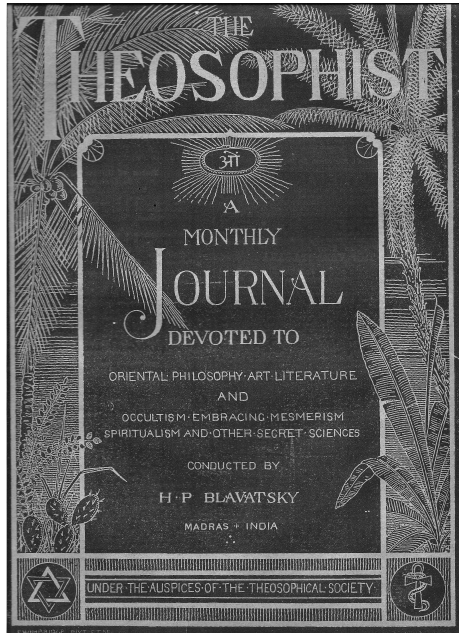


The Hidden Side of “The Theosophist”

By Mary K. Neff



Original cover design of *The Theosophist*

(Originally published in *The Theosophist*, October-December 1929. Quotations from *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* are from its first edition (1923), T. Fisher Unwin Ltd, London. Quotations from *The Letters from H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett* are from its first edition (1925), Theosophical University Press, Pasadena, California.)

[**Mary K. Neff** (1877-1948), for many years a teacher in the public schools of Ohio, USA. She joined the Theosophical Society in 1908. Three years later she went to Adyar. And then for four years she worked in the Theosophical Publishing House and the Adyar Library. For a time she acted as private secretary to C. W. Leadbeater. Under the inspiration of Dr. Annie Besant she worked for schools in Madanapalle, Benares and Lucknow.

While in Lucknow, Miss Neff was organizing secretary of the Women's Department of the Anti-Tuberculosis League and superintendent of the Lady Student's Hostel at King George's Medical College. In 1922 Miss Neff went to Australia. At Sydney she assisted Dr. J. J. van der Leeuw in King Arthur's School. She was for two years Assistant General Secretary of the Australian Section. Then followed two years as national lecturer.

At the request of Mr. Jinarajadasa, the then Vice-President of The Theosophical Society, Miss Neff returned to Adyar in 1927 to arrange and catalogue the archives of The Theosophical Society. This mountainous and important task occupied two years and made her thoroughly conversant with the history of the Society. When C. W. Leadbeater left Australia to reside at Adyar in 1929, Miss Neff again served as his private secretary.

Miss Neff was the author of numerous articles in THE THEOSOPHIST and other theosophical journals. Among her published books were *The "Brothers" of Madame Blavatsky*, *A Guide to Adyar* and *Personal Memoirs of H. P. Blavatsky*. Her book, *How Theosophy Came to Australia*, published in 1943, won for her the high honor of the Subba Row Medal. Source: *The American Theosophist*, January 1949.]

When, in the last quarter of the last century, the Masters moved to come into more direct contact with the world, in order to stem the tide of materialism which threatened to overwhelm it and to guide the equally threatening tidal-wave of spiritualistic phenomena into

safer channels, various means and personalities were chosen for the purpose.

They began their direct teaching through Mme. Helene Petrovna Blavatsky, who, attracting to herself Colonel Olcott and a small nucleus of seekers after the occult in New York, founded the Theosophical Society in 1875. The network of this teaching had spread by correspondence and controversy in the Press (chiefly the Spiritualistic Press) about America, England, France and Germany, and to Corfu, Greece, before two Founders left the United States to settle in India in 1879.

Now that both East and West Were involved in the field of endeavour, a journal was the fittest means of communication; for the correspondence of the Founders had reached unwieldy proportions. And so on October 1, 1879, THE THEOSOPHIST came into existence. Colonel Olcott tells the story of its genesis in his Diary thus:

- July 4, 1870: Consultation which decided us to issue THE THEOSOPHIST at once.
- 9th. Corrected proof of the Prospectus of THE THEOSOPHIST.
- 15th. Had visit in body of the Sahib!
Sent Babula to my room to call me to H. P. B.'s bungalow, and there we had a most important private interview. Alas! how puerile and vain these men make one feel by contrast, to them.
- 31st. Wim[bridge] made design for the cover THE THEOSOPHIST.
- Aug. 22nd. Evening. With H.P.B. revised articles for THE THEOSOPHIST.
- Sept. 2nd. Wim began engraving heading for THE THEOSOPHIST.
- 11th. Workmen fitting up Theosophist Office in the new compound.
- 20th. Ran off first form (8 pages) today. Much pleased with the paper; think it will find public favour and secure many subscriptions.
- 27th. Made up last form today; and now all difficulties having been surmounted—as it were—we will make our periodical bow to the world from our own rostrum.
- 28th. Up at 5.30, to find printer and make certain changes ordered by the revered Old Gentleman late last night.
- 29th. Preparing for the birth of the paper.
- 30th. Waiting. Evening. The first 400 copies of the THE THEOSOPHIST were received. Welcome, stranger.
- Oct. 1st. All hands busy, pasting and directing wrappers, making city and country lists, sending *peons* to deliver in the city, receiving congratulations, and taking new subscriptions.
- 3rd. Order about the paper received, signed by Serapis. First word from him in some time.

The next year still another channel of communication was opened between the Masters and the world when, at Simla, Master Koot Hoomi began correspondence with Messrs. Sinnett and Hume; for, though the latter proved futile, the former embodied

the instructions he received in *The Occult World, Esoteric Buddhism, Karma, etc.*, which books being printed in England and arousing much comment in the English and Continental Press, spread a knowledge of occult philosophy in Europe, as THE THEOSOPHIST was doing more particularly in India and The United States.

To return to the particular channel under consideration, note how at its very inception three Masters, at least, had a hand: “the Sahib” (Master Morya), “the revered Gentleman” (Master Jupiter, the Regent of India, called also the Rshi Agastya), and Master Serapis. The proprietary interest of the Brotherhood in the journal is implied in Master Morya’s statement regarding misrepresentation of the Adepts in Hume’s pamphlet, *Hints on Esoteric Theosophy*:

Why should we dribble facts through him, to be dressed for the public meal with a curry of nauseous doubts and biting sarcasm to throw the public stomach into confusion? If we wanted anything about our lives and work to be known, are not the columns of THE THEOSOPHIST open to us?¹

Their policy in regard to the magazine may be gathered from a statement made by Master K. H. in October, 1882:

Whatever may be the views of the two Founders, the journal of the Society has nothing to do with them; and will publish as willingly criticism directed against Lamaism as against Christianity. . . . THE THEOSOPHIST making room as willingly for hymns on the Lamb as for *slokas* on the sacredness of the cow. . . . M[orya] thinks that the Supplement ought to be enlarged if necessary, and made to furnish room for the expression of thought of every Branch, however diametrically opposed these may be. THE THEOSOPHIST ought to be made to assume a distinct colour, and become a unique specimen of its own. We are ready to furnish the *necessary* extra sums for it.²

That the Masters were not too well satisfied with the earliest volumes appears in some of their comments; thus in February, 1881, Mahatma K. H. says:

The British President [of the T.S.] labours under the most original ideas about us, whom he persists in calling *Yogīs*, without allowing the slightest margin to the enormous differences which exist even between *Hatha* and *Rāja Yoga*. This mistake must be laid at the door of Mrs. B. [Blavatsky]—the able editor of THE THEOSOPHIST, who fills up her volumes with the practices of divers Sannyāsīs and other ‘blessed ones’ from the plains, without ever troubling herself with a few additional explanations.³

And again he says:

So, while a better selection might have been made for THE THEOSOPHIST in the way of illustrative anecdotes, as, for instance, well authenticated historical cases yet the theory of turning the minds of the phenomenologists into useful and suggestive channels, away from mere mediumistic dogmatism, was the correct one.⁴

While in the autumn of 1881, at the opening of the magazine’s third year, he still more emphatically remarks:

¹ *The Mahatma Letters*, p. 260.

² *The Mahatma Letters*, pp. 317, 319.

³ *The Mahatma Letters*, p. 33.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

I am anxious that the journal should be more successful this year than it has been hitherto.⁵

To accomplish this improvement, it would seem that the Masters determined to take a more active part in the production of the magazine. In December, 1881, we find Master Morya writing to Mr. Sinnett:

My object is . . . to help the journal by infusing into it few drops of real literary good blood. Your three articles are certainly praiseworthy.⁶

And in March, 1882, Mr. Sinnett, then editor of *The Pioneer* of Allahabad, was adjured by Master K. H., half seriously, half humorously, and altogether quaintly:

Neglect not, then, my good Brother, the humble, the derided journal of your Society; and mind not either its quaint pretentious cover nor the “heaps of manure” contained in it—to repeat the charitable and to yourself the too familiar phrase used often at Simla. But let your attention be rather drawn to the few pearls of wisdom and *occult truths* to be occasionally discovered under that “manure”. Our own ways and manners are, perchance, as quaint and as uncouth—nay, more so. . . . Many of us would be mistaken for madmen by you English gentlemen. But he who would be a son of Wisdom can always see beneath the rugged surface. So with the poor old Journal. Behold its mystically bumptious clothing! its numerous blemishes and literary defects; and with all, that cover the most perfect symbol of its contents: the main portion of its original ground thickly veiled, all smutty and as black as night, through which peep out grey dots, and lines, and words, and even—sentences. To the truly wise, those breaks of grey may suggest an allegory full of meaning, such as the streaks upon the eastern sky at morning’s early dawn, after a night of intense darkness; the aurora of a more “spiritually intellectual” cycle. And who knows how many of those who, undismayed by its unprepossessing appearance, the hideous intricacies of its style, and the other many failures of the unpopular magazine, will keep on tearing its pages, may find themselves rewarded some day for their perseverance! Illuminated sentences may gleam out upon them at some time or other, shedding a bright light upon some old puzzling problems. Yourself, some fine morning while poring over its crooked columns with the sharpened wits of a well-rested brain, peering into what you now view as hazy, impalpable speculations having only the consistency of vapour—yourself, you may perchance perceive in them the unexpected solution of an old, blurred, forgotten “dream” of yours, which once *recalled* will impress itself in an indelible image upon your *outer* from your *inner* memory, to never fade out from it again. All this is possible and may happen; for our ways *are* the ways of Madmen.⁷

