamimansa) First mimansa. - **End of comment**.
There were besides myself in the family two younger sisters and two brothers, the youngest of whom was born when I was already sixteen. On one memorable night, as we were attending a nautch festival at the house of a friend, a servant was

despatched after us from home, with the terrible news that my sister, a girl of fourteen, had been just taken sick with a mortal disease.

H.P.B.'s comment: - (Nautch festival) Singing and dancing by professional women. **End of comment.**

Notwithstanding every medical assistance, my poor sister expired within four ghatkas [HPB: About half hour] after we had returned. It was my first bereavement, and the shock my heart received was great. While friends and relatives were sob-bing and lamenting around me, I stood like one petrified, and plunged in a profound revery. It resulted in a series of long and sad meditations upon the instability of human life. 'Not one of the beings that ever lived in this world could escape the cold hand of death' - I thought; 'I, too, may be snatched away at any time, and die.' Whither, then, shall I turn for an expedient to alleviate this human misery, connected with our death-bed; where shall I find the assurance of, and means of attaining Mukti, the final bliss ...

H.P.B.'s comment: - The Final bliss of a liberated soul; absorption into Brahma. - **End of comment.**

It was there and then, that I came to the determination that I would find it, cost whatever it might, and thus save myself from the untold miseries of the dying moments of an unbeliever. The ultimate result of such meditations was to make, me vio-lently break, and for ever, with mummeries of external mortification and penances, and the more to appreciate the inward efforts of the soul. But I kept my determi-nation secret, and allowed no one to fathom my inner-most thoughts. I was just eighteen then.

Soon after, an uncle, a very learned man and full of divine qualities, - one who had shown for me the greatest tenderness, and whose favorite I had been from my birth, expired also; his death leaving me in a state of utter dejection, and with a still profounder conviction settled in my mind that there was nothing stable in this world, nothing worth living for, or caring for, in a worldly life.

Although I had never allowed my parents to perceive what was the real state of my mind, I yet had been im-prudent enough to confess to some friends how repulsive seemed to me the bare idea of a married life. This was reported to my parents, and they immediately determined that I should be betrothed at once, and the marriage solemnity performed as soon as I should be twenty.

Having discovered this intention, I did my utmost to thwart their plans. I caused my friends to intercede on my behalf, and pleaded my cause so earnestly with my father, that he promised to postpone my betrothal till the end of that year. I then began entreating him to send me to Benares, where I might complete my knowledge of the Sanskrit grammar, and study astronomy and physics until I had attained a full proficiency in these difficult sciences.

H.P.B.'s comment: - Astronomy includes Astrology in India, and it is in Benares that the subtlest of metaphysics and so-called occult sciences are taught. - **End of comment.**

But this once, it was my mother who opposed herself violently to my desire. She declared that I should not go to Benares, as whatever I might feel inclined to study, could be learned at home, as well as abroad; that I knew enough as it was, and had to be married anyhow before the coming year, as young people through an excess of learning were apt to become too liberal and free sometimes in their ideas. I had no better success in

that matter with my father. On the contrary, for no sooner had I reiterated the favor I begged of him, and asked that my betrothal should be postponed until I had returned from Benares, a scholar, proficient in arts and sciences, than my mother declared that in such a case she would not consent even to wait till the end of the year, but would see that my marriage was celebrated immediately. Perceiving at last that my persistence only made things worse, I desisted, and declared myself satisfied with being allowed to pursue my studies at home, provided I was allowed to go to an old friend, a learned pandit who resided about six miles from our town in a village belonging to our Jamadaree. Thither then, with my parent's sanction, I proceeded, and placing myself under his tuition, continued for some time quietly with my study. But while there, I was again forced into a confession of the insurmountable aversion I had for marriage. This went home again. I was summoned back at once, and found upon returning that everything had been prepared for my marriage ceremony. I had entered upon my twenty-first year and had no more excuses to offer. I fully realized now, that I would neither be allowed to pursue any longer my studies, nor would my parents ever make themselves consenting parties to my celibacy. It was then, driven to the last extremity, that I resolved to place an eternal barrier between myself and marriage.

On an evening of the year Samvat 1903, without letting anyone this time into my confidence, I secretly left my home, as I hoped for ever. Passing that first night in the vicinity of a village about eight miles from my home, I arose three hours before dawn, and before night had again set in I had walked over thirty miles; carefully avoiding the public thoroughfare, villages, and localities in which I might have been recognized. These precautions proved useful to me, as on the third day after I had absconded, I

learned from a Government officer that a large party of men, including many horsemen, were diligently roving about in search of a young man from the town of who had fled from his home. I hastened further on, to meet with other adventures. A party of begging Brahmans had kindly relieved me of all the money I had on me, and made me part even with my gold and silver ornaments, rings, bracelets and other jewels, on the plea that the more I gave away in charities, the more my self-denial would benefit me in the afterlife. Thus, having parted with all I had, I hastened on to the place of residence of a learned scholar, a man named Lala Bhagat, of whom I had much heard on my way, from wandering Samnyasins and Bairagees (religious mendicants). He lived in the town of Sayale, where I met with a Bramacarya who advised me to join at once their holy order, which I did ...

After initiating me into his order and conferring upon me the name of Shuddha Chaitanya, he made me exchange my clothes for the dress worn by them - a reddish-yellow garment. From thence, and in this new attire, I proceeded to the small principality of Kouthagangad, situated near Ahmedabad, where, to my misfortune, I met with a Bairagi, the resident of a village in the vicinity of my native town, and well acquainted with my family. His astonishment was as great as my perplexity. Having naturally enquired how I came to be there, and in such an attire, and learned of my desire to travel and see the world, he ridiculed my dress and blamed me for leaving my home for such an object. In my embarrassment he succeeded in getting himself informed of my future intentions. I told him of my desire to join in the Mella of Kartik, held that year at Siddhpore, and that I was on my way to it. Having parted with him, I proceeded immediately to that place, and taking my abode in the temple of Mahadeva at Neelkantha, where Daradi Svamin and others Bramacaryas

already resided. For a time, I enjoyed their society unmolested, visiting a number of learned scholars and professors of divinity who had come to the Mella, and associating with a number of holy men.

H.P.B.'s comment - Mella is a religious gathering, numbering at times hundreds of thousands of pilgrims. - **End of comment.**

Meanwhile, the Bairagi, whom I had met at Kouthagangad had proved treacherous. He had despatched a letter to my family, informing them of my intentions and pointing to my whereabouts. In consequence of this, my father had come down to Siddhpore with his sepoy, traced me step by step in the Mella, learning something of me wherever I had sat among the learned pandits, and finally, one fine morning appeared suddenly before me. His wrath was terrible to behold. He reproached me violently, accusing me of bringing an eternal disgrace upon my family. No sooner had I met his glance though, than knowing well that there would be no use in trying to resist him, I suddenly made up my mind how to act. Falling at his feet with joined hands, and supplicating tones, I entreated him to appease his anger. I had left home through bad advice, I said; I felt miserable, and was just on the point of returning home, when he had providentially arrived; and now I was willing to follow him home again. Notwithstanding such humility, in a fit of rage he tore my yellow robe into shreds, snatched at my tumb? and wresting it violently from my hand flung it far away; pouring upon my head at the same time a volley of bitter reproaches, and going so far as to call me a matricide. Regardless of my promises to follow him, he gave me in the charge of his sepoy, commanding them to watch me night and day, and never leave me out of their sight for a moment ...

H.P.B.'s comment - (Tumba) A vessel to hold water, made of a dried gourd. - **End of comment.**

But my determination was as firm as his own. I was bent on my purpose and closely watched for my opportunity of escaping. I found it on the same night. It was three in the morning, and the sepoy whose turn it was to watch me, believing me asleep, fell asleep in his turn. All was still; and so softly rising and taking along with me a tumba full of water, I crept out, and must have run over a mile before my absence was noticed. On my way, I espied a large tree, whose branches were overhanging the roof of a pagoda; on it I eagerly climbed, and hiding myself among its thick foliage upon the dome, awaited what fate had in store for me. About four in the morning, I heard and saw through the apertures of the dome, the sepoy enquiring after me, and making a diligent search for me inside as well as outside the temple. I held my breath and remained motionless, until finally, believing they were on the wrong track, my pursuers reluctantly retired. Fearing a new encounter, I remained concealed on the dome the whole day, and it was not till darkness had again set in that, alighting, I fled in an opposite direction. More than ever I avoided the public thoroughfares, asking my way of people as rarely as I could, until I had again reached Ahmedabad, from whence I at once proceeded to Baroda. There I settled for sometime; and, at Chetan Math (temple) I held several discourses with Bramhanand and a number of Bramacaryas and Samnyasin upon the Vedanta philosophy. It was Bramhanand and other holy men who established to my entire satisfaction that Brahma, the deity, was no other than my own Self - my Ego. I am Brahma a portion of Brahma: Jiv?(Soul) and Brahma, the deity, being one.

