

ESOTERIC BUDDHISM :

The New Gospel of Atheism.

*REPRINTED, AND A LITTLE ENLARGED, FROM TWO
ARTICLES IN 'THE MONTH.'*

BY

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ESOTERIC BUDDHISM—THE NEW GOSPEL OF ATHEISM.

IF anyone were to say, just now, in a mixed assemblage of people, that idolatry is a distinguishing fact of these days, his hearers, more or less, would take him for an escaped lunatic ; yet certain it is that idolatry, worse than ever was attributed to the Catholic Church by her bitterest enemies, is practised now in this our beloved England, once ‘the Mother of Saints.’ For, in fact, what is idolatry but that giving of supreme honour to creatures, real or supposed, which in a more or less indefinite shape is put forth now as the religion of the future ? If we give such supreme honour to Nature, or to the Cosmos, or to Humanity, or to anything else that is not Almighty God, we make an idol of the same, to all intents and purposes, whether with or without external signs ; and everyone knows that some such idol is the only God of our ‘advanced thinkers.’

But a still worse and a more dangerous kind of atheistic idolatry, that deifies the creature in order to dethrone the Creator, has latterly been introduced into England by Mr. Sinnett, President of the London Lodge of the Theosophical Society, in a work entitled ‘Esoteric Buddhism,’ of which five editions have already appeared, and which is epitomized by Mrs. Sinnett in a smaller work, ‘The Purpose of Theosophy.’ Worse it is, and more dangerous : for it claims to be a revelation of hidden truth, raises Atheism to the rank of a theological system, offers a *quasi* infinite amount of possible knowledge, appeals to that instinctive longing for a future which Agnosticism leaves unsatisfied, provides geology with an indefinite number of million years for its use, and, as Mrs. Sinnett says,*

‘may and does include among its followers, representatives of almost every form of religious belief in the world, as well as many who have no belief at all.

* ‘The Purpose of Theosophy,’ p.

This remarkable inclusiveness is suggestive of a common cause, a common bond, and a common foe. The conclusion is obvious, and we had better not forget what these three principles of union are. Any instructed Catholic, reading the two books by the light of History, must see that the common cause is anti-Christianism, the common bond rebellion against Almighty God, the common foe Christianity, and, *par excellence*, the Catholic Church. Nor is it less evident that, besides the advanced thinkers and the advancing thinkers and the thinkers of advanced thinkers' thoughts, there is an indefinite multitude of educated people who, bewildered by the multitude of beliefs that contradict themselves as much as each other, and having in a way tried everything except the truth, from which they have been effectually warned off, would be open to the influence of a new doctrine, as such, and strongly tempted by this, which is advertised as the 'Old Wisdom Religion,' underlying 'all the religions of the world.'*

It abounds, of course, in contradictions, because error always does so, and must; but the plausible plea, that an untrained mind is not up to such transcendental thinking, would be accepted by the willing as a triumphant reply to the uninitiated.

Mr. Sinnett says :

'The information contained in the following pages is no collection of inferences drawn from study. I am bringing to my readers knowledge which I have obtained by favour rather than by effort. . . .† I have been privileged at last to receive a very considerable mass of instruction in the hitherto secret knowledge over which the Oriental philosophers have brooded silently till now; instruction which has hitherto been only imparted to sympathetic students, prepared themselves to migrate into the camp of secrecy. . . . The very considerable block of hitherto secret teaching

* 'Theosophy does not teach Buddhism pure and simple, but the study of it shows very clearly that the Old Wisdom Religion, as taught by initiates from time immemorial, underlies all the religions of the world.'—'Purpose of Theosophy,' p. 45. There is truth in this, as regards false religions, though not as the author meant; for all the initiates teach what 'the fool said in his heart,' and of such 'the memory of man runneth not to the contrary.'

† 'Esoteric Buddhism,' p. 1.

this volume contains has been conveyed to me, not only without conditions of the usual kind, but to the express end that I might convey it in my turn to the world at large.*

And again, at p. 8, he says :

‘It is under favour of direct instruction from one of their number that I am now enabled to attempt an outline of the Mahatmas’ teaching,† and it is in the same way that I have picked up what I know concerning the organization to which most of them, and the greatest, in the present day belong.’

And Mrs. Sinnett says that

‘in the formation of the Theosophical Society, the founders were acting under the direct wishes of the Mahatmas.’