Mr. Sinnett’s earliest efforts at Theosophical journalism had been made a few months previously, perhaps in the three articles found so “praiseworthy” by Master Morya. He was now entrusted with a piece of work which is noteworthy as being the first attempt to indicate the position of Theosophy on the subject of evolution. The issue of December, 1881, published an article on “The Theosophists,” by Gerald Massey. He had been impelled to write it through noting quotations from THE THEOSOPHIST made by M.A. Oxon (Stainton Moses) in the Spiritualistic journal, *Light*, for September 17th. Mme. Blavatsky in her capacity of editor added a note by way of reply, which is nearly twice the size the article itself. Master Morya was not satisfied with a certain portion of her note:

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 207.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 254.

⁷ *The Mahatma Letters*, p. 278.

The ring of doubt in the sentence, “If the Theosophist were also an evolutionist,” forces us to become painfully aware of the fact that Mr. G. Massey is no reader of THE THEOSOPHIST – if he has ever seen it. Otherwise he could not have been ignorant of the fact that two-thirds of the members of the Theosophical Society are “evolutionists,” and that their Journal is pre-eminently so.

The Master wrote to her, quoting the above passage of her prepared note and remarking:

You do not seize the meaning at all. Ask Mr. Sinnett to do this for you; he’ll see what the man means and answer him ...

Let him then who acquitted himself so neatly of one thing do this one likewise, and so oblige his
“illustrious” friend

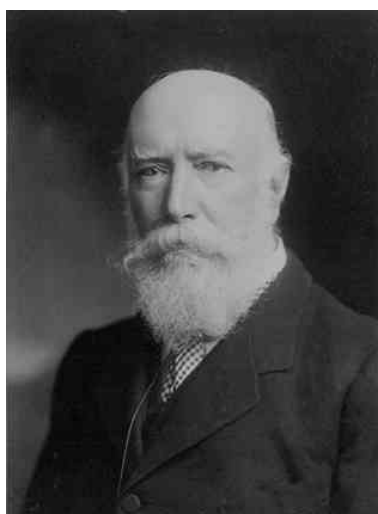
M.⁸

Such a veto of her explosive retorts by her Master or Mahatma K. H. was not infrequent, and once elicited from her the exclamation,

I begin to think our Brothers chicken-hearted for refusing to make the most of my war-like disposition.⁹

The version which appeared in print in THE THEOSOPHIST (Mr. Sinnett’s) is as follows:

“If the Theosophist were also an evolutionist,” says Massey, “perhaps he would be able to fix the fleeting forms of vision, of Man’s predecessors on the scientists, whose fancy has for within these last few years by evolutionary theory, were less appertains to the mysteries of life, sane bits of knowledge concerning entirely absurd conclusions which enter in the constitution threshold of a far mightier Europe who has not made occult study is likely to estimate in any . . . make an effort to



Alfred Percy Sinnett

and perceive some of the spirits earth.” If the European the first time been caught the crude outlines of an blankly ignorant of all that they would not be misled by the evolution of the body, into concerning the other principles of Man. But we are on the subject than any reader in considerable progress in real its appalling magnitude. Will account, even in the most

shadowy and indistinct way, for the history of the six higher principles in any human creature during the time when his body was being gradually perfected, so to speak, in the matrix of evolution? Where and what were his higher principles when the body had worked into no more dignified shape than that of a baboon? . . . or, to go a step back in the process, how account for the presence of the animal soul in the first creature with independent volition that emerges from the half-vegetable condition of the earlier forms? Is it not obvious, if the blind materialist is not to be accepted as a sufficient guide to the mysteries of the universe, that there music be some vast process of spiritual evolution going on in the universe *pari passu* with the physical evolution?

This brief outline, or rather mere indication, of Man’s *spiritual evolution*

⁸ Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett, p. 364

⁹ Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett, p. 364.

evidently met with the approval of the Master. The next year, in the October and November issues, Mr. Sinnett sketched “The Evolution of Man” in *Fragments of Occult Truth*, Nos. IV and V, which were later embodied in *Esoteric Buddhism*. Another effort to deal with spiritual evolution was made in *Man: Fragments of Forgotten History*, published in 1885; but it was only many years later, when the public was more ready to “digest and assimilate” it (in the Master’s phrase), that this statement was really elaborated, first by Mrs. Besant in *The Pedigree of Man*, and later jointly by Mrs. Besant and Mr. Leadbeater in *Man: Whence, How are Whither?*

Not only was the able editor of India’s most prominent Anglo-Indian daily thus giving his aid to their journal, but a number of the Masters themselves became contributors. The years 1882 and 1883 are specially rich in these hidden treasures, those of 1882 being mostly from the pen of Mahatma Koot Hoomi, who seems to have exercised a constant and varied supervision, from proof-reading to furnishing the material for articles and the substance for replies to enquiring or controversial letters, when not writing them himself. Thus, H. P. B. writes to Mr. Sinnett:

K. H. was so kind as to dictate to me last night nearly all of my answer to Massey.

This answer appeared in THE THEOSOPHIST of August, under the title of “*Isis Unveiled*” and the *Theosophists on Reincarnation*. Evidently it did not meet with Mr. Sinnett’s approval; for we find Master K.H. remarking:

I am sorry you do not find her answer, written under my direct inspiration, very satisfactory . . . [And later] . . . Both yourself and C. C. M. [assey] were unjust to Upasika and myself, who told her what to write; since even you mistook my wail and lament at the confused arid tortured explanations in *Isis* (for its incompleteness no one but we, its inspirers, are responsible).¹⁰

Again, commenting on Sinnett’s *Fragments of Occult Truth*, No. V, on Devachan, he writes:

You are wrong in pandering to the prejudices and preconceptions of Western readers . . . Hence my order to a chela to reproduce, in an appendix to your article, extracts from this letter and explanations calculated to disabuse the reader, etc. (There are Appendices A, B, C and D.)¹¹

Master Morya was one of the “Brothers” who aided in the work of publishing THE THEOSOPHIST. For instance, on one occasion he interposed his strong hand when the attacks on his chela became too severe. March 3, 1882, he wrote to Mr. Sinnett:

¹⁰ *The Mahatma Letters*, pp. 183 and 173.

Re *Isis*, the Master says: “She obeyed our orders, and wrote purposely veiling some of her facts . . . In *reality* there is no contradiction between that passage in *Isis* and our later teaching. It was at the beginning of a new cycle, in days when neither Christians nor Spiritualists ever thought of more than two principles in man – body and soul, which they called Spirit. It was H. P. B. who, acting under the orders of Atrya, was the first to explain the difference between *psyche* and *nous*—soul and spirit . . . And as there happened such a war over it, endless polemics and objections to the *effect* that there could not be in man two souls,—we thought it was premature to give the public more than they could possibly assimilate, and before they had digested the “two souls”; and thus the further subdivision of the trinity into seven principles was left unmentioned in *Isis* . . . ‘You will write so and so, give so far and no more,’ she was constantly told by us when writing her hook . . . It really ought to be rewritten for the sake of the family honour”—which it was, as we know, in *The Secret Doctrine. Ibid.*, pp. 289, 290, 130.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 195.

There never was a woman more unjustly abused than H. B. See the infamous letters she was sent from England for publication against herself and us and the Society. You may find them undignified perhaps, but the “Answers to Correspondents” in Supplement are written by myself. So do not blame her. I am anxious to know your frank opinion on them. Perhaps you might think she might have done better herself.¹²

He fills two pages with answers to three correspondents: “J. K.,” “Mr. Joseph Wallace,” and “Miss Chandos Leigh Hunt (Mrs. Wallace)”. A summary of the first will illustrate:

“J.K.”—Your letter headed, “Under which ‘adept’ Theosophist?” will not be published, for the following reasons:

1. Personal abuse of the editor, however amusing to the latter, does not interest the general reader.

2. Our journal is not concerned with, and carefully avoids everything of a political character; therefore such vilification as a low and vulgar abuse of Russia . . . cannot find room in its columns.

3. For that same reason, we must decline to allow the author of “The Adeptship of Jesus Christ” to soothe his ruffled feelings by expatiating upon “the political object” of the Theosophical Society.

4. British and American laws having provided against the violation of the postal enactments intended to secure the purity of the mails, the Journal would risk paying the penalty for sending indecent matter by book-post. The coarse paragraph in the said article . . . comes directly under that law.

5. THE THEOSOPHIST, devoted to Oriental Philosophy, Art, Literature, Occultism, Mesmerism, Spiritualism and other sciences, has not pledged itself to reproduce burlesque parodies or circus-clown poetry.