H.P.B.'s comment - This passage is of such importance that the original is here appended for the consideration of the learned. - **End of comment**.

Formerly, while studying Vedanta, I had come to this opinion to a certain extent, but now the important problem was solved, and I have gained the certainty that I am Brahma

At Baroda hearing from a Benares woman that a meeting composed of the most learned scholars was to be held at a certain locality, I repaired thither at once; visiting a personage known as Satchidanand Paramahansa, with whom I was permitted to discuss upon various scientific and metaphysical subjects. From him I learned also that there were a number of great Samnyasins and Bramacaryas who resided at Chanoda, Kanyali. In consequence of this I repaired to that place of sanctity, on the banks of Nurbuda, and there at last met for the first time with real *Diksheets*, or initiated Yogis, and such Samnyasins as Chidashrama and several other Bramacaryas. After some discussion, I was placed under the tuition of one Parmanand Paramhansa, and for several months studied "Vedantasar." "Arya Harimide Totak," Vedant Paribhasha," and other philosophical treatises. During this time, as a Bramacarya I had to prepare my own meals, which proved a great impediment to my studies. To get rid of it, I therefore concluded to enter, if possible into the 4th Order of the Samnyasins.

H.P.B.'s comment - (Samnyasins). Samnyas. There are different conditions and orders prescribed in the Sastras.

- (1) *Bramacarya* - one who leads simply a life of celibacy, maintaining himself by begging while prosecuting his studies;
- (2) *Gruhashtasrama* - one who leads a married but a holy life;

(3) *Vanaprastha* - who lives the life of a hermit;

(4) *Samnyas* or *Chaturthashrama*. This is the highest of the four; in which the members of either of the other three may enter, the necessary conditions for it being the renunciation of all worldly considerations. Following are the four different successive stages of this life:

(a) *Kuteechaka* - Living in a hut, or in a desolate place and wearing a red-ochre colored garment, carrying a three-knotted bamboo rod, and wearing the hair in the centre of the crown of the head, having the sacred thread, and devoting oneself to the contemplation of *Para-Brahman*;

(b) *Bahudaka* - one who lives quite apart from his family and the world, maintains himself on alms collected at seven houses, and wears the same kind of reddish garment;

(c) *Hansa* - the same as in the preceding case, except the carrying of only a one-knotted bamboo;

(d) *Paramahansa* - the same as the others; but the ascetic wears the sacred thread, and his hair and beard are quite long. This is the highest of all these orders. A Paramahansa who shows himself worthy is on the very threshold of becoming a *Diksheet*. - **End of comment**.

Fearing, moreover, to be known under my own name, on account of my family's pride, and well aware that once received in this order I was safe, I begged Dekkani pandit, a friend of mine, to intercede on my behalf with a Diksheets - the most learned among them, that I might be initiated into that order at once. He refused, however, point-blank to initiate me, urging my extreme youth. But I did not despair. Several months later, two holy men, a Svamin and a Bramacarya came from the Dekkan, and took up their abode in a solitary, ruined building, in the midst of a jungle,

near Chanoda, and about two miles distant from us. Profoundly versed in the Vedanta philosophy, my friend, the Dekkany Pandit, went to visit them, taking me along with him. A metaphysical discussion following, brought them to recognize in each other Diksheets of a vast learning. They informed us that they had arrived from "Shrungiree Math," the principal convent of Sankaracharya, in the South, and were on their way to Dwarka. To one of them Purnanand Saraswati - I got my Dekkani friend to recommend me particularly, and state at the same time the object I was so desirous to attain and my difficulties. He told him that I was a young Bramacharya, who was desirous to pursue his study in metaphysics unimpeded; that I was quite free from any vice or bad habits, for which fact he vouchsafed; and that, therefore, he believed me worthy of being accepted in this highest probationary degree, and initiated into the 4th Order of the Samnyasins; adding that thus I might be materially helped to free myself from all worldly obligations, and proceed untrammelled in the course of my metaphysical studies. But this Svamin also declined at first.

I was too young he said. Besides, he was himself a Maharashtra, and so he advised me to appeal to Gujarathi Svamin. It was only when fervently urged on by my friend, who reminded him that Dekkani Samnyasins can initiate even *Gowdas*, and that there could exist no such objection in my case, as I had been already accepted and was one of the five *Dravids* that he consented. And, on the third day following, he consecrated me into the Order, delivering unto me a *Dand*, and naming me Dayanund Saraswati. By the order of my initiator through, and my proper desire, I had to lay aside the emblematical bamboo - the *Dand*, renouncing it for while, as the ceremonial performances connected with it would only interfere with and impede the progress of my studies ...

H.P.B.'s comment - [*Dand*]. The three and seven-knotted bamboo of Samnyasins given to them as a sign of power, after their initiation. - **End of comment**.

After the ceremony of initiation was over, they left us and proceeded to Dwarka. For sometime, I lived at Chanoda Kanyali as a simple Samnyasin. But, upon hearing that at Vyasashram there lived a Svamin whom they called *Yoganund*, a man thoroughly versed in Yog, to him I addressed myself as an humble student, and began learning from him the theory as well as some of the practical modes of the science of Yog (or *Yoga Vidya*).

H.P.B.'s comment - (*Yog*) A religious "magician," practically. One who can embrace the past and the future in one *present*; a man who has reached the most perfect state of clairvoyance, and has a thorough knowledge of what is now known as mesmerism, and the occult properties of nature, which sciences help the student to perform the greatest phenomena; such phenomena must not be confounded with *miracles*, which are an absurdity. - **End of comment**.

When my preliminary tuition was completed, I proceeded to Chhinour, as on the outskirts of this town lived Krishna Shastree, under whose guidance I perfected myself in the Sanskrit grammar, and again returned to Chanoda, where I remained for some time longer. Meeting there two Yogis - Jwalanand Pooree and Shiwanand Giree, I practiced Yoga with them, also and we all three held together many a dissertation upon the exalted Science of Yoga; until finally, by their advice, a month after their departure, I went to meet them in the temple of Doodheshwar, near Ahmedabad, at which place they had promised to impart to me the final secrets and modes of

attaining Yoga Vidya. They kept their promise, and it is to them that I am indebted for the acquirement of the practical portion of that great science. Still later, it was divulged to me that there were many far higher and more learned Yogis than those I had hitherto met - yet still not the highest - who resided on the peaks of the mountain of Aboo, in Rajputana. Thither, then, I travelled again, to visit such noted places of sanctity as the *Arvada Bhawanee* and others; encountering, at last, those whom I so eagerly sought for, on the peak of Bhawanee Giree, and learning from them various other system and modes of Yoga. It was in the year of Samvat 1911 that I first joined in the Kumbha Mella at Hardwar, where so many sages and divine philosophers meet, often unperceived, together. So long as the Mella congregation of pilgrims lasted, I kept practicing that science in the solitude of the jungle of Chandee; and after the pilgrims had separated, I transferred myself to Rhusheekesk where sometimes in the company of good and pure Yogis and Samnyasins, oftener alone, I continued in the study and practice of Yoga.

H.P.B.'s comment - One may be a Yogi, and yet not a Diksheet, i.e., not have received his final initiation into the mysteries of Yoga Vidya. - **End of comment**.

After passing a certain time in solitude, on the Rusheekesh, a Bramacarya and two mountain ascetics joined me, and we all three went to Tidee. The place was full of ascetics and Raj (Royal) Pandits - so called on account of their great learning. One of them invited me to come and have dinner with him at his house. At the appointed hour he sent a man to conduct me safely to his place, and both the Bramacarya and myself followed the messenger. But what was our dismay upon entering the house, to first see a Brahman preparing and cutting

meat, and then, proceeding further into the interior apartments, to find a large company of pandits seated with a pyramid of flesh, rumpsteaks, and dressed-up heads of animals before them! The master of the house cordially invited me in; but, with a few brief words - begging them to proceed with their good work and not to disturb themselves on my account, I left the house and returned to my own quarters. A few minutes later, the beef-eating Pandit was at my side, praying me to return, and trying to excuse himself by saying that it was on my account that the sumptuous viands had been prepared! I then firmly declared to him that it was all useless. They were carnivorous, flesh-eating men, and myself a strict vegetarian, who felt sickened at the very sight of meat. If he would insist upon providing me with food, he might do so by sending me a few provisions of grain and vegetables which my Bramacarya would prepare for me. This he promised to do, and then, very much confused, retired.