In these open and clear statements we see, firstly, that the esoteric or inner doctrine of Buddhism has been offered to us by its acknowledged guardians ; and, secondly, that Mr. Sinnett is the accredited medium of the communication. We cannot, by the use of right reason, doubt this ; for we have no right on any grounds to question his word, nor could anyone falsely assume such an office as his without the certainty of a crushing contradiction from some learned Indian. We have to see, then, what the doctrine really is that now is put forth as nothing less than a new gospel, the gospel of the future, the gospel for which England is supposed to be ripe or ripening, the gospel whose message is to satisfy advanced thinkers and elevate humanity.

We shall find the answer to this in the pages of the books referred to, of which the one officially expounds the esoteric doctrine, so far as the adepts are willing to show it, while the other reproduces the same in a more condensed and more popular shape.

‘It teaches people [says Mrs. Sinnett] to search for the fundamental truth, that is the basis equally of every creed, philosophy, and science. . . . The searcher for truth will find that Theosophy holds within its grasp an inexhaustible source of knowledge in every groove of thought, whether on

* ‘Esoteric Buddhism,’ p. 2.

† ‘The custodians of this knowledge are variously called Mahatmas, Rishis, arbats, adepts,’ etc.—‘Purpose of Theosophy,’ p. 70.

the spiritual or physical plane. There is no science, no art, no intellectual pursuit, in whatever direction it may incline, that Theosophy, as now understood, does not embrace and pervade. . . .*

And Mr. Sinnett says :

‘It is not too much to say that it constitutes the only religious system that blends itself easily with the physical truths discovered by modern research in those branches of science [geology and astronomy].’†

Theosophy, then, or the inner teaching in which all the Indian religions agree,‡ is a scientific as well as a religious system ; and the religion is based on occult knowledge of nature. What the ‘fundamental truth’ is we can only infer from what the system teaches about God, because there cannot be anything more fundamental in any religion. Now what does it teach ?

In the first place, it denies the existence of a personal God.

‘Mr. Lillie [says Mr. Sinnett, at p. 207] is mistaken . . . in deducing from its Temple ritual the notion of a personal God. No such conception enters into the great esoteric doctrine of Nature, of which this volume has furnished an imperfect sketch.’

And Mrs. Sinnett says, at pp. 41, 42 :

‘Eastern philosophy has one great foundation of belief that runs through all the various forms of thought, whether orthodox Brahminical, Buddhist, or Vedantist ; and this resembles broadly what Mr. Draper gives as that of the Stoics, or followers of Zeno, “That, though there is a Supreme Power, there is no Supreme Being. There is an invisible principle, but not a personal God. . . . There is no such thing as Providence. . . .”’

And Mr. Sinnett says, at p. 204 :

‘The seventh principle, undefinable, incomprehensible for

* ‘The Purpose of Theosophy,’ pp. 3, 5.

† ‘Esoteric Buddhism,’ p. 221.

‡ ‘. . . but the broad basis of esoteric identity is recognised by their respective cultured and mystical adherents and priests, and they one and all acknowledge the hidden occult meaning which underlies each of these writings . . .’—‘Purpose of Theosophy,’ p. 40.

us at our present stage of enlightenment, is, of course, the only God recognised by esoteric knowledge; and no personification of this can be otherwise than symbolical.'

'This Seventh Principle [he tells us at p. 34] is the True Unknowable, the supreme controlling cause of all things, which is the same for one man as for every man, and the same for humanity as for the animal kingdom. . . .'

And at p. 24 he calls it one of the elements into which a complete or perfect man, but not of the mankind with which we are as yet familiar, would be resolvable.

And Mrs. Sinnett says that

'The vital force which pervades the world is what the illiterate call God.*'

There is no personal God, then, according to the Wisdom Religion, which we are invited to accept instead of Christianity; for though we are told that

'it recognises in the Universal Spirit all the higher attributes which Christianity assigns to its Deity,†

the said Universal Spirit may, so far as we can learn from its English exposition, be the *Anima Mundi*, or anything else, except an intelligible First Cause, for which we may search in vain. Mr. Sinnett does indeed say at p. 202, that

'Perhaps we have now plunged deeply enough into the fathomless mystery of the great First Cause.'

But after the plunge we are no wiser, having only found, as the preceding sentence explains, an 'androgynus,' or man-woman, 'one and only element.'

Of course, Creation is denied; for 'an endless cyclic progression,‡ of which a serpent with his tail attracted to his mouth§ is the symbol, puts that out of court, as well as the androgynous First Cause, whose reason of being is as unapparent as his place in an endless cyclic progression, or his possible place out of it. But Mr. Sinnett states it plainly.