6. THE THEOSOPHIST publishes only articles written and sent by *gentlemen*.

Another “Brother” who sometimes took part in the work of THE THEOSOPHIST was Djwal Khul, then an Initiate, now a Master. The December, 1881 issue had reviewed Wm. Oxley’s *Philosophy of Spirit*; and in March, 1882, Mr. Oxley replied in a letter to the Editor, on which Master K. H. remarks:

The article is penned by the Manchester seer—Oxley. Having received no reply to his summons to K.H., he criticises—mildly so far—the utterances of that ‘Internal Power’ for which new title I feel rather obliged to him. At sight of the gentle rebuke, our blunderbuss Editor failed not to explode. Nor would she be soothed until Djwal Khul, with whom the famous review was concocted, (one by the way which, seen by you, ought never to have been permitted to see the day) was authorised, under the safe *nom de plume* of “Reviewer,” to answer (by correcting some of his blunders) the Seer, in a few innocent footnotes.¹³

1. “What says that living Representative, Koot-Hoomi (whether a mortal man or an Internal Power matters riot for my present purpose)?”

2. Of the bits which “ought never to have been permitted to see the day,” perhaps these are two:

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 273.

¹³ *The Mahatma Letters*, p. 274.

“Even the name of the living Koot-Hoomi, a purely Aryan, Samskrit name, and one moreover mentioned at length in the ‘Padma Purana,’ which gives it as one of the thirty-six Rishis who were the authors of Smrti, was for a considerable time regarded as a non-Aryan name . . . And people who refuse to believe even in a *living* man, their own countryman, unless that man exhibits himself for their delectation in the *maidans* and *bazaars*, are still less likely to open their arms to a ‘Mahatma’ of Western origin, who, to boot, controls in English medium . . .

“The suggestion that the *Mahābhārata* might prove to be the last Book of the Wars of Jehovah, as reference in the Hebrew Scriptures, ‘where a Book or Books which are not found in the Canon’ is distinctly made in Numbers XXL, 14, is novel and might prove to contain more truth than is now generally supposed.”

But the matter did not end with these “innocent footnotes”. In the May issue Mr. T. Subba Row reviewed Oxley’s book “from the Esoteric and Brāhmanical standpoint,” and Mr. Oxley, when replying to this second review, made the rather astounding statement (September, 1882 issue):

For instance, I have had three visits by the astral form of the venerable Koot Hoomi, through a sensitive whose linguistic organism was used by the astral form to speak to me, first in Bengali and then in my own language. On the last occasion, I enquired, “Are you conscious of your connection with your physical organism, which presume is now in India; because in your last visit you said that if you could succeed in maintaining the consciousness all the way back, then certain results would follow? My reason for asking this question is this: an account is recorded of the visit you made to Mr. Eglinton¹⁴, and that this was in accordance with pre-arrangement, and the evidence seems to point to the conclusion that you were conscious at both ends of the line.” The reply was: “In my first visit I was not successful; in the second hardly more so; and in the present one it is still doubtful.” “How so? Is it more difficult in a subjective form to me to maintain a continued consciousness, than it was to project your astral form and *solidify* the same for the time being, when you appeared to Mr. Eglinton on board the S.S. ‘*Vega*’? The significant answer came: “The two cases are different. In the one case, it was a matter of *efflux*, and in the present it is one of *influx*.” And then followed an explanation I need not repeat. The statement may come that this was the work of some vagrant.

There is a footnote appended by Mme. Blavatsky as editor:

We feel extremely sorry to acknowledge that Mr. Oxley was right in his foreboding. Far from pretending to be informed of all the doings and actions of our venerated Brother Koot-Hoomi, and notwithstanding our surprise—since the language given is certainly not that of the Koot-Hoomi we all know—we were preparing to allow the above extraordinary statement to be published without comment, when we received the following from our Brother’s favourite Chela.

Then follows the Chela’s statement on behalf of Master K. H.:

I am commanded by my beloved Master, known in India and in the Western lands as Koot-Humi Lal Singh, to make in his name the following declaration, in answer to a certain statement made by Mr. Oxley and sent by him for publication. It is claimed by the said gentleman that my Master Koot-Humi

(a) has thrice visited him “by astral form”; and

¹⁴ Not the Master himself, but one impersonating him by his consent and to carry out his purpose – a long and complicated story.

(b) that he had conversation with Mr. Oxley, when, as alleged, he gave the latter certain explanations in reference to astral bodies in general, and the incompetency of his own Māyāvi Rūpa to preserve its consciousness simultaneously with the body, “at both ends of the line”. Therefore my Master declares:

1. Whomsoever Mr. Oxley may have seen and conversed with at the time described, it was not with Koot-Humi, the writer of the letters published in “The Occult World”.

2. Notwithstanding that my Master knows the gentleman in question, who once honoured him with an autograph letter, thereby giving him the means of making his (Mr. Oxley’s) acquaintance, and of sincerely admiring his intuitional powers and Western learning—yet he has never approached him, whether astrally or otherwise; nor has he ever had any conversation with Mr. Oxley; nor could he under any circumstances, even had there been such conversation, have expressed himself in the terms now imputed to him.

To guard against all possible misapprehension of this kind in the future, my Master will undertake to hold no communication henceforward with any medium or seer, without authenticating that communication by means of three pass-words which shall be made known to Messrs. A. O. Hume, President Olcott and A. P. Sinnett, Vice-President of the Simla “Eclectic Theosophical Society”; so that they may be enabled to declare explicitly that my Master cannot be the author of any statement attributed to him in which they do not find these words,

By order,

GJUAL-KHOOL * * *

One might suppose this precaution unnecessary, that the Masters had naught to do with seers and mediums; but this was not so. True, Master K. H. says:

In those days, you [Sinnett] were yet hesitating to see in Occultism or the “Old Lady’s” phenomena anything beyond a variety of Spiritualism and mediumship . . . For the first time in my life [toward the end of 1880], I paid serious attention to the utterances of “media” . . . M. knew all about them; but since I had never had anything to do with any of them, they interested me very little.¹⁵

But on the other hand, in 1883, he declares:

Suffice for me to say that “Ski” [the “guide” of Mrs. Hollis-Billing] has more than once served as a carrier and even a mouthpiece for several of us.¹⁶

And H.P.B., on July 21, 1882, writes:

K. H. and M. and the Chohan say that the Emperor of his [Stainton Moses’s] early mediumship *is* a Brother, and I will assert it over and over again; but assuredly the Emperor of then is not the Emperor of today.¹⁷

As late as 1884, Master M. gives an amusing and satirical account of a séance which Sinnett attended in Picadilly, over old S.’s mouldy bookshop; and reminds him of the above pass-words [sic]:

Spooks worked remarkably well, nothing abashed by my presence, of which neither W. E. [glinton] nor his bodyguard knew anything. My attention was attracted by their forging H. P. B.’s

¹⁵ *The Mahatma Letters*, p. 426.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 417.

¹⁷ *Letter from H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 22.

handwriting. Then I put aside my pipe and watched. Too much light coming from a Picadilly shop for the creatures . . . Poor entranced wretch. His astral ticks fabricated that letter of mine through means of their own . . . As for all of you, you did not watch very keenly while he was guided to place paper envelope between the leaves of a book and when he laid it upon the table, or you would have seen something very interesting for science. . . . Your memory is not good. Have you forgotten the agreement made at Prayag [Allahabad], and the pass-words [sic] that have to precede every genuine communication coming from us?¹⁸

In April, 1882, a whirlwind burst upon the devoted Theosophical Society. The first great controversy in which the infant T.S. had engaged took place in America between the Spiritualists and the Theosophists; and as Master K.H. says;

The battle kept raging hot and fierce till the very day of departure . . . Ransack Spiritualistic literature, if you will, to the year 1878; search and find in it, if you can, one single word about occult philosophy, or esotericism . . . This was the first war-cry.¹⁹

The second skirmish took place in India in 1882, when the split occurred between the T.S. and the Arya Samaj. In America the Founders had been the attacking party, in India they were attacked. It was the alliance with the Samaj that had drawn them to Hindustan, and “Dayanand stamped the movement with the impress of Aryan nationality”²⁰; but it was not destined to last. Of course, the real cause of disruption was the ambition of Swami Dayanand to figure as head of both Societies, and his jealousy of the growing fame of the T.S. in India; but the ostensible cause, the second “war-cry,” was the nature of God—Personal God or Abstract Principle of the Universe; and for some time THE THEOSOPHIST was much concerned with “P.G.” and Dwaitism or Adwaitism. In this philosophical battle, the Regent of India, Master Jupiter, took up the cudgels for his Society, in an article in the Supplement of the June THEOSOPHIST, entitled “A Mental Puzzle” and signed, “One of the Hindu Founders of the Parent Theosophical Society, Tiruvallam Hills, May 17”. He opens with a very telling contrast of statements made in “the last two numbers of Pandit Dayanand’s organ—*The Ārya*—and abandons them to the readers in the hope that someone may be able to solve this mental puzzle”. The following will serve as specimens:



Adyar (circa 1882)

¹⁸ *The Mahatma Letters*, pp. 431, 432.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 272.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 416.

Ārya of April, 1882

The Founders of the Society (our esteemed Brothers and allies) are the first and staunchest champions of the Vedas and the ancient philosophy of Āryavarta.

The Society is the most powerful ally that the Aryan religion and science have at the present time in the West.

Therefore the cause of the Theosophical Society is the cause of the Ārya Samaj, and every insult offered to the former our esteemed Brothers and allies, the Founders of the T.S. is equally painful to the latter.