Staying at Tidee for some time, I inquired of the same Pandit about some books and learned treatises I wanted to get for my instruction; what books and manuscripts could be procured at that place, and where. He mentioned some works on Sanskrit grammar, classics, lexicographies, books on astrology, and the Tantras - or ritualistics. Finding that the latter were the only ones unknown to me, I asked him to procure the same for me. Thereupon the learned man brought to me several works upon this subject. But no sooner had I opened them, than my eye fell upon such an amount of incredible obscenities, mistranslations, misinterpretations of text and absurdity, that I felt perfectly horrified. In this Ritual I found that incest was permitted with mothers, daughters, and sisters (of the Shoemaker's caste), as well as among the Pariahs or the outcastes, - and worship was performed in a perfectly nude state ... Spirituous liquors, fish,

and all kind of animal food, and Mudra (exhibition of indecent images) ... were allowed, from Brahman down to Mang.

H.P.B.'s comment - For reasons which will be appreciated we prefer giving the text in Hindi: -

The word Mudra has been variously understood and interpreted. It means the signet of a royal as well as of a religious personage; a ring seal with initials engraved upon it. But it is also understood in another sense - the pristine and esoteric.

Bhoochurri, Chachurri, Khechari, Churachari, and Agochuri - these five were the Mudras practiced by the Aryas to qualify themselves for Yoga. They are the initiative stages to the difficult system of Raja-Yoga, and the preliminaries of *Dhotipoti*, the early discipline of HATHA-YOGA. The *Mudra* is a quite distinct and independent course of Yoga training, the completion of which helps the candidate to attain *Anima, Laghima* and *Gariman*. (For the meaning of these *Siddhis*, see article on Yoga-Vidya in the Nov. number of THEOSOPHIST.) The sense of this holy word once perverted, the ignorant Brahmins debased it to imply the pictorial representation of the emblems of their deities, and to signify the marks of those sexual emblems daubed upon their bodies with *Gopichand* made of the whitish clay of rivers held sacred. The Vaishnavas debase the mark and the word less than the *Shaivas*; but the *Saktas* by applying it to the obscene gestures and the indecent exposures of their filthy Ritual, have entirely degraded its Aryan meaning. -

End of comment.

And it was explicitly stated that all those five things of which the name commences with the nasal, *m* as for instance *Madya* (intoxicating liquor); *Meen* (fish); *Maons* (flesh); *Mudra* ? and

Maithoon ... were so many means for reaching *Muktee* (salvation)!

H.P.B.'s comment - The following are the five nasals in Sanskrit:

- (1) (nga);
- (2) (yna);
- (3) (nna);
- (4) (na);
- (5) (ma.) - **End of comment.**

By actually reading the whole contents of the *Tantras* I fully assured myself of the craft and viciousness of the authors of this disgusting literature which is regarded as RELIGIOUS! I left the place and went to Shreenagar ...

Taking up my quarters at a temple, on Kedar ghat, I used these Tantras as weapons against the local pundits, whenever there was an opportunity for discussion. While there, I became acquainted with a Sadhu named Ganga Giri, who by day never left his mountain where he resided in a jungle. Our acquaintance resulted in friendship as I soon learned how entirely worthy he was of respect. While together, we discussed Yoga and other sacred subjects, and through close questioning and answering became fully and mutually satisfied that we were fit for each other. So attractive was his society for me that I stayed over two months with him. It was only at the expiration of this time, and when autumn was setting in, that I, with my companions, the Bramacharya and the two ascetics, left Keda Ghat for other places. We visited Rudra Prayag and other cities until we reached the shrine of Agasta Muneo ... Further to the North,

there is a mountain peak known as the Shivpooree (town of Siva) where I spent the four months of the cold season; when, finally parting from the Bramacarya and the two ascetics, I proceeded back to Kedar, this time alone and unimpeded in my intentions, and reached Gupta-Kashee (the secret Benares) ...

H.P.B.'S comment - Gupta-Kashee - *Gupta*, secret, hidden; *Kashee*, the ancient name of Benares - is a holy place enshrouded in mystery. It is about 50 miles from Badrinath. Outwardly there is seen only a temple with columns; but a firm belief prevails among pilgrims to the effect that this shrine only serves as a landmark to indicate the locality of the sacred hidden Benares - a whole city, in fact, underground. This holy place, they believe, will be revealed at the proper time, to the world. The *Mahatmas* alone can now reach it, and some inhabit it. A learned Svamin friend, and a native of Badrinath, highly respected at Bombay, has just told us that there is a prophecy that in twenty-five years from this time Benares will begin to decline in every other respect as it has long done in holiness, and, owing to the wickedness of men, will finally fall. Then, the mystery of Gupta-Kashee will be disclosed and the truth begin to dawn upon men. Svamin P - solemnly avers that, having often visited this very shrine, he has several times observed, with his own eyes, as it were, shadowy forms disappearing at the entrance - as though half visible men, or the wraiths of men were entering. **End of comment.**

I stayed but few days there, and went thence to the *Triyugee* [Three Yugas, or the three Epochs. - H.P.B.] Narayan shrine, visiting on my way Gowree Koond tank, and the cave Bheemgoopha. Returning in a few days to Kedar, my favorite place of residence, I there finally rested, a number of ascetic

Brahman worshipers - called Pandas and the devotees of the temple of Kedar of the Jangam sect, - keeping me company until my previous companions, the Bramacarya, with his two ascetics, returned. I closely watched their ceremonies and songs, and observed all that was going on with a determined object of learning all that was to be known about these sects. But once that my object was fulfilled I felt a strong desire to visit the surrounding mountains, with their eternal ice glaciers, in quest of those true ascetics I have heard of but as yet had never met - the *Mahatmas* - I was determined, come what might, to ascertain whether some of them did or did not live there as rumored.

H.P.B.'s comment - The Mahatmas, or literally great souls, from two words - *Maha*, great, and *atman*, soul - are those mysterious adepts whom the popular fancy views as "magicians," and of whom every child knows in India, but who are met with so rarely, especially in this age of degeneration. With the exception of some Svamins and ascetics of a perfectly holy life, there are few who know positively that they do exist, and are no myths created by superstitious fancy. It will be given, perhaps, to Svamin Dayananda, the great and holy man, to disabuse the skeptical minds of his degenerating countrymen; especially of this young decorated generation, the *Jeunesse Dorée* of India, the LL.B., and M.A. aristocracy - who, fed upon Western materialism, and inspired by the cold negation of the age, despise the traditions, as well as the religion of their forefathers, calling all that was held sacred by the latter, a "rotten superstition." Alas! They hardly remark themselves that from idolatry they have fallen into *fetichism*. They have but changed their idols for poorer ones, and remain the same. - **End of comment.**

But the tremendous difficulties of this mountainous journey and the excessive cold forced me, unhappily, to first make inquiries among the hill tribes and learn what they knew of such men. Everywhere I encountered either a profound ignorance upon the subject or a ridiculous superstitions. Having wandered in vain for about twenty days, disheartened, I retraced my steps, as lonely as before, my companions who had at first accompanied me, having left me, two days after we had started, through dread of the great cold. I then ascended the Tunganath Peak.

H.P.B.'s comment - At Badrinath (Northern India), on the right bank of the Bishanganga, where the celebrated temple of Vishnu, with hot mineral springs in it, annually attracts numerous pilgrims, there is a strange tradition among the inhabitants. They believe that holy Mahatmas (anchorites) have lived the inaccessible mountain peaks, in caves of the greatest beauty for several thousand years. Their residence is approachable only through a cavern perpetually choked with snow, which forbids the approach of the curious and the skeptical. The Badrinath peaks in this neighborhood are above 22,000 feet high.

Since the above was written one of our most respected and learned Fellows has informed us that his *Guru* (Preceptor) told him that while stopping at the temple of Narayan, on the Himalayas, where he had passed some months, he saw therein a copper plate bearing date, with an inscription, said to have been made by Sankaracharya, that temple was the extreme limit where one should go in ascending the Himalayas. The *Guru* also said that farther up the heights, and beyond apparently insurmountable walls of snow and ice, he several times saw men of a most venerable appearance, such as the Aryan Rishis are represented, wearing hair so long as to hang below their waist. There is reason to know that he saw correctly, and that the current belief is not without foundation that the place is

inhabited by adepts and *no one* who is *not* an adept *will ever* succeed in getting an entrance. - **End of comment.**

There, I found a temple full of idols and officiating priests, and hastened to descend the peak on the same day. Before me were two paths, one leading West and the other South-west. I chose at random that which led towards the jungle, and ascended it. Soon after the path led me into a dense jungle, with rugged rocks and dried-up waterless brook. The path stopped abruptly there. Seeing myself thus arrested, I had to make my choice to either climb up still higher, or descend. Reflecting what height there was to the summit, the tremendous difficulties of climbing that rough and steep hill, and that the night would come before I could ascend it, I concluded that to reach the summit that night was an impossibility. With much difficult, however, catching at the grass and the bushes, I succeeded in attaining the higher bank of the Nala (the dry brook), and standing on a rock surveyed the environs. I saw nothing but tormented hillocks, highland, and a dense pathless jungle covering the whole, where no man could pass. Meanwhile the sun was rapidly descending towards the horizon. Darkness would soon set in and then - without water or any means for kindling a fire, what would be my position in the dreary solitude of that jungle!