'Talk of Creation [he says at p. 201], and we are continually butting against the facts:'

though what the facts are we are not told.

* 'Purpose of Theosophy,' p. 42.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 44, 45.

‡ 'Esoteric Buddhism,' p. 239.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

Secondly and consequently, its nearest approach to religious worship is a mysterious reverence for deified Humanity, or for the Cosmos, or for the Unconscious, Infinite, Ultimate Reality,* or for the above-named Universal Spirit, whatever that may happen to be. Which of these is what I must call, for want of a better term, the Pro-God, I have not been able to discover, for each appears in that character, as the following passages will show :

‘Carrying on imagination [says Mr. Sinnett] through immeasurable vistas of the future, we must next conceive ourselves approaching the period which would correspond to the inter-cyclic period of the seventh round of humanity, in which men have become as gods.’†

Yet Mrs. Sinnett speaks of

‘the deep reverence with which the teachers and pupils of the esoteric doctrine approach the subject of the Great Law—the Unconscious, Infinite, Ultimate Reality, or whatever name is used to express the idea. . . .’‡

But then, at p. 35, when speaking of the seventh principle, Mr. Sinnett says :

‘No one man has got *a* seventh principle. . . . We are all in the same unfathomable way overshadowed by *the* seventh principle of the Cosmos.’

While at pp. 200, 201, the Cosmos itself seemed to be overshadowed by that which

‘may be regarded indifferently as space, duration, matter or motion, [which] *is* the one eternal, imperishable thing in the universe [and *is*] these four things at once and always, [they constituting] one and the same eternal substance of the universe’ (p. 208).

Whether the Universal Spirit is motion that animates matter,§ or the androgynous one and only principle or element,|| or the Universal Spiritual principle, the Unconscious ever-active Lifegiver,¶ does not clearly appear ; but

* ‘Purpose of Theosophy,’ p. 47.

† ‘Esoteric Buddhism,’ pp. 187, 188.

‡ ‘Purpose of Theosophy,’ p. 47.

|| ‘Esoteric Buddhism,’ p. 202.

§ ‘Esoteric Buddhism,’ p. 208.

¶ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

all these would seem to answer the purpose. The motion that animates matter is its 'Para-brahm, or spirit.*' The androgynous element is represented as an evolutionary substitute for a Creator.† The Universal Spiritual principle needs no apology for appearing as the Universal Spirit, though one fails to see how anyone can recognise in an unconscious something the attributes of God. But inasmuch as we are told that our future depends exclusively on the Karma, or affinities that we have contracted—in other words, by the results of our own dispositions, to which we are nailed by a hard and fast law without a lawgiver, irrespective of repentance and amendment—the question does not concern us practically.

Thirdly, it requires us to believe that human beings, who, with the exception of those annihilated as utterly unspiritual

'at the final sorting out of humanity at the middle of the great fifth round,‡ [will] become as gods,§

have been evolved from pebbles,|| and primarily from something lower; for, according to esoteric Buddhism,

'A pebble contains all the potential elements of the perfected man¶ . . . and there are three kingdoms below the mineral.'**

Fourthly, its morality is 'pitilessly inflexible,' yet it teaches that vice and virtue do not determine ultimate progress in evolution.††

'The truth of the matter [says Mr. Sinnett, at p. 153] is (if it is not imprudent at this stage of our progress to brush the surface of a new mystery) that the question, to *be* or not to *be*, is not settled by reference to the question whether a man be wicked or virtuous *at all*.'

The italics are his. And Mrs. Sinnett says, p. 98, that

* 'Esoteric Buddhism,' p. 208.

† 'But once realize that our planet and ourselves are no more creations than an iceberg . . .' ('Esoteric Buddhism,' p. 201) . . . 'Then we are enabled to see what is meant by the one and only principle or element in the universe, and by the treatment of that element as androgynous . . .'—*Ibid.*, p. 202.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

¶ 'Purpose of Theosophy,' p. 52.

** 'Esoteric Buddhism,' p. 57.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

|| *Ibid.*

†† *Ibid.*, p. 154.

'a life of unsystematic innocence, no matter how free from actual sin, nor how devotional in spirit, would have comparatively little effect on the evolutionary progress of the entity.'