In a footnote all the particulars of the Swāmī's joining the T.S., with dates of his diploma and initiation, are given; also places and times of his public meetings with the Founders and his public speeches supporting the T.S. The ground being thus cut away under the feet of this argument, next the philosophical basis of it is shown to be caused by a contradiction of their position on the part of the Samajists, not the Theosophists, in another clever contrast taken from their journal:

The Vedas teach us that our thoughts, words and deeds are the authors of our fate and of our future state. There is no stern deity punishing innocents, or an over-merciful one forgiving sinners.

Ārya of May, 1882

The alliance between the Ārya Samaj and the Theosophical Society has been broken off because the head Theosophists are new converts to Buddhism and no more for the Vedas.

They came to India as students, but have set themselves up as teachers, by establishing a Society of their own (!?) which has proved no practical good to India.

The reader should also know that Swamiji was never a Fellow of the T.S. (!!!) nor ever expressed a desire to be one. The only relation which he suffered to have been made consisted in his accepting to be their Instructor in the Vedas.

The highest aspiration of a Yogi is God, and they who have no faith in a God, as defined in the Vedas, which contain all the sublime doctrines of Yoga Vidyā, can never become Yogis.

The Master ends his long and telling article with the assertion that:

The PARABRAHM of the Vedantins and the ADI-BUDDHI of the northern Buddhists are identical. Both are Abstract Principles, or *non*-entities, Moksha and Nirvana being their immutable states; hence the re-absorption of the human spark of Parabrahm or Adi-Buddhi called by the vulgar "soul"—into the Parent Flame whence it proceeded—an end so eagerly sought for under the synonymous terms of "Moksha" and "Nirvana".

In THE THEOSOPHIST of October, 1881, there had appeared an article on "Death, by (the late) Eliphas Levi"; and in July, 1882, Mr. D. Khandalavala of Poona, put some questions on seeming discrepancies between the teachings of Levi and those given in *Fragments of Occult Truth*. At the foot of this letter, when it reached the editor at Bombay by post, were the words:

Send this to Mr. Sinnett. Having now received all the necessary explanations from me, he will not refuse me the personal favour I now ask him. Let him enlighten his brother-theosophists in his turn, by writing an answer to this for the next THEOSOPHIST, and sign himself—"A Ley Chela".

To which H. P. B. added, before sending it on to Mr. Sinnett:

And now he [K.H.] must needs precipitate here too! *Very* much obliged to him anyhow, one trouble less on my shoulders. Found the precipitation on opening the wrapper.²¹

In due course, Mr. Sinnett replied to H. P. B.:

I began to try to answer N. D. Khandalavala's letter at once, so that if K. H. meant the note to appear in this immediately "next" THEOSOPHIST for August, it might be in time. But I soon got into a tangle. Of course, we have received no information that distinctly covers the question now raised, though I suppose we ought to be able to combine bits into an answer.

Evidently he could not "combine bits" satisfactorily; for he returned the MS. to Mme. Blavatsky with a postscript:

As you may want to print the letter in this number, I return it herewith, but hope that this may *not* be the case, and that you will send it me back again, so that I may duly perform my little task with the help of a few words as to the line to be followed.²²

And she received it with the humorous stricture:

Why you sent me back the MS. of Khandalavala is more than I can tell. K.H. says you *do* know and have to know, and that it is only your viciousness that prevents you from admitting that you *do* know *but won't* tell. To tell truth, it is not K.H. who says so, but I know he *must think* so, and that's the same thing. However, he carried it off in *disgust with* you, I feel sure of it. Good Bye.

Nobody's H. P. Blavatsky²³

And it was the Master who finalised the matter, as is shown by his remark to Sinnett

When I wrote for you the materials for your answer to Mr. Khandalavala's letter that you sent back to H. P. B.²⁴

The letter and the answer thus furnished were published in the November issue of 1882, and called "Death Immortality". It is interesting to find that the answer is introduced by three stars in the form of a triangle. When one looks through the early issues of the journal with seeing eyes (as in the case of the folio edition of Shakespeare, knowing the cyphers), secrets are revealed: ∴ for a Master; ∴ for an Initiate; even the degrees of Initiation being sometimes marked, as when in THE THEOSOPHIST of September, 1882:

We, the undersigned, the "Accepted" and "Probationary" Hindu Chelas of the HIMALAYAN BROTHERS, their disciples India and Northern Cashmere, respectfully claim our right to protest against the tone used in the above article and the bold claims of H.X. chela, etc.

(Signed)

DEVA MUNI ∴ ∴

PARAMAHAMSA SHUB TUNG ∴ ∴ ∴

²¹ *Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 364.

²² *The Mahatma Letters*, p. 125.

²³ *Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 28.

²⁴ *The Mahatma Letters*, p. 189.

T. Subba Row, B. A., EL., F.T.S.
 Derbhagiri Nath], F.T,S.
 S. Ramaswamier, B.A., KT. S.
 Ouala K, Deb, F.T.S.
 Nobin K. Bannerjee, F.T.S.
 T.T. Gurudas, F.T.S.
 Bholā Deva Sarma, F.T.S.
 S. T. K. . . . Chary, F.T.S,
 Gargya Devi, F.T.S.
 Damodar K. Mavalankar, F.T.S.²⁵

In August, 1882, Master K.H. wrote to Mr. Sinnett:

To reconcile you still more with Eliphas, I will send you a number of his MSS,—that have never been published, with my comments all through.²⁶

However, the MSS. went instead to Mr. Hume, who translated them from the French for THE THEOSOPHIST; for when Mr. Sinnett reminded the Master:

Memo: at convenience to send A. P. S. those unpublished notes of Eliphas Levi, with annotations by K.H.,²⁷

the Master replied:

Sent long ago to our Jakko friend [Hume, of Simla];²⁸

And later wrote:

In the forthcoming [November] THEOSOPHIST, you will find a note or two appended to Hume's translation of Eliphas Levi's *Preface*, in connection with the lost continent.²⁹

There are really a number of footnotes attached article, which is called "Gleanings from Eliphas Levi: Extracts from the Introduction to the *Dogme de la Haute Magie*". The notes are of great interest; for even in such terse form the Master throws a penetrating light into abstruse questions on dim old myths of the Magi, Atlantis, the god Pan, etc.; as an illustration:

Cupid, the god, is the seventh principle, or Brahm of the Vedantins; and Psyche is its vehicle, the sixth principle, or spiritual soul. As soon as she feels herself distinct from her

²⁵ The article referred to is "C. C. M. [asse]y and *Isis Unveiled*," by "H.X." [A. O. Hume], who states, among other opinions, that he considers it a "sin on the Masters not to communicate all the knowledge they possess to the world". Master K.H. says that the names in capitals are those of the confidential chelas of the Chohan himself and that the "Protest" was published by his order. *Ibid.*, pp. 292,293.

²⁶ *The Mahatma Letters*, p. 134.

Master K.H. once remarked of Levi's book: "No wonder you think it cloudy, for it was never meant for the uninitiated reader. Eliphas studied from the Rosicrucian MSS. (now reduced to three in Europe). These expound our eastern doctrines from the teachings of Rosencreuz, who, upon his return from Asia, dress them up semi-Christian garb, intended as a shield for his pupils against clerical revenge. One must have the key to it, and that key is a science *per se*. Rosencreuz taught orally. St. Germain recorded the good doctrine in figures and his only cyphered MS. remained with his staunch friend and patron, the benevolent German Prince from who house and in whose presence he made his last exit—Home."

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 144.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

²⁹ *The Mahatma Letters*, p. 156.

“consort” – and sees him – she loses him. Study the “Heresy of Individuality”, you will understand.

There is one among these footnotes of Master K.H. which is of peculiar significance, because its author had recently experienced what he describes. This note deals with Initiation and the Initiator, treating the subject chiefly from the Christian and Jewish points of view, but adding:

To this day, the Initiation *beyond* the Himalayas is followed the temporary death (from three to six months) of the disciple, often of the Initiator.

Now in September, 1881, the Master Koot-Hum had notified his two “lay chelas,” Sinnett and Hume, that

I will soon have to leave you to yourselves for a period of three months.³⁰

As a matter of fact, they were not left to themselves; for Master Morya took over their correspondence, and his letters reveal a glimpse of the wonderful experience through Mahatma K.H. was then passing, and still more of the exquisite relationship existing between the two Masters. He writes:

When his (K.H.’s) ‘retreat’ was decided upon, in parting he asked me: “Will you watch over my work, will you see it promised. What would I not hour!³¹ At a certain spot not to outsiders, there is a chasm of woven grasses, and with a The bravest member of your scarcely dare to venture the a spider’s web, and *seems* to impassable. Yet it is not; and and succeeds—as he will if it permitted—comes into a beauty of scenery, to one of of *our* people, of which and minute among European stone’s throw from the old tower, within whose bosom generations of Bodhisatwas.³² rests your lifeless friend—my soul, to whom I made a watch during his absence over



Master M.'s turban given to Col. Olcott in New York (*The Theosophist*, August 1932)

falls no in ruins?” I have promised him that be mentioned to spanned by a frail bridge raging torrent beneath. Alpine Clubs would passage, for it hangs like be rotten and he who dares the trial is right that he should be gorge of surpassing *our* places and to some whom there is no note or geographers. At a Lamasery stands the old have gestated It is there now where brother, the light of my faithful promise to his work. . . .³³

Koot-Humi went to see him (as he is his chela) before going into Tong-pa-nyi—the state in which he now is. . . .³⁴

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 206.

³¹ Djwal Khul reveals the magnitude of this promise in his remark: “M. Sahib’s only hatred in his life is for writing” (*Ibid.* p. 250); and it is echoed in the sigh which Master M. says: “I close the longest letter I have ever written in my life; but as it is for K.H. am satisfied.” (*Ibid.* p. 228.)