By dint of tremendous exertion, though, and after an acute suffering from thorns, which tore my clothes to shreds, wounded my whole body, and lamed my feet, I managed to cross the jungle, and at last reached the foot of the hill and found myself on the high-way. All was darkness around and over me, and I had to pick my way at random, trying only to keep to the road. Finally I reached a cluster of huts and learning from the people that that road led to Okhee Math, I directed my steps towards that place, and passed the night there. In the morning,

feeling sufficiently rested I returned to the Gupta-Kashee (the Secret Benares), from whence I had started on my Northward journey. But that journey attracted me, and soon again I repaired to Okhee Math, under the pretext of examining that hermitage and observing the way of living of its inmates. There I had time to examine at leisure, the ado of that famous and rich monastery, so full of pious pretenses and a show of asceticism. The high priest (or Chief Hermit), called *Mahant*, tried hard to induce me to remain live there with him, becoming his disciple.

He even held me before me the prospect, which he thought quite dazzling, of inheriting someday his lacs of rupees, his splendor and power and finally succeeding him in his *Mahantship*, or supreme rank. I frankly answered him that have I had ever craved any such riches or glory, I would not have secretly left the house of my father, which was not less sumptuous or attractive than his monastery, with all its riches. - "The object, which induced me to do away with all these worldly blessings," I added, "I find you neither strive for, nor possess the knowledge of." He then enquired what was that object for which I so strived. "That object," I answered "is the secret knowledge, the Vidya, or true erudition of a *genuine* Yogi; the Mooktee, which is reached only by the purity of one's soul, and *certain attainments* unattainable without it. Meanwhile, the performance of all the duties of man towards his fellowmen, and the elevation of humanity thereby."

The *Mahant* remarked that it was very good, and asked me to remain with him for sometime at least. But I kept silent and returned no reply" I had not yet found what I sought. Rising on the following morning very early I left this rich dwelling and went to Joshee Math. There, in the company of Dakshanee, or

Maháráshtra Shástrees and Samnyasins, the true ascetics of the 4th Order - I rested for while.

Bibliographical source:

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The Bright Spot of Light

[Letter to the Editor of the magazine the *Theosophist*, comments by H.P.B.]

Madame, - In the last issue of your valuable Journal, a member of the New York Theosophical Society seeks to en enlightened as to the cause of a bright spot of light which he has often seen. I am also equally curious to have an explanation. I attribute it to the highest *concentration* of the soul. As soon as I place myself in *that* prescribed attitude, suddenly a bright spot appears before me which fills my heart with delight, - indeed, that being regarded as a special sign by the Indian devotee that he is in the right path, leading to the ultimate success in the Yoga practice - that he is blessed by the special grace of the Almighty.

One evening, sitting on the ground cross-legged, in that state of innate concentration when the soul soars into the high regions, I was blessed with a shower of flowers - a most brilliant sight, and which I long to see again. I moved to catch at flowers so rare, but they eluded my grasp and suddenly disappeared, leaving me much disappointed. Finally two flowers fell on me, one touching my head and the other my right shoulder but this time also the attempt to seize them was unsuccessful. What can it be, if not a response that God has been pleased with his worshiper meditation being, I believe the unique way of spiritual worship.

September 18, 1881.
P.



H.P.B.'s comment - It depends. Those of our orthodox native contributors, who worship some particular God, - or, if they so prefer, the one ISWAR under some particular name - are too apt to attribute every psychological effect brought on by mental concentration during the hours of religious meditation to their special deity, whereas, in 99 cases out of 100, such effects are due simply to purely *psycho-physiological* effects. We know a number of mystically inclined people who see such "lights," as that as soon as they concentrate their thoughts. Spiritualists attribute them to the agency of their departed friends; Buddhists - who have no personal God - to a *pre-nirvanic* state; pantheists and Vedantins to *Maya* - illusion of senses; and Christians - to a foresight of the glories of Paradise. The modern Occultists say that, when not directly due to cerebral action whose normal functions are certainly impeded by such an artificial mode of deep concentration - these lights are glimpses of the Astral Light, or, to use a more *scientific* expression - of the "Universal Ether" firmly believed in by more than one man of science, as proved by Mr. Balfour Stewart's *Un-seen Universe*. Like the pure blue sky closely shrouded by thick vapors on a misty day - is the Astral Light concealed from our physical senses, during the hours of our normal, daily life. But when concentrating all our spiritual faculties, we succeed, for the time being, to paralyze their enemy - physical senses, and the inner man becomes, so to say, distinct from the man of matter, then, the action of ever-living spirit, like a breeze that clears the sky from its obstructing clouds - sweeps away the mist which lies between our normal vision and the Astral Light, and, we obtain glimpses into, and of, that light.

The days of "smoking furnaces" and "burning lamps" which form part of the Biblical visions are well gone by and - to return no more. But, whosoever, refusing natural explanations, prefers

supernatural ones, is, of course, at liberty to imagine that an "Almighty God" amuses us with visions of flowers, and sends burning lights before making "covenants" with his worshippers.

Bibliographical Source:

The Theosophist, November 1881, pp. 45-46.

Stone-Showers



[A letter from A. J. RIKO, comments by H.P.B.]

H.P.B.'s introduction: Following is an interesting letter which we translate from the French "Revue Spirite," of March last. It is addressed to that journal by M. A. J. Riko, of the Hague, Holland, a well known gentleman of great education, whose name is fami-liar to many people in London and Paris, M. Riko is an esteemed correspondent of ours, and we believe his personal experience in various phenomena has been great. - **End of introduction.**

The stone shower is a remarkable phenomenon which takes place at uncertain intervals in every country, and under every climate. It is frequent in the East.

An official Report coming from Dutch East Indies, and dated 1831, states that one Van Kessinger, then residing at Reanger, had in his own house, situated in Sumadon a veritable rain of stones throughout a period of sixteen days.

H.P.B.'s comment: - Sumarang? The name given must be a misprint. We can find no such place as "Sumadan" on the maps. But there is a province on the north const of Java and the capital of the former, both called Sumarang; the city being about 250 miles from Batavio. - **End of comment.**

The Governor-General ad interim, M. J. C. Baud, ordered an inquest, and a report was made to which, among other signatures, was appended that of Major-General W. Michiels, (then Lieutenant-Colonel), a man of a positive mind, known for his stern probity, and who would never allow himself to be duped. Remaining shut up in a room, near a little girl who seemed to attract the stones, this man recorded their continuous falling near the child whom they never even grazed. His verbatim report will be found further on.

From most reliable information this is what happened. Belief in phenomena produced by spirits is widely spread in the Malay Archipelago, and the natives call them Gendarola. In the house of a gentleman named Van Kessinger lived a child, the cook's daughter, who kept constantly near her father. On February, the 3rd 1831, the little girl approached Madame Van Kessinger and drew her attention to her Kabaai (white native apron) on which there were numerous red spots of Sirs. The lady believing the spots were due to a trick of other servants, had the child put on a clean Kabaai, but in a few seconds the same spots appeared on it. At the same time, stones of about the size of an egg kept falling perpendicularly, seemingly from nowhere, at the lady's feet. Extremely frightened, she sent immediately a message to the Regent, Radeen Adi, a man of great probity who became convinced of the reality of the phenomena, but who, notwithstanding all his precautions, and the help of an armed force, was unable to fathom the mystery of the red spots and the cause of the stone-falling.

H.P.B.'s comments: - We believe the Resident is here meant. Each of the twenty provinces of Java, called Residencies, is governed by an official - often a native - whose title is that of Resident. Or, perhaps, the word Regent is a translation of that

of Raden, as the petty Javanese chieftains are called in Java "Radens". - **End of the comment.**

An Indian priest attempted to exorcise the "spirit." Placing a lamp on the matting, he had hardly squatted himself on it, when upon opening his Kuran he received a box on the ears, and both lamp and Kuran violently flew in opposite directions. As no hand was visible the priest remained very much perplexed. Madame Van Kessinger having determined to pass the night with the child in the Regent's house, the rain of stones began pouring there harder than ever. The bare presence of the child seemed sufficient to bring it on.

H.P.B.'s comments: - In religion the Javanese are Mahomedans, which faith was established by Arab conquerors in the fifteenth century, and has almost entirely destroyed Brahmanism and Buddhism, the ancient religions of the country. It was the Hindus who finding themselves in Java as conquerors and settlers, founded kingdoms on the island and converted the natives to Brahmanism. They can be traced back to the sixth century of our era, but were there far earlier, according to native legends and traditions. Long before the sixth century, the Javanese had acquired a considerable degree of civilization, their ample literature and language (three-fourths of it being Sanskrit and the rest Malabaric) proving that they got it from India. - **End of the comment.**

The event having spread abroad and produced a commotion, Colonel Michiels was then officially ordered to investigate the facts, and, if possible, to find out the truth. Causing the house to be cleared of all its inmates, he placed a policeman in every tree around the building; he had the walls and ceiling of the room covered, tent like, with white canvass; but, notwithstanding all

such precautions, he found that when alone with the little girl, the red spots appeared without any visible cause upon the white linen walls, and that stones, hot and wet, were falling by fives and sixes at very short intervals, becoming visible to the eye that followed them only at a height of five or six feet from the ground. He also saw a fruit called papaya plucked by an invisible hand from a neighboring tree of that name, and at a great height; the sap running down the trunk from the wound made in it by the violent tearing away of the fruit.

H.P.B.'s comment - The Papaw in Malay - papaya. The fruit, of the size of a melon, grows like that of the "Jack-fruit" tree in Ceylon and India, at a considerable height, and in a -duster just at the root of the leaves. The stem being soft and herbaceous, if the fruit is violently torn out instead of being cut off, it leaves a regular wound on the trunk. - **End of comment**.

Sometimes, chairs and glasses were seen moved by an invisible force, and the imprint of a hand was found on the glass of the mirrors. Colonel Michiels, after many days of investigation, made a report of the same which is now in the archives. The Government offered considerable sums to any person who would discover the cause of that mystery, but all its efforts proved useless. The report runs as follows: -

To His Excellency the Acting Governor-General of the Dutch East, Indies.

On February 4, 1831, on the first tiny of the Javanese month Nal s Poéassa, as I was returning from an inspection tour, I saw a group of persons assembled around my house. My wife affirmed to me that stones thrown by an invisible power were falling into our room and into the interior gallery. Believing it at first either a hallucination on their part or some wicked trick, I got angry.

Entering the house I placed myself in the middle of the gallery and saw at once stones falling perpendicularly, passing, so to say, through the ceiling, the boards and rafters of which are closely and solidly fixed and united, and do not show the smallest crevice. This proved to me that the stones came there from no human hands.

Gathering all the persons of my house and the inmates of the neighboring abodes together, and placing them under the watch and in charge of the police, on an esplanade open from the four sides, I then shut myself up with closed windows and doors in my house, alone with my wife. The stones poured in still from all sides, until - the phenomenon being well proved to us - we were finally compelled to re-open doors and windows. These stones - some of which weighed nine pounds - were thrown in to the number of one thousand a day, and for a period of sixteen days. My house is built of djali wood, very dry and solid; the windows being furnished with a close, wooden lattice, the square openings of which are two inches in diameter. The stone-rain began daily at 5 o'clock a.m., and stopped at 11 p.m., offering that strange peculiarity that it seemed to acquire additional violence in the presence of a little Javanese girl whom it pursued.

I close the report, which outside the simple statement of facts would become too voluminous, but to corroborate which I here give the names of well-known and respectable persons who were all witnesses to the phenomenon, and are ready to verify it under oath should the Government require them to do so.

(Signed.)

W. Michiels, Lieut.-Colonel, Aid-de-Camp,
Ermalinger, late Inspector of Coffee Plantations.

V. Kessinger;

J. Van Simiten; etc. etc.

This document is at present in the Royal archives of Holland.

Promoted, General Mr. Michiels spoke rarely of the above experience. In 1877, at an official dinner, when asked to repeat his story, he consented to do so. General Van Gagern having laughed at him, a violent quarrel was the result, and the row ended by Van Gagern offering his excuses and taking back his imprudent and flippant remarks.

Following are facts of the same kind.

In the southern part of Soehapoera(?) near the place of the same name, lived in 1834, a family named Teisseire. The husband was a Frenchman and inspector of a Government indigo manufacturing store. The family was generally liked. In that year, while they were at dinner a shower of stones came upon the table, and the same was repeated for a fortnight in every room of the house; the stones being sometimes replaced by buffalo bones, and once by a whole head of that animal. Once M. Teisseire being out, seated in a chariot dragged by buffaloes, he found himself stoned with pieces of dry earth. As at Sumadan (Samarang?) not ? creature was near, the stones falling perpendicularly, and never hurting or even touch-ing any one.

H.P.B.'s comment - Unless the blame for the incorrect rendering of the names of these localities is to be laid at the door of the printers we have to beg M. Riko's pardon for the liberty we take in correcting them. The cases related by him are most incredible for the general reader, though, having witnessed far more extraordinary phenomena personally, we believe in them tho-roughly. But the *THEOSOPHIST* is sent throughout the world. Some persons might read this account in Java, or, finding themselves there, desire to ascer-tain how far the statements

are true. It is absolutely necessary that in every case the names of the localities, where the phenomena took place, and their geographical position, should be rendered as carefully as possible. The Theosophists and Spiritualists, have too many enemies to allow the latter triumphs which might be easily avoided by exercising some little care. And neither of us - Spiritists or Theosophists - can be too careful. - **End of comment.**

The Regent of Soehapoera (?), before he had personally investigated the above-given phenomenon, desiring to pass one night at the house of M. Teisseire, went to bed. As soon as he lay down, the bed was vigorously shaken and finally lifted up entirely from the floor, in the presence of his son and several servants, and under the full glare of several lamps. In this case what is most remarkable is, that after having marked the stones with a cross or some other sign, they were thrown into the torrent of Tjilan-dooq which passed near the house at a depth of 150 feet; and, in less than a minute, these marked stones were thrown back out of the water, all wet, but bearing the signs that identified them.

The resident Ament tells of a similar case. Finding himself on Government service on a tour in the district of Breanger where he was serving as inspector of coffee plantations, he learned that at Bandung, there was a gendarola (spirit) then appearing in a small house. He determined to learn the truth about the matter. The haunted cottage was situate opposite the house of the Assistant Resident of Bandung, one Nagel, and was oc-cupied by an old woman, a native from the Sunda islands.

H.P.B.'s comment - Prianger or Prayangan must be the correct name. Bandung is one of the eleven districts which

constitute the Prayangan or Prianger regency, in the island of Java, of which it is one of the loveliest and most picturesque places. - **End of comment.**

M. Ament, accompanied by the Assistant Resident and the Regent, placed the small building under the watch of the police, inside as well as outside. The old lady was invited to remain outside, and when all was ready the investigators proceeded to the haunted abode by the only road leading to it - a narrow path which brought the visitors to the very door. There was but a single room in the hut. The Sundanese woman led the way, being followed closely by M. Ament, the Assistant Resident, and lastly by the Regent and his suite. On the threshold the Sundanese was caught by invisible hands by her legs, suddenly upset, and dragged around the room. She was shouting for help. Here, too, the room had had its walls and ceiling covered with white sheeting. M. Ament received a large handful of gravel right in his bosom, which upset him to such an extent that so late as in 1870 he was heard to say that nothing could induce him to repeat the experiment. The causes of these doings were never discovered.

Several years later, during the Residency of M. Visscher Van Gaasbeck at Bandung, analogous phenomena again occurred there. The civilized and well-educated Javanese regents, corroborated by the native chiefs, aver that such weird things happen very often in our colonies, but that the Indians are afraid to talk of the matter lest they should be laughed at and ridiculed by sceptical Nederlanders.

In 1825 M. Mertins was Governor of the Moluccas Islands. Once, towards evening, as he was at Amboyna, in Fort Victoria, he saw a shower of stones fall. The fort was situated in an open space, and a vast esplanade separated it from the nearest

house. It was simply im-possible to reach the fort with a stone from any of these buildings. The esplanade was then surrounded by sentries and no one allowed to pass, and the garrison was called to arms inside the fort. But all this did not in the least prevent stones, bits of dry lime &c., from shower-ing among the ranks of soldiers. People saw the projectiles coming from a short distance and not at a very great height from the ground. The phenomenon was repeated upon several occasions, and never was a man touched by one of the stones. All this is to this day a mystery. The news spread widely over the islands, and in 1842, at Banda it was still discussed.