³² Compare: “Unless on had become in the interim a Bodhisatwa, are Arhat.” (*The Mahatma Letters*, p.198.)

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 219.

Not having the right to follow K.H., I feel lonely without my boy. . . .³⁵

I would not have even the desert wind listen to a word said at low breadth against him who now sleeps. . . .³⁶

Master K.H.'s footnote on Initiation, written not long his return from Tong-pa-ngi, is worthy of fuller quotation, and will be of special interest to Freemasons:

In the Christian legend, the "Redeemer" is the "Initiator" who offers his life in sacrifice for the privilege of teaching his disciples some great truths. He who unriddles the Christian sphinx "becomes the master of the reason that the greatest initiations is made plain and who would fathom the Cross study the modes of Chaldeans, ancient Jews, find what the word Christianity—meant, as also

At the last moment of when the Initiator divulged either the Hierophant or the *of the two*, had to die; since must not live, and *he who is* earth. Eliphaz Levi hints at the without explaining it. Yet dies – mysteriously

Mt. Pisgah after he had "laid his of Jesus, who dies for the

the author of the Apocalypse; and of John the Baptist—the last of the real Nazars of *The Old Testament* (See *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. II, p. 132.)



**Initiation in the Eleusianian
Mysteries
(Wikimedia Commons)**

Absolute," for the simple mystery of *all* the ancient divulged to him . . . Let him mystery of both Sphinx and initiation of the Egyptians, Hindus, etc.; and then he will 'Atonement'—far older than the 'Baptism of Blood'.

the supreme initiation, the last mysterious word, "newly born," *the worthier* two Adepts of equal power *perfect* has no room on mystery in his volumes, he speaks of Moses who disappears from the top of hand" upon the initiated Aaron; disciple "whom he loved," John,

In these documents, *Aba*, the Father, becomes the Son, and the Son succeeds the Father, and becomes *Father and Son* at the same time, 'inspired by Sophia Achamoth (secret wisdom), transformed later into the Holy Ghost . . .

To this day the Initiation *beyond* the Himalayas is followed by the temporary death (from three to six months) of the disciple, often that of the Initiator; but the Buddhists do not spill blood, for they have a horror of it, knowing that blood attracts 'evil powers'. At the initiation of the Chhinnamasta Tantrikas (from *chhinna*, "severed," and *masta*, "head," the Goddess Chhinnamasta being represented with a decapitated head), the Tāntrik Shastras say that as soon as the Adept has reached the highest degree of perfection, he has to initiate his successor and—die, "cut off his own head with his light hand, holding it in the left".

Three streams of blood gush out from the headless trunk. One of these is directed *in the mouth* of the decapitated head ("My blood is drink indeed" — the injunction in. John that so shocked the

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 375.

³⁵ *The Mahatma Letters*, p. 439.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 375.

disciples); another is directed towards the earth as an offering of the pure sinless blood to Mother Earth; and the third gushes towards heaven as a witness for the sacrifice of “self-immolation”.

Now this has a profound occult significance which is known only to the initiated. Nothing like the truth is explained by the Christian dogma; and imperfectly as they have defined it, the quasi-inspired authors of *The Perfect Way*³⁷ reveal the truth far nearer than any of the Christian commentators.

1883 still finds Master K.H. extremely active in carrying on THE THEOSOPHIST. On February 2nd, he writes to Mr. Sinnett:

I am specially anxious — on M.’s account — that the Journal should be made as much as possible a success; and should be circulated more than it is now in England.³⁸

Again, he says of Lillie’s *Buddha and Early Buddhism*:

I will have it reviewed by Subba Row or H.P.B., furnishing them with notes myself.³⁹

And later in the year, when Sinnett had gone to England, he urges him to contribute:

If you find time to write for THE THEOSOPHIST and can induce someone else, as Mr. Myers, for instance—you will oblige me personally.⁴⁰

On August 22nd, 1883, Col. Olcott joined Mme. Blavatsky at Ootacamund, the hill-station of Madras, where she had been staying some little time at “the Retreat,” the home of Major-General Morgan. He tells how delighted she was to see him after his prolonged lecture tour, and how she worked off some of her excitement by keeping him up that night till 2 a.m., reading proofs and correcting her MS. He says:

Part of her work was the taking from dictation from her invisible teacher of the “Replies to an English F.T.S.” which contained among other things the now oft-quoted prophecy of the direful things and many cataclysms that would happen in the near future, when the cycle should close. That she was taking down from dictation was fully apparent to one who was familiar with her ways.⁴¹

Writing to Mr. Sinnett from Ootacamund, Mme. Blavatsky says:

I wish your “London Lodge” new members would not write questions necessitating such ample answers. Why, bless you only the half of the “Replies” fill up a whole form of the September THEOSOPHIST! and fancy the pleasure. It is *I* who had to copy most of them, written half by M, half by either chelas or handwritings I see for the first time, as no printer the world over could make out M’s handwriting. It is more red and fierce than ever!

And then I do not like them a bit, the “Replies”. Where’s the necessity of writing three pages for every line of the question, and explaining things that after all none of them, except yourself perhaps, will understand? Science, science and science. Modern physical science be hanged! And the October number having to devote 15 columns perhaps to answering the Questions and *Objections* by “an English F.T.S.” M. ordered Subba Row to answer his objection on the date of Buddha’s birth and Cunningham’s fanciful dates, Holy shadow! And who is Mr. Myers that my big Boss should waste a bucketful of his red ink to satisfy *him*? And He won’t; see if He does. For Mr. Myers will not be satisfied with negative proofs and the evidence of the failings of European

³⁷ By Dr. Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland.

³⁸ *The Mahatma Letters*, p. 201.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 428.

⁴¹ *Old Diary Leaves*, Vol. II, p. 466.

astronomers and physicists. But does he really think that any of the “adepts” will give out their real *esoteric* teaching in THE THEOSOPHIST?⁴²

And again, writing in September, she remarks:

As M. says, “Remains to be seen how Mr. F. V. [should be W.] Myers will receive the Replies”—whether he will not be the first one (and if not he, then other members) to call them ignorant fools, illiterate Asiatics, “with a small Oriental brain” as Wyld expressed it—wanting to make believe, I suppose, that his Jesus was an Anglo-Saxon Āryan. I say those “Replies to an English F.T.S.” are time lost. They will not accept the truth, and they occupy half of every number of THE THEOSOPHIST that comes out, crowding out other matter . . . I am really sorry. It does seem wisdom thrown out of the window. Well—Their ways *are* mysterious.⁴³

These “Replies” were published as follows:

August: DEVACHAN: Memorandum, with three “Replies”:

1. The Real and the Unreal,
2. Dream Life,
3. The Various States of Devachan.

Master K. H. says of them:

Again and once more, an attempt has been made to dispel some of that great mist that I find in Mr. Massey’s Devachan.⁴⁴

And H. P. B., in an editorial note attached to them, says that they come from three different sources.

September: SOME ENQUIRIES SUGGESTED BY MR SINNETT’S ESOTERIC BUDDHISM:

1. Do the Adepts Deny the Nebular Theory?
2. Is the Sun Merely a Cooling Mass?
3. Are the Great Nations to be Swept Away in an Hour?
4. Is the Moon Immersed in Matter?
5. About the Mineral Monad.
8. Shrī Sankarāchārya’s Date and Doctrine.

It is of these that H.P.B. stated, they were “written half by M., half by chelas or handwritings I see for the first time”; and she gave Mr. Sinnett a piece of her mind in regard to the question about the moon, when writing from Ootacamund to him on August 23rd:

And now, speaking of moons, why should you, in pity’s sale, speak of forbidden things! Did I not tell you a hundred times that They allowed no one to know or speak of this eighth sphere; and how do *you* know it is the moon, as we all *see* it? And why should you print about it? And now “an English F.T.S.” comes out with his question, and this ass Wyld calling it a dust-bin [sic]. I called his head a dust-bin [sic] in *Light*. You will both catch it in the Answer, you may bet your bottom dollar! for they (the answers) have arrived, the last ones tonight, and *vous ne l’aurez pas volé*, as the French say, your *savonade*! When Subba Row read the question discussed in your book, he nearly fainted;

⁴² *Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 46.

⁴³ *Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 59.

⁴⁴ *The Mahatma Letters*, p. 339.

and when he read it (Mr. Myers's question) in the galleys—Damodar writes that he *became green*.⁴⁵

The *savonade* is as follows, in the September THEOSOPHIST:

QUESTION IV

IS THE MOON IMMERSSED IN MATTER?

No "Adept," so far as the writers know, has ever given to "Lay Chela" his "views on the moon" for publication. With Selenography, modern science is far better acquainted than any humble Asiatic ascetic may ever hope to become. It is to be feared that the speculations on pp. 104 and 105 in *Esoteric Buddhism*, besides being hazy, are somewhat premature. Therefore it may be as well to pass on to Question V.

But Sinnett was not the only one to receive a *savonade*! Says she later:

Boss [Master M.] blew me up several times for talking too much and telling you things I knew nothing much of myself—as about this darned "Moon" question. I was abused more than I ever *was* for this, when the question of the moon "dust-bin" came out. It's all that wretched Wyld.⁴⁶

October 6: HISTORICAL DIFFICULTY—WHY?

Of this H.P.B. writes to Mr. Sinnett:

She (Mrs. Kingsford) can hardly be an infallible Seer, or else Maitland would not have attributed to "Mad. Blavatsky" a sentence written by the Tiravellum Mahatma in "Reply VI" of October. I have his MSS. I must be deuced clever to have written the "Replies" in THE THEOSOPHIST; I do not understand ten lines of that occult and scientific jibberish.⁴⁷

November 7: PHILOLOGICAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL DIFFICULTIES.