In Europe such showers of stones have been known everywhere. The stone-phenomena of the Rue den Grés (in 1849),) and that of the Rue du Bae (1858) are well remembered in Paris.

H.P.B.'s comments: - Two streets in Paris. The two cases referred to, were made the object of the strictest investigation by the police, and in the case of that of 1858, the Emperor Napoleon ordered the severest researches, had the house emptied, isolated, and surrounded for nearly a month, but the mystery remained unsolved for ever. In Russia there were several such cases in the last twenty-five years which baffled the police. - **End of comment.**

I will close by giving some particulars about a case which came under my own ob-servation at the Hague - in 1871. In the Van Hogendorp Street, there lived the family of Captain O. E. K. who occupied the second floor of a house in which one of the back rooms confronted other houses of an adjacent street. The family had been there but a few weeks, when, on one afternoon, a stone dropped on the window-sill of the said room. The

phenomenon was repeated during several days, generally between two and four p.m. Besides stones, there also fell pieces of bricks, coals, lime, fragments of crockery, and even dung carefully wrapped up in paper. I visited the house in company with a sceptical investigator, a surgeon, Mr. H. G. Becht, and the Captain's wife showed us a heap of rubbish. The room had been absolutely ruined. The mirrors, windows, ornaments, all were in bits and rags. The stones flew with such a force that the window curtains had been all torn into shreds. The missiles coming from a great distance were seen in their flight to fall from far higher than the roofs of the adjoining houses. The police investigated the case for several days with the utmost activity; placed some men from the police force upon every roof but could discover nothing to explain the cause of it. Stones coming from nowhere, and directing themselves toward the windows of the room, were continually flying before the noses of the policemen, and that was all that could be ascertained.

It would certainly be worth the trouble of trying to find out and accept some definite opinion, as to the nature of the invisible beings who cause such showers of stone to come down. What do they do it for? Is it to amuse themselves? A strange pastime! For a revenge? ... But the uniformity of that phenomenon in various countries forbids such a supposition. Must we believe in other beings (than human spirits) as believed in by the Theosophists? I would like to learn the opinion of your readers upon this subject.

A. J. RIKO.

The Hague, December 1880.

H.P.B.'s comment: - Meanwhile, M. Riko will perhaps permit us a word. The last sentence of his letter proves clearly that even he, a spiritist, is unable to trace such a uniformly senseless, idiotic phenomenon - one that periodically occurs in every part of the world and without the slightest cause for it, as without the least moral effect upon those present, - to the agency of disembodied human spirits. We well know that, while most of the spiritists will attribute it to the Esprits malins (malicious disembodied spirits) the Roman Catholic world and most of the pious Protestants - at least those who may have convinced themselves of the facts - will lay it at the door of the devil. Now for argument's sake, and allowing the idea of such creatures as the "malicious human souls" of the spiritist and the "demons" of the Christian theology to exist elsewhere than in imagination, how can both these classes of believers account for the contradictions involved? Here are beings which or who whether devils, or malicious ex-human imps - are evidently wicked. Their object - if they have any at all - must be to derive cruel pleasure from tormenting mortals? They cannot be less bent upon mischief or more careful of possible results than ordinary mischievous school boys. Yet we see the stones, or whatever the missiles may be, carefully avoiding contact with those present. They fall all around without "even grazing" the little Javanese girl - evidently the medium in the case observed by General Michiles. They fall thick among the ranks of the soldiers at "Fort Victoria:" and pass incessantly for several days before the very noses of the police agents in Paris and the Hague, without ever touching, let alone hurting, any one! What does this mean? Malicious human spirits, to say nothing of devils, would certainly have no such delicate care for those they were bent upon tormenting. What are they then, these invisible persecutors? Ordinary human "spirits"? In such a case human

intelligence would be but a name; a word devoid of meaning as soon as it gets separated from its physical organs. It would become a blind force, a remnant of intellectual energy that was, and we would have to credit every liberated soul with insanity!

Having disposed of the theory of "spirits," "imps" and "devils," on the score of the idiocy and total absence of malevolence in the proceedings, once that the genuineness of the phenomenon is proved, to what else can it be attributed in its causation or origin, but to a blind though living force; one subjected to an intransgressible law of attraction and repulsion - in its course and effects - a law which exact science has yet to discover; for it is one of innumerable correlations due to magnetic conditions which are supplied only when both animal and terrestrial magnetism are present; meanwhile the former has to fight its way step by step for recognition, for science will not recognize it in its psychological effects, - do what its advocates may. The Spiritualists regard the phenomena of the stone-showers as irregular? We, Theosophists, answer that although their occurrence at a given place may appear to be very irregular, yet from a comparison of those in all parts of the world it might be found, if carefully recorded, that hitherto they have been uniform or nearly so. Perhaps they may be aptly compared with the terrestrial magnetic perturbations called by Science "fitful," and distinctly separated by her, at one time, from that other class she named "periodical"; the "fitful" now being found to recur at as regular periods as the former. The cause of these variations of the magnetic needle is as entirely unknown to physical science as are the phenomena of stone-showers to those who study psychological Science; yet both are closely connected. If we are asked what we mean by the comparison - and indignant may be the question on the part of both, "Science and Spiritualism - we will humbly answer that such is the teaching of

Occult Science. Both classes of our opponents have yet much to learn, and the Spiritualists - to first unlearn much in addition. Did our friends the believers in "spirits" ever go to the trouble of first studying "mediumship" and only then turning their attention to the phenomena occurring through the sensitives? We, at least, never heard that such is the case, not even during the most scientific investigations of mediunistic powers that ever took place - Professor Hare's and Mr. Croocks' experiments. And yet, had they done so, they might have found how closely related to and dependent on the variations of terrestrial magnetism are those of the mediunistic or animal magnetic state. Whenever a true medium fails to get phenomena it is immediately attributed by the Spiritualists, and oftener by the "Spirits" themselves to "unfavorable conditions." The latter are lumped together in a single phrase; but never did we hear the real scientific and chief cause for it given: the unfavorable variations of the terrestrial magnetism. The lack of harmony in the "circle" of investigators; various and conflicting magnetisms of the "sitters" are all of secondary importance. The power of a real, strongly charged medium[1] will always prevail against the animal magnetism which may be adverse to it; but it cannot produce effects unless it received a fresh supply of molecular force, an impress from the invisible body of those we call blind "Elementals" or Forces of Nature, and which the Spiritualists in every case regard as the "spirits of the dead." Showers of stones have been known to take place where there was not a living soul consequently no medium.

The medium charged by the atmospheric legion of "correla-tions" (we prefer calling them by the new scientific term) will attract stones within the periphery of his force, but will at the same time repel them, the polaric condition of his body preventing the missiles from touching it. And its own mole-cular

condition will temporarily induct with its properties all the other human and even non-sensitive bodies around it. Sometimes there may be an exception to the rule produced by some chance condition.

This explanatory postscript may be closed with the remark to M. Riko that we do not regard the Elementals of the Kabalists as properly "beings." They are the active Forces and correlations of Fire, Water, Earth and Air, and their shape is like the hues of the chameleon which has no permanent colour of its own. Through the interplanetary and interstellar spaces, the vision of almost every clairvoyant can reach. But it is only the trained eye of the proficient in Eastern Occultism, that can fix the flitting shadows and give them a shape and a name.

[1] We hold that a "physical medium," so called, is but an organism more sensitive than most others to the terrestrial electro-magnetic induction. That the powers of a medium for the production of phenomena fluctuate from one hour to another is a fact proven by Mr. Croocks' experiments, believing though we do in the existence of innumerable other so-called Spiritual Forces besides and quite independent of human spirits, we yet firmly maintain that physical mediums have very little, if anything, to do with the latter. Their powers are purely physical and conditional i.e. these powers depend almost entirely on the degree of receptivity, and chance polarization of the body of the medium by the electro-magnetic and atmospheric currents. Purely phychological manifestations are quite a different thing.

Bibliographical source:

The Theosophist, August 1881.

Rahatship

H.P.B.'s introduction: - It highly gratified our Delegates to Ceylon to find that not only every educated priest and layman, but the uneducated people of that Island also, knew the possibility of man's acquiring the exalted psychical powers of adeptship, and the fact that they had often been acquired. At Bentota, we were taken to a temple where a community of 500 of these Rahats, or adepts, had formerly resided. Nay, we even met those who had quite recently encountered such holy men; and a certain eminent priest, who joined our Society, was shortly after permitted to see and exchange some of our signs of recognition with one. It is true that, as in India and Egypt, there is a prevalent idea that the term for the manifestation of the highest grades of *rahatship* (*Rahat* or *Arahat* is the Pali equivalent for the Sanskrit Rishi - one who has developed his psychical powers to their fullest extent) has expired, but this comes from a mistaken notion that Buddha himself had limited the period of such development to one millenium after his death. To set this matter at rest we here give a translation by Mr. Frederic Dias, Pandit of the Galle Theosophical Society, of passages which may be regarded as absolutely authoritative. They were kindly collected for us by the chief assistant priest of the Parmananda Vihare, at Galle. - **End of introduction.**

Memorandum.