Also Subba Row's INSCRIPTIONS DISCOVERED BY A. CUNNINGHAM, of which she says:

What do you mean by saying that "their Lordships" write too much for your London Society? It is my Boss and two others you do not know. It is *against science* and not *for your members* that they write. And I always said it was useless and time lost; for no one will believe, and very few will understand; *I don't!* What do you mean by abusing Subba Row? Why, read his last against Cunningham. The old man wrote to him and has made him hundred questions, *for the sake of science and archaeology*, which Subba Row says *he will no answer*.⁴⁸

And Master K.H.:

See his last in the November issue. His statement concerning the errors of General Cunningham ought to be regarded as a whole revelation in Indian archaeology. Ten to one it will never receive the attention it deserves.⁴⁹

It is in "Reply VII" that the prophecy occurs which was mentioned by Col. Olcott. It will be of interest:

⁴⁵ *Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 52.

⁴⁶ *Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to Sinnett*, p. 72.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

⁴⁹ *The Mahatma Letters*, p. 429.

We are at the end of a cycle—geological and other—and at the beginning of another. Cataclysm is to follow cataclysm. The pent up forces are bursting out in many quarters; and not only will men be swallowed up or slain by thousands, “new” land appear and “old” subside, volcanic eruptions and tidal waves appal; but secretes of an unsuspected Past will be uncovered to the dismay of western theorists and the humiliation of an imperious science. We are not emulous of the prophet’s honours; but still, let this stand as a prophecy.

In all these “Replies to an English F.T.S.,” there much important matter, and it would be well if they were to be incorporated into Mr. Sinnett’s *Esoteric Buddhism* as an Appendix. With the exception of those dealing with Devachan, the “Replies” were reprinted in *Five Years of Theosophy*, and so made available to the general reader.

The literary labours of the Masters for THE THEOSOPHIST, though extensive, seem to have been mere incidents in her busy lives. We get occasional glimpses into the state of things from their correspondence; for example, Master K.H. explains to Mr. Sinnett:

Writing my letters, then, as I do, a few lines now and a few words two hours later; having to catch up the thread of the same subject, with perhaps a dozen interruptions between the beginning and the end; I cannot promise you anything like Western accuracy.⁵⁰

Under more favourable circumstances, he writes:

This abundance of MSS. from me of late shows that I have round a little leisure; their blotched, patchy and mended appearance also shows that my leisure has come by snatches, with constant interruptions; and that my writing has been done in odd places, here end there, with such materials as I could pick up. But for the RULE [since the palmy days of the “impressions” and “precipitations,” p. 425] that forbids using one minim of power until every ordinary means has been tried and failed; I might, of course, have given you a lovely “precipitation” as regards chirography and composition. I console myself for the miserable appearance of my letters with the thought that perhaps you may not value them the less for these marks of my personal subjection to the wayside annoyances which you English so ingeniously reduce to a minimum with your appliances of sorts. As your lady once kindly remarked, they take away effectually the flavour of miracle, and make us as human beings more thinkable entities – a wise reflection for which I thank her.⁵¹

Once upon a time it was Mr. Sinnett’s letter which was subjected to “wayside annoyances”. It happened after this fashion, as related by the Master:

I cannot close without telling you of an incident which, however ludicrous, has led to something that makes me thank my stars for it, and will please you also. Your letter, enclosing that of C.C.M., was received by me on the morning following the date you handed it over to the “little man”. I was then in the neighbourhood of Pari-Jong, at the gun-pa of a friend, and was very busy with important affairs. When I received intimation of its arrival, I was just crossing the large inner courtyard of the monastery. Bent upon listening to the voice of Lama Töndhüb Gyatcho, I had no time to read the contents.

So, after mechanically opening the thick packet, I merely glanced at it and put it, as I thought, into the travelling bag I wear across the shoulder. In reality though, it dropped on the ground; and since I had broken the envelope and emptied it of its contents, the latter were scattered in their fall. There was no one near me at the time, and my attention being wholly absorbed with the conversation,

⁵⁰ *The Mahatma Letters*, p. 186

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

I had already reached the staircase leading to the library when I heard the voice of a young *gyloong* calling out from a window and expostulating with someone at a distance.

Turning round I understood the situation at a glance; otherwise your letter would never have been read by me, for I saw a venerable, old goat in the act of making a morning meal of it. The creature had already devoured part of C.C.M.'s letter, and was thoughtfully preparing to have a bite at yours, more delicate and easy for chewing, with his old teeth than the tough envelope and paper of your correspondent's epistle. To rescue what remained of it took me but one short instant, disgust and opposition of the animal notwithstanding – but there remained mighty little of it.

The envelope with your crest on had nearly disappeared, the contents of the letters been made illegible—in short, I was perplexed at the sight of the disaster. Now you know *why* I felt embarrassed: *I*

restore it, the from the connected hapless sides. What restore the

I had humbly crave the Chohan to exceptional dire necessity, holy face before twinkling in

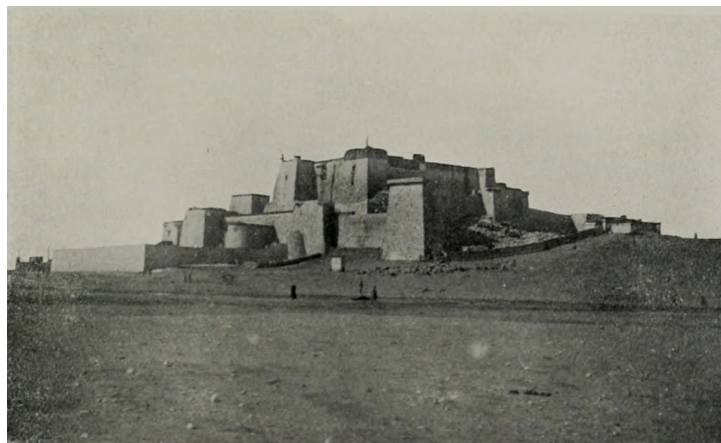
manner, and heard his voice: “Why break the rule? I will do it myself.” These simple words, *Kam mi ts'har*—“I'll do it,” contain a world of hope for me.

He has restored the missing parts and done it quite neatly too, as you see, and even transformed a crumpled broken envelope, very much damaged, into a new one—crest and all. Now I know what great power had to be used for such a restoration, and this leads me to hope for a relaxation of severity one of these days.

Hence I thanked the goat heartily; and since he does not beg to the ostracised Peling race, to show my gratitude I strengthened whatever remained of teeth in his mouth, and set the dilapidated remains firmly in their sockets, so that he may chew food harder than English letters for several years yet to come.⁵⁴

Very humorously the Master describes an occasion of special dearth of materials:

Time is precious and material still more so. “Precipitation” having become in your ease unlawful, and I, being far away from home, and at a place where a stationer's shop is less needed than breathing air, our correspondence threatens to break very suddenly unless I manage my stock in hand judiciously. A friend [it was Djwal Khul] promises to supply me, in case of great need, with a few stray sheets, memento relics of his grandfather's will, by which he disinherited him and thereby



Pari-Jong monastery, mentioned by Master K.H. in his letter to Mr Sinnett (photograph of 1903, Wikimedia Commons)

had no right to letters coming “Eclectic”⁵² and directly with the “Pelings”⁵³ on all could I do to missing parts!

already resolved to permission from be allowed an privilege in this when I saw his me, with his eye quite an unusual

⁵² Simla Eclectic T.S.

⁵³ Tibetan for “foreigners”.

⁵⁴ *The Mahatma Letters*, p. 320.

made his “fortune”. But as he never wrote one line but once, he says, for the last eleven years, except on such “double *superfin glacé*,” made at Thibet, as you might irreverently take for blotting paper in its primitive days, and as the will is drawn on like material—we might as well turn to your book at once.⁵⁵

In another instance, the first part of a letter was written on thin rice-paper, while the remainder was on rough parchment-like material. It would seem that Master Morya sometimes suffered from the same lack of literary tools, for he once wrote to Mr. Sinnett:

My writing is good, but the paper rather thin for penmanship. Cannot write English with a brush though; would be worse.⁵⁶

The remark about his writing being good is a bit of humour; for he often laughs at his writing, and describes a particularly atrocious penman as “a scribe and calligrapher of my kind”⁵⁷. He once told Mr. Sinnett, when the latter had been thinking much about him,

You make my snake-like signature haunt me even in my sleep.⁵⁸

At another time he exclaims,

My message in a *feigned* hand, when I am at dead loggerheads with my own!⁵⁹

However, he took himself in hand in the matter of penmanship; for later he writes:

I trust you will not find much difficulty – not as much, hitherto—in making out my letter. I have become a very plain writer since K.H. reproached me with making you lose your valuable time over my scrawlings. His rebuke struck home, and as you see, I have mended my evil ways.⁶⁰

The Editor, or rather the Founders, had their difficulties too, which H.P.B., feelingly depicts for Mr. Sinnett’s benefit in a letter in September, 1883, when he had been contemplating the founding of a new daily to be called *The Phoenix*:

Do you forget that you are addressing two beggars with two Hindū other beggars to help them in the management, and not rich *Pioneer* with lakhs behind it? I would like to see *you* undertake the management and editing of *Phoenix* with two pence in your pocket; with a host of enemies around; no friends to help you; yourself—editor, manager, clerk, and even *peon* [messenger] very often; with a poor half-broken down Damodar to help you alone for three years, one who was a boy right from the school-bench, having no idea of business any more than I have; and Olcott always—seven months in the year—away! Why, we have made miracles in rearing up, alone, and in the face of such antagonism, paper, Society and business in general . . . Please remember that while you, in the midst of all your arduous labours as Editor of *The Pioneer*, used leave your work regularly at 4, after beginning it at 10 a.m. – and, went away either to lawn tennis or a drive; Olcott and I begin ours at 5 in the morning with candle-light, and end it sometimes at 2 a.m. We have no time for tennis as you had, and clubs and theatres and social intercourse. We have no time hardly to eat and drink.⁶¹

And when later Damodar was taken to the Master’s Ashrama, she exclaims in despair:

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 72.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 253.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 259.

⁵⁹ *The Mahatma Letters*, p. 431.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

⁶¹ *Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 57.

And now what *shall* we do in the office *without* Damodar? Ye gods and powers of Heaven and Hell, we didn't have work and trouble enough! Well, well, Their Will be done, not mine.

One last example with which to close this sketch of the work of the Masters in connection with THE THEOSOPHIST in its early days. Another Brother who contributed occasionally was Master Hilarion, or Illarion. It is he of whom Master K.H. said, "The adept who writes stories with H.P.B."⁶² In the issue of January, 1880, there appeared a story entitled, "The Ensouled Violin," which was signed, "By Hilarion Smerdis, F.T.S., Cyprus, October 1, 1879". H.P.B. later incorporated it in *Nightmare Tiles*. Another tale, evidently a narration by him of events known to and experienced by her, was republished in THE THEOSOPHIST of January, 1883, from the *New York Sun*, where it had appeared in the 1870's, when H.P.B. was contributing to that daily under the *nom de plume* of "Hadji Mora". She says of it:

This story was put up for me and arranged by Illarion; and he says, and said again only that day I quarrelled with Sellin, "As every word of the evocation of Frosya by Gospoja is true, so the scenes in Vienna and double Popesco told you". I thought

Why, you knew was October, 1867. I was in perhaps a month before, Obrenovitz was killed. towards Belgrad, where in (as ordered by Master)—to through Serbia and the certain . . . he sent after me; Gospoja and Frosya, about murder, I believe. All is account of the "double from Mme. Popesco; and in I put it only a few days

. . . The Hospodar was 1868, I think (see

in Florence after Mentana, and on my way to India with Master from Constantinople . . . I knew the Gospoja and Frosya and the Princess Katinka, and even the Gospoja Michael Obrenovitz, far earlier. The paragraph in some Temesvar paper was given to me in 1872 (I believe), when I went from Odessa to Bukharest visit my friend, Mme. Popesco. Why, every detail is true – so far as I am concerned, and the actors in it.⁶⁴

Here follows the tale:

CAN THE DOUBLE MURDER? FROM "THE THEOSOPHIST" OF JANUARY, 1883



H. P. Blavatsky

you [Sinnett] knew it

from the first that Mentana⁶³ Florence about Christmas, when the poor Michael Then I went to Antemari and the mountains I had to wait Constantinople, passing Karpats Mts., waiting for a and it is there that I met a month or two after the true, except that I read the murder" four years later, the story, for sensation sake, later, at Temesvar—that's all killed in the beginning of Encyclopaedia), when I was

⁶² C. Jinarajadasa's *Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom, First Series*, p.59.

⁶³ The battle in which H.P.B. was severally wounded.

⁶⁴ *The Letters from H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 152.

(The story which follows was written by the editor of this magazine some years ago at the request of a literary friend⁶⁵ in America, and published in a leading journal of New York. It is reprinted because the events actually occurred, and they possess a very deep interest for the student of psychological science. They show in a marked degree the enormous potentiality of the human will upon mesmeric, subjects, whose whole being may be so imbued with an imparted intellectual preconception that the “double” or *māyāvi-rūpa*, when projected transcorporeally, will carry out mesmeriser’s mandate with hopeless subserviency. The fact that a mortal wound may be inflicted upon the inner man without puncturing the epidermis will be a novelty only to such readers have not closely examined the records and noted the many proofs that death may result from many psychical causes besides the emotions, whose lethal power is universally conceded.—EDITOR.)

One morning in 1867 Eastern Europe was startled by news of the most terrifying description. Michael Obrenovitch, reigning Prince of Serbia; his aunt, the Princess Catherine, or Katinka as she was called; and her daughter, had been murdered in broad daylight near Belgrade, in their own garden, the assassin or assassins remaining unknown. The Prince had received several bullet shots and stabs, and his body was actually butchered; the Princess was killed on the spot, her head smashed; and her young daughter, though still alive, was not expected to survive. The circumstances are too recent to have been forgotten; but in that part of the world, at that time, the case created a delirium of excitement.

In the Austrian dominions and those under the doubtful protection of Turkey, from Bucharest down to Trieste, no high family felt secure. In those half-oriental countries every Montecchi has his Capuletti, and it was rumoured that the bloody deed was perpetrated by the Prince Kara-Gueorguevitch, an old pretender to the modest throne of Serbia, whose father ad been wronged by the first Obrenovitch. The members of this family were known to nourish the bitterest hatred towards one whom they called an usurper, and “the shepherd’s grandson”. For a time the official papers of Austria were filled with indignant denials of the charge that the treacherous deed had been done or procured by “Tzerno-Gueorguey,” as he is usually called in those parts. Several persons, innocent of the act, were as is usual in such cases imprisoned, and the real murderers escaped justice.

A young relative of the victim, greatly beloved by his people, a mere child, taken for the purpose from a school in Paris, was brought over in ceremony to Belgrade, and proclaimed Hospodar of Serbia. (Milan, now King of Serbia. Editor). In the turmoil of political excitement, the tragedy of Belgrade was forgotten, by all but an old Serbian matron who had been attached to the Obrenovitch family and who, like Rachel, would not be consoled for the death of her children. After the proclamation of the young Obrenovitch, the nephew of the murdered man, she had sold out her property and disappeared, but not before taking a solemn vow the tombs of the victims to avenge their deaths.

The writer of this truthful narrative had passed a few days at Belgrade about three months before the horrid deed was perpetrated, and knew the Princess Katinka. She was kind, gentle and lazy at home; abroad she seemed a Parisian in manners and education. As nearly

⁶⁵ The “literary friend” is evidently Master Hilarion, of whom she notes in her Scrapbook I, on a press cutting dated May 27, 1875, that “At [trya] and Ill [arion] passed through New York and Boston; thence through California and Japan, back.”

all the personages who will figure in this story are still living, it is but decent that I should withhold their names and give only initials.

The old Serbian lady seldom left her house, going out to see the Princess occasionally. Crouched on a pile of pillows and carpeting, clad in the picturesque national dress, looked like the Cumaean Sibyl in her days of calm repose. Strange stories were whispered about her occult knowledge and thrilling accounts circulated sometimes among the guests assembled round the fireside of my modest inn.

Our fat landlady's maiden aunt's cousin had been troubled for some time past by a wandering vampire, and had been bled nearly to death by the nocturnal visitor; and while the efforts and exorcisms of the parish pope had been of no avail, the victim was luckily delivered by Gospoja P. (or Mrs. P), who had put to flight the disturbing ghost by merely shaking her fist at him, and shaming him in his own language. It was at Belgrade that I learned for the first time this highly interesting fact of philology; namely, that spooks have language of their own.

The old lady, whom I will, then, call Gospoja P., was generally attended by another personage, destined to be principal actress in our tale of horror. It was a young girl from some part of Roumania, about fourteen years of age. Where she was born and who she was, she seemed to know as little as anyone else. I was told that she had been brought one day by a party of strolling gypsies, and left in the yard of the old lady, from which moment she became an inmate of the house. She was nicknamed the "sleeping girl," as she was said to be gifted with the faculty of apparently dropping asleep wherever she stood, and speaking her dreams aloud. The girl's heathen name was Frosya.

About eighteen months after the news of the murder reached Italy (where I was at the time), I was travelling over the Banat in a small waggon of my own, hiring a horse whenever I needed it, after the fashion of this primitive trusting country. I met on my way an old Frenchman, scientist, travelling alone after my own fashion; but with that difference that while he was a pedestrian, I dominated the road from the eminence of a throne of dry hay, in a jolting waggon. I discovered him one fine morning, slumbering in wilderness of shrubs and flowers, and had nearly passed over him, absorbed as I was in contemplation of the surrounding glorious scenery. The acquaintance was soon made, no great ceremony of mutual introduction being needed. I had heard his name mentioned in circles interested in mesmerism, and knew him to be a powerful adept of the school of Dupotet.

"I have found," he remarked in the course of the conversation, after I had made him share my seat of hay, "one of the most powerful subjects in this lovely Thebaide. I have an appointment tonight with the family. They are seeking to unravel the mystery of a murder by means of the clairvoyance of the girl. She is wonderful; very, very wonderful."

"Who is she?" I asked.

"A Roumanian gypsy. She was brought up, it appears, in the family of the Serbian reigning Prince who reigns no ore, for he was very mysteriously murdered. Hol-la-a-h! Take care! Diable, you will upset us over the precipice!" he hurriedly exclaimed, unceremoniously snatching from me the reins, and giving the horse a violent pull.

"Do you mean the Prince Obreinovitch?" I asked, aghast.

"Yes; I do, and him precisely. Tonight I have to be there, hoping to close a series of séances, by finally developing a most marvellous manifestation of the hidden power of the

human spirit, and you may come with me. I will introduce you; and besides, you can help me as an interpreter, for they not speak French.”