An opinion is almost universally current among the literary class

of Buddhists, that the period of the world for attaining to *Rahatship* has expired, and the present age is only a theoretical period of the Yoga-system. That this opinion is erroneous, is evident from the numerous passages of the Buddhistical Scriptures where the Dhyana system is described and the practical course of contemplation discussed. From the many detailed accounts of *Rahatship*, the following are extracted: -

"Digha Nikaya." (Section treating on Dhyâna System. Parinibberica Suttan.)

Imecha Subadda Bhikku Samma Vihareiyun Asunno Loko Arahantohi.

"Hear Subhaddra. The world will not be devoid of *Rahats* if the Yogis in my dispensation will and truly perform my precepts."

"Manorata -Purani Angottara Atawaeva."

Buddhananhi parinibbanato wassa sahana Mewa patisambhida nibbattetun sakkenti tatoparancha Abhinna tatopi Asakkenta tino wijja nibbantenti gachetanti kalatapi nibbattelun Adakkento sukkauwepanaka honti.

Within a period of one thousand years from the temporal death of Buddha, the sacerdotal order will attain to that grade of *Rahat* termed '*Siwupilidimbiapat Rahat*' (the 1st order). At the lapse of this period the sacerdotal order will attain to the grade termed '*Shat Abhigna*' (the 2nd order). In the course of time the sacerdotal order will attain to the grade '*Tividdhya*' (3rd order). After a further lapse of time this grade will also cease, and the priesthood will attain only '*Suska Widarsaka*' (4th order).

Among these four grades of *Rahat* a limited time is defined only to the first order. And no defined period is assigned to the prevalence of the other three orders.

"Milindapprasna," - By the *Rahat Magasena*.

"As a pond is kept filled up with water by the continual pouring of rain; as a conflagration is kept up by feeding the fire with dry wood; as a glass is lusted by frequent cleaning; even so by the invariable observance of the enjoined devotional rules, and by indefatigable exertion to lead a pure life on the part of the priesthood, the world will not be devoid of *Rahats*."

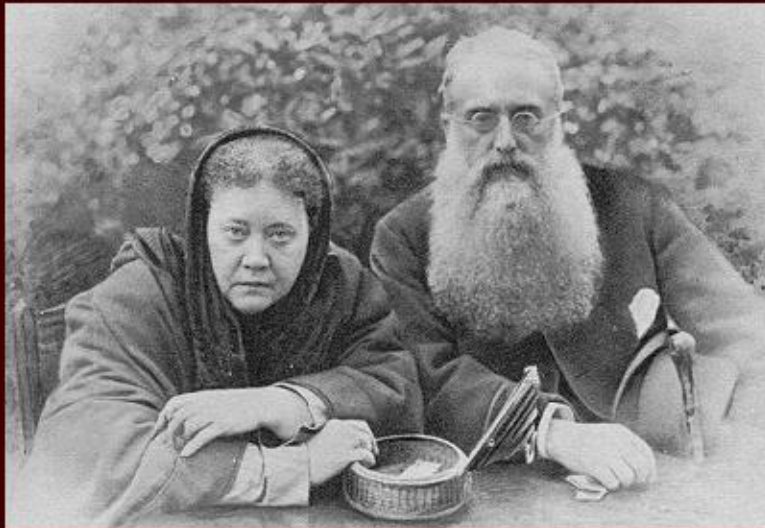
So it is evident that the attainment of *Rahatship* has no defined period.

Bibliographical source:

The Theosophist, Vol. I, August 1880, p. 289.

Should Men Cut Their Hair?

[By Professor Alexander Wilder M.D., F.T.S., comments by H.P.B.]



WHETHER the hair should be cut I never quite satisfy myself. As a physiological practice, I seriously doubt the propriety. Every cutting is a wounding, and there is some sort of bleeding in consequence, and waste of vital force. I think that it will be found that long lived persons most frequently wear their hair long. The cutting of hair stimulates to a new growth, to supply the waste. Thus the energy required to maintain the vigor of the body is drawn off to make good the wanton destruction. It is said, I know, that after the hair has grown to a certain length it loses its vitality at the extremity and splits or "booms up;" whether this would be so if the hair should never be cut, I would like to know. When it is a cut a fluid exudes, and forms a scar or cicatrix at each wounded extremity, indicating that there has been injury. Women and priests have generally worn long hair. I never could imagine why this distinction was made. The ancient priests was very often unsexed or devoted to a vow of celibacy, but I cannot surmise whether that had anything to do with it. Kings wear their hair long in imitation of Samson and the golden sun-god Mithras. I suspect from this that the first men shorn were slaves and laborers; that freedmen wore their hair uncut as the crown of perfect manhood and manliness. If this be correct, the new era of freedom, when it ever shall dawn, will be characterized by men unshorn as well as women unperverted.

I wish that our science and our civilization had better devices for preserving the integrity of the hair. Baldness is a deformity, and premature whiteness a defect. If the head was in health, and the body in proper vigor, I am confident that this would not be. I am apprehensive that our dietetic habits occasion the bleaching of the hair; the stiff, arsenic-prepared hat is responsible for much baldness. *Our hats are unhealthy, from the tricks of the hatters.* I suppose there are other causes however. *Heredity* has its *influence*. Certain diseases wither the hair at its roots; others lower the vitality of the skin, and so depilate the body. I acknowledge that the shingled head disgusts me. It cannot be wholesome. The most sensitive part of the head is at the back where the neck joins. That place exposed to unusual heat or cold is liable to receive an injury that will be permanent if not fatal, in a short period. The whole head wants protection; and the hair affords this as no other protection can. Men have beards because they need them, and it is wicked to cut them off. No growth or part of the body is superfluous, and we ought, as candidates for health and long life, to preserve ourselves from violence or mutilation. Integrity is the true manly standard. - (Phrenol Journal.)

H.P.B.'s comment - Fashion - which has somehow succeeded in making "respectability" its queer ally - forbids Christian civilized society wearing their hair long at this period of our century. In this the so-called Christian civilization is guilty of inconsistency, and its clergy of disrespect, since Jesus and his Apostles are shown to have worn long hair - every one of them except Paul. The *Nazars* of the Old Testament never allowed the razor to touch their head. The *Aryan Rishis*, the *Yogis*, the *Sadhús* of every kind wore and still wear their hair long. The initiates of Tibet do the same. In Europe, the Greek and Russian

clergy alone, along with their monks, have preserved the wise habit, and the longevity of some of the last named is *proverbial*.

Bibliographical source:

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The mystical school of Yogis - Neo-platonism - Svamin Dayanada



Long before the time of such Orientalists as Burnouf, Colebrooke and Max Müller, there have been in India many reformers who tried to prove the pure monotheism of the Vedic doctrines. There have even been founders of new religions who denied the revelations of these scriptures; for instance, the Raja Ram Mohun Roy, and, after him, Babu Keshub Chunder Sen, both Calcutta Bengalees. But neither of them had much success. They did nothing but add new denominations to the numberless sects existing in India. Ram Mohun Roy died in England, having done next to nothing, and Keshub Chunder Sen, having founded the community of "Brahmo-Samaj," which professes a religion extracted from the depths of the Babu's own imagination, became a mystic of the most pronounced type, and now is only "a berry from the same field," as we say in Russia, as the Spiritualists, by whom he is considered to be a medium and a Calcutta Swedenborg. He spends his time in a dirty tank, singing praises to Chaitanya, Koran, Buddha, and his own person, proclaiming himself their prophet, and performs a mystical dance, dressed in woman's attire, which, on his part, is an attention to a "woman goddess" whom the Babu calls his "mother, father and eldest brother."

In short, all the attempts to re-establish the pure primitive monotheism of Aryan India have been a failure. They always got

wrecked upon the double rock of Brahmanism and of prejudices centuries old. But lo! here appears unexpectedly the pandit Dayananda. None, even of the most beloved of his disciples, knows who he is and whence he comes. He openly confesses before the crowds that the name under which he is known is not his, but was given to him at the Yogi initiation.

The mystical school of Yogis was established by Patanjali, the founder of one of the six philosophical systems of ancient India. It is supposed that the Neo-platonists of the second and third Alexandrian Schools were the followers of Indian Yogis, more especially was their theurgy brought from India by Pythagoras, according to the tradition. There still exist in India hundreds of Yogis who follow the system of Patanjali, and assert that they are in communion with Brahma. Nevertheless, most of them are do-nothings, mendicants by profession, and great frauds, thanks to the insatiable longing of the natives for miracles. The real Yogis avoid appearing in public, and spend their lives in secluded retirement and studies, except when, as in Dayananda's case, they come forth in time of need to aid their country. However, it is perfectly certain that India never saw a more learned Sanskrit scholar, a deeper metaphysician, a more wonderful orator, and a more fearless denunciator of every evil, than Dayananda, since the time of Śankaracharya, the celebrated founder of the Vedanta philosophy, the most metaphysical of Indian systems, in fact, the crown of pantheistic teaching. Then, Dayananda's personal appearance is striking. He is immensely tall, his complexion is pale, rather European than Indian, his eyes are large and bright, and his greyish hair is long. The Yogis and Dikshatas (initiated) never cut either their hair or beard. His voice is clear and loud, well calculated to give expression to every shade of deep feeling, ranging from a sweet childish caressing whisper to thundering wrath against the evil

doings and falsehoods of the priests. All this taken together produces an indescribable effect on the impressionable Hindu. Wherever Dayananda appears crowds prostrate themselves in the dust over his footprints; but, unlike Babu Keshub Chunder Sen, he does not teach a new religion, does not invent new dogmas. He only asks them to renew their half-forgotten Sanskrit studies, and, having compared the doctrines of their forefathers with what they have become in the hands of Brahmans, to return to the pure conceptions of Deity taught by the primitive Rishis - Agni, Vayu, Aditya, and Anghira - the patriarchs who first gave the Vedas to humanity. He does not even claim that the Vedas are a heavenly revelation, but simply teaches that "every word in these scriptures belongs to the highest inspiration possible to the earthly man, an inspiration that is repeated in the history of humanity, and, when necessary, may happen to any nation ..."

During his five years of work Svamin Dayananda made about two million proselytes, chiefly amongst the higher castes. Judging by appearances, they are all ready to sacrifice to him their lives and souls and even their earthly possessions, which are often more precious to them than their lives. But Dayananda is a real Yogi, he never touches money, and despises pecuniary affairs. He contents himself with a few handfuls of rice per day. One is inclined to think that this wonderful Hindu bears a charmed life, so careless is he of rousing the worst human passions, which are so dangerous in India. A marble statue could not be less moved by the raging wrath of the crowd. We saw him once at work. He sent away all his faithful followers and forbade them either to watch over him or to defend him, and stood alone before the infuriated crowd, facing calmly the monster ready to spring upon him and tear him to pieces.

Here a short explanation is necessary. A few years ago a society of well-informed, energetic people was formed in New York. A certain sharp-witted savant surnamed them "La Societe des Malcontents du Spiritisme." The founders of this club were people who, believing in the phenomena of spiritualism as much as in the possibility of every other phenomenon in Nature, still denied the theory of the "spirits." They considered that the modern psychology was a science still in the first stages of its development, in total ignorance of the nature of the psychic man, and denying, as do many other sciences, all that cannot be explained according to its own particular theories.

From the first days of its existence some of the most learned Americans joined the Society, which became known as the Theosophical Society. Its members differed on many points, much as do the members of any other Society, Geographical or Archeological, which fights for years over the sources of the Nile, or the Hieroglyphs of Egypt. But everyone is unanimously agreed that, as long as there is water in the Nile, its sources must exist somewhere. So much about the phenomena of spiritualism and mesmerism. These phenomena were still waiting their Champollion - but the Rosetta stone was to be searched for neither in Europe nor in America, but in the far-away countries where they still believe in magic, where wonders are performed daily by the native priesthood, and where the cold materialism of science has never yet reached - in one word, in the East.

The Council of the Society knew that the Lama-Buddhists, for instance, though not believing in God, and denying the personal immortality of the soul, are yet celebrated for their "phenomena," and that mesmerism was known and daily practised in China from time immemorial under the name of "gina." In India they fear and hate the very name of the spirits whom the Spiritualists

venerate so deeply, yet many an ignorant fakir can perform "miracles" calculated to turn upside-down all the notions of a scientist and to be the despair of the most celebrated of European prestidigitateurs. Many members of the Society have visited India - many were born there and have themselves witnessed the "sorceries" of the Brahmans. The founders of the Club, well aware of the depth of modern ignorance in regard to the spiritual man, were most anxious that Cuvier's method of comparative anatomy should acquire rights of citizenship among metaphysicians, and, so, progress from regions physical to regions psychological on its own inductive and deductive foundation. "Otherwise," they thought, "psychology will be unable to move forward a single step, and may even obstruct every other branch of Natural History." Instances have not been wanting of physiology poaching on the preserves of purely metaphysical and abstract knowledge, all the time feigning to ignore the latter absolutely, and seeking to class psychology with the positive sciences, having first bound it to a Bed of Procrustes, where it refuses to yield its secret to its clumsy tormentors.

In a short time the Theosophical Society counted its members, not by hundreds, but by thousands. All the "malcontents" of American Spiritualism - and there were at that time twelve million Spiritualists in America - joined the Society. Collateral branches were formed in London, Corfu, Australia, Spain, Cuba, California, etc. Everywhere experiments were being performed, and the conviction that it is not spirits alone who are the causes of the phenomena was becoming general.

In course of time branches of the Society were in India and in Ceylon. The Buddhist and Brahmanical members became more numerous than the Europeans. A league was formed, and to the name of the Society was added the subtitle, "The Brotherhood of

Humanity." After an active correspondence between the Arya-Samaj, founded by Svamin Dayananda, and the Theosophical Society, an amalgamation was arranged between the two bodies. Then the Chief Council of the New York branch decided upon sending a special delegation to India, for the purpose of studying, on the spot, the ancient language of the Vedas and the manuscripts and the wonders of Yogism. On the 17th of December, 1878, the delegation, composed of two secretaries and two members of the council of the Theosophical Society, started from New York, to pause for a while in London, and then to proceed to Bombay, where it landed in February, 1879.

It may easily be conceived that, under these circumstances, the members of the delegation were better able to study the country and to make fruitful researches than might, otherwise, have been the case. Today they are looked upon as brothers and aided by the most influential natives of India. They count among the members of their society pandits of Benares and Calcutta, and Buddhist priests of the Ceylon Viharas - amongst others the learned Sumangala, mentioned by Minayeff in the description of his visit to Adam's Peak - and Lamas of Thibet, Burmah, Travancore and elsewhere. The members of the delegation are admitted to sanctuaries where, as yet, no European has set his foot. Consequently they may hope to render many services to Humanity and Science, in spite of the ill will which the representatives of positive science bear to them.

As soon as the delegation landed, a telegram was despatched to Dayanand, as everyone was anxious to make his personal acquaintance. In reply, he said that he was obliged to go immediately to Hardwar, where hundreds of thousands of pilgrims were expected to assemble, but he insisted on our remaining behind, since cholera was certain to break out among

the devotees. He appointed a certain spot, at the foot of the Himalayas, in the jab, where we were to meet in a month's time.

Alas! all this was written some time ago. Since then Svamin Dayananda's countenance has changed completely toward us. He is, now, an enemy of the Theosophical Society and its two founders - Colonel Olcott and the author of these letters. It appeared that, on entering into an offensive and defensive alliance with the Society, Dayanand nourished the hope that all its members, Christians, Brahmans and Buddhists, would acknowledge His supremacy, and become members of the Arya-Samaj.

Needless to say, this was impossible. The Theosophical Society rests on the principle of complete non-interference with the religious beliefs of its members. Toleration is its basis and its aims are purely philosophical. This did not suit Dayanand. He wanted all the members, either to become his disciples, or to be expelled from the Society. It was quite clear that neither the President, nor the Council could assent to such a claim. Englishmen and Americans, whether they were Christians or Freethinkers, Buddhists, and especially Brahmans, revolted against Dayananda, and unanimously demanded that the league should be broken.

However, all this happened later. At the time of which I speak we were friends and allies of the Svamin, and we learned with deep interest that the Hardwar "mela," which he was to visit, takes place every twelve years, and is a kind of religious fair, which attracts representatives from all the numerous sects of India.

Learned dissertations are read by the disputants in defence of their peculiar doctrines, and the debates are held in public. This year the Hardwar gathering was exceptionally numerous. The Sannyasis - the mendicant monks of India - alone numbered

35,000 and the cholera, foreseen by the Svamin, actually broke out.

Bibliographical source:

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