As I was pretty sure that if the somnanbula was Frosya, the rest of the family must be Gospoja P, I readily accepted. At sunset we were at the foot of the mountain, leading to the old castle, as the Frenchman called the place. It fully deserved the poetical name given to it.

There was a rough bench in the depths of one of the shadowy retreats; and as we stopped at the entrance of this poetical place and the Frenchman was gallantly busy himself with my horse, on the suspicious-looking bridge which led across the water to the entrance gate, I saw a tall figure slowly rise from the bench and come towards us. It was my old friend, Gospoja P, and looking more pale and more mysterious than ever. She exhibited no surprise at seeing me, but simply greeting me after the Serbian fashion—with triple kiss on both cheeks—took hold of my hand and led straight to the nest of ivy. Half reclining on a small carpet spread on the tall grass, with her back leaning against the wall, I recognised our Frosya.

She was dressed in the national costume of the Vallachian women: a sort of gauze turban intermingled with various gilt medals and beads on her head, white shirt with opened sleeves, and petticoats of variegated colors. Her face looked deadly pale, her eyes were closed, and her countenance presented that stony, sphinx-like look which characterises it such a peculiar way the entranced clairvoyant somnambulists. If it were not for the heaving motion of her chest and bosom, ornamented with like rows of medals and necklaces, which feebly tinkled at every breath, one might have thought her dead, so lifeless and corpse-like was her face.

The Frenchman informed me that he had sent her to her sleep just as we were approaching the house, and that she now was as he had left her the previous night. He then began busying himself with the *subject*, as he called Frosya. Paying no further attention to us, he shook her by the hand, and then making a few rapid passes stretched out her arm and stiffened it. The arm, as rigid as iron, remained in that position. He then closed all her fingers but one—the middle finger—which he caused to point at the evening star that twinkled in the deep blue sky. Then he turned round and went from right to left, throwing out some of his fluid here, again discharging at another place, and busying himself with his invisible but potent fluids, like a painter with his brush when giving the last touches to a picture.

The old lady, who had silently watched him with her chin in her hand the while, put out her thin, skeleton-looking hand on his arm, and arrested it, as he was preparing himself begin the regular mesmeric passes.

“Wait,” she whispered, “till the star is set, and the ninth hour completed! The *Voordalaki* are hovering around; they may spoil the influence.”

“What does she say?” inquired the mesmeriser, annoyed at her interference.

I explained to him that the old lady feared the pernicious influences of the *Voordalaki*. “*Voordalaki*? What’s that, the *Voordalaki*?” exclaimed the Frenchman. “Let us be satisfied with Christian spirits, if they honor us tonight with a visit, and lose no time for the *Voordalaki*.”

I glanced at the Gospoja. She had become deathly pale, and her brow was sternly knit over her flashing black brows. “Tell him not to jest at this hour of the night!” she cried. “He does not know the country. Even this holy Church may fail to protect us, once the *Voordalaki* are aroused. . . . What’s this?” pushing with her foot a bundle of herbs the botanising mesmeriser had laid near on the grass. She bent over the collection, and anxiously examined

the contents of the bundle, after which she flung the whole in the water, to the great wrath of the Frenchman.

“It must not be left here,” she firmly said; “these are the St. John’s plants, and they might attract ‘the wandering one’.”

Meanwhile the night had come, and the moon illuminated the landscape with a pale, ghastly light. The nights in Banat are nearly as beautiful as in the East, and the Frenchman had to go on with his experiments in the open air, the pope of the church had prohibited such in his tower, which was used as the parsonage, for fear of filling the precincts with the heretical devils of the mesmeriser, which he remarked he would be unable to exorcise on account of their being foreigners.

The old gentleman had thrown off his travelling blouse, rolled up his shirt sleeves, and now striking a theatrical attitude began a regular process of mesmerisation. Under his quivering fingers, the odyle fluid actually seemed to flash in the moonlight. Frosya was placed with her figure facing the moon, and every motion of the entranced girl was discernable as in daylight. In a few minutes large drops of perspiration appeared on her brow, and slowly rolled down her pale face, glittering in the moonbeams. Then she moved uneasily about and began chanting a low melody, to the words of which the Gospoja, anxiously bending over the unconscious girl, was listening with avidity and trying to catch every syllable. With her thin finger on her lips, her eyes nearly starting from their sockets, her frame motionless, the lady seemed herself transfixed into a statue of attention. The group was a remarkable one, and I regretted I was not painter.

What followed was a scene worthy to figure in *Macbeth*. At one side the slender girl, pale and corpse-like, writhing under the invisible fluid of him who for the hour was her omnipotent master; at the other the old matron who, burning with her unquenched thirst for revenge, stood like the picture of Nemesis, waiting for the long-expected name of the Prince’s murderer to be at last pronounced. The Frenchman himself seemed transfigured, his grey hair standing on end, his bulky clumsy form seeming as though it had grown in a few minutes. All theatrical pretence was now gone; there remained but the mesmeriser aware of his responsibility, unconscious himself of the possible results, studying and anxiously expecting.

Suddenly Frosya, as if lifted by some supernatural force, rose from her reclining posture and stood erect before us, motionless and still again, waiting for the magnetic fluid to direct her. The Frenchman silently taking the old lady’s hand, placed it in that of the somnambulist, and ordered her to put herself *en rapport* with the Gospoja.

“What sayest thou, my daughter?” softly murmured the Serbian lady, “Can your spirit seek out the murderers?”

“Search and behold,” sternly commanded the mesmeriser, fixing his gaze upon the face of the subject.

“I am upon my way—I go,” faintly whispered Frosya, her voice not seeming to come from herself, but from the surrounding atmosphere.

At this point something so extraordinary took place that doubt my ability to describe it. A luminous shadow, vapour-like, appeared closely surrounding the girl’s body. At first about an inch in thickness, it gradually expanded, and gathering itself, suddenly seemed to break

off from the body altogether, and condense itself into a kind of semi-solid vapour, which very soon assumed the likeness of the somnambulist herself. Flickering about the surface of the earth, the form vacillated for two or three seconds, then glided noiselessly towards the river. It disappeared like a mist, dissolved in the moonbeams which seemed to absorb and imbibe it altogether!

I had followed the scene with an intense attention. The mysterious operation known in the East as the invocation of the *scin-lecca* was taking place before my own eyes. To doubt was impossible, and Dupotet was right in saying that mesmerism was the conscious magic of the ancients, and spiritualism the unconscious effect of the same magic upon certain organisms.

As soon as the vaporous double had soaked itself through the pores of the girl, the Gospoja had by a rapid motion of the hand which was left free, drawn from under her pelisse something which looked suspiciously like a small stiletto, placed it as rapidly in the girl's bosom. The action was quick that the mesmeriser, absorbed in his work, had not remarked it, as he afterward told me. A few minutes elapse in dead silence. We seemed a group of petrified persons. Suddenly a thrilling and transpiercing cry burst from the entranced girl's lips. She bent forward, and snatching the stiletto from her bosom, plunged it furiously around her in the air, as if pursuing imaginary foes. Her mouth foamed, and incoherent wild exclamations broke from her lips, among which discordant sounds I discerned several times two familiar Christian names of men. The mesmeriser was so terrified that he lost all control over himself, and instead of withdrawing the fluid, he loaded the girl with still more.

"Take care," I exclaimed, "stop! You will kill her or she will kill you!" But the Frenchman had unwittingly raised subtle potencies of nature over which he had no control. Furiously turning round, the girl struck at him a blow which would have killed him had he not avoided it by jumping aside, receiving but a severe scratch on the right arm. The poor man was panic-stricken. Climbing with extraordinary agility for a man of his bulky form on the wall above her, he fixed himself on it astride and gathering the remnants of his will power, sent in her direction a series of passes. At the second, the girl dropped the weapon and remained motionless.

"What are you about?" hoarsely shouted the mesmeriser in French, seated like some monstrous night-goblin on the wall. "Answer me, I command you."

"I did—but what she—whom you ordered me to obey—commanded me to do," answered the girl in French, to my utter amazement.

"What did the old witch command you to do?" irreverently asked he.

"To find them—who murdered—kill them—I did so—and they are no more! Avenged—avenged! They are—."

An exclamation of triumph, a loud shout of infernal joy, rang loud in the air; and awakening the dogs of the neighbouring villages, a responsive howl of barking began from that moment like a ceaseless echo of the Gospoja's cry.

"I am avenged, I feel it, I know it! My warning heart tells me that the fiends are no more." And she fell panting on the ground, dragging down in her fall the girl, who allowed herself to be pulled down as if she were a log of wood.

"I hope my subject did no further mischief tonight. She is as dangerous as well as a very wonderful subject," said the Frenchman.

We parted. Three days after that I was at T. (emesvar); and as I was sitting in the dining-room of a restaurant waiting for my lunch, I happened to pick up a newspaper. The first lines I read ran thus:

“Vienna, 186—Two Mysterious Deaths. Last evening at 9.45 as P . . . was about to retire, two gentlemen-in-waiting suddenly exhibited great terror, as though they had seen a dreadful apparition. They screamed, staggered, and ran about the room holding up their hands as if to ward off the blows of an unseen weapon. They paid no attention to the eager questions of their master and suite; but presently fell writhing upon the floor, and expired in great agony. Their bodies exhibited no appearance of apoplexy nor any external marks of wounds; but strange to relate, there were numerous dark spots and long marks upon the skin, as though they were stabs and slashes made without puncturing the cuticle. The autopsy revealed the fact that beneath each of these mysterious discolorations there was a deposit of coagulated blood. The greatest excitement prevails, and the faculty are unable to resolve the mystery . . .