And again, at p. 101 :

'Obedience to a moral code, the regular performance of all daily duties, an attitude of uncritical devotion to religious forms and customs are . . . no doubt, as examples to the debased and uneducated classes, productive of good ; but in themselves they will not urge forward the entity . . . nor guide it into the channels leading to quicker methods of advancement in the next incarnation.'

Fifthly, it condemns to painless extinction of individuality at the Great Crisis those who are only good, and not wise in the esoteric sense of the word.* So that final perseverance without Buddhist enlightenment will lead us to painless extinction. And Mr. Sinnett says, at p. 153, that 'the choice between good and evil . . . is not a mere choice between ideas so plainly contrasted as wickedness and virtue. It is not so rough a question as that—whether a man be wicked or virtuous—which must really at the final critical turning-point decide whether he shall continue to live and develop into higher phases of existence, or cease to live altogether [viz.] at the final sorting out of humanity, at the middle of the great fifth round, [and which results in] the annihilation of the utterly unspiritual Egos.'

So that ultimate progress is determined by Buddhist spirituality,

'irrespective of its moral colouring : [and this] spirituality is not devout aspiration. It is the highest kind of intellection ' (p. 155).

It may here be remarked that we must understand the term 'spiritual' in a Pickwickian sense ; for Mr. Sinnett says in a previous work :†

* . . . 'and goodness alone, associated, as we often find it, with the most grotesque religious beliefs, cannot conduct a man to more than Devachanic periods of devout but unintelligent rapture, and in the end, if such conditions are reproduced through many existences, to some painless extinction of individuality at the great crisis.'—'Esoteric Buddhism,' p. 194.

† 'The Occult World,' p. 14.

‘The soul is material . . .’

And again, in the same page, he says :

‘The important point which occultism brings out is, that the soul of man, while something enormously subtler and more ethereal and more lasting than the body, is itself a *material* reality.’

The words ‘more lasting’ are noteworthy, as denying the soul’s immortality in plain language.

But the danger of being annihilated as an incorrigible failure is comfortably remote ; for we are told that

‘certainly, for millions and millions of centuries to come, it [mankind] will not be confronted with any judge at all, other than that all-pervading judge, that Seventh Principle or Universal Spirit, which exists everywhere. . . .’*

This principle is, as we have seen, the only God recognised by esoteric knowledge, and is one of those principles into which a complete and perfect man would be resolvable.

But how about the immortality of the perfected men who have ‘become as gods’? The following extracts will enable the reader to judge :

‘Most assuredly that [*i.e.*, Buddhist] philosophy no more finds in the universe than in the belief of any truly enlightened thinker . . . the unchangeable and eternal Heaven and Hell of monkish legend. . . .†

This is a very old story. Tertullian, for instance, tells us of demons who pretend to be one or another dead person in order to deny the dogma of eternal punishment. At p. 228 Mr. Sinnett speaks of

‘the ever-progressive conditions of spiritual exaltation, which come before that unutterably remote mergence into the non-individualized condition. That condition certainly must be somewhere in futurity. . . . As with the idea of Nirvana [a sort of Heaven], so with this about the delusion of individuality. . . .’

And, at p. 233, we read that

‘the craving for the continuity of personal existence . . .

* ‘Esoteric Buddhism,’ p. 204.

† *Ibid.*, p. 227.

is manifestly no more than a passing weakness of the flesh.'

'Surely [he says at p. 206] it is end enough to satisfy any reasonable mind that such sublimely perfected beings as the Planetary Spirits themselves come thus into existence, and live a conscious life of supreme knowledge and felicity, through vistas of time which are equivalent to all we can imagine of eternity.'

How vistas of the limited can equal the unlimited let those explain who can.

He continues :

'Into this unutterable greatness every living thing has the opportunity of passing ultimately. The Spirit which is in every animated form, and which has even worked up into these from forms we are generally in the habit of calling inanimate, will slowly but certainly progress onwards until the working of its untiring influence in matter has evolved a human soul. . . . Eventually every spiritual monad—itself a sinless, unconscious principle, will work through conscious forms on lower levels, until these, throwing off one after another higher and higher forms, will produce that in which the Godlike consciousness may be fully evoked. Certainly it is not by reason of the grandeur of human conceptions . . . that such a consummation can appear an insufficient purpose, not even if the final destiny of the planetary spirit himself, after periods to which his development from the mineral forms of primeval worlds is but a childhood in the recollection of the man, is to merge his glorified individuality into that sum-total of all consciousness, which esoteric metaphysics treat as absolute consciousness, which is non-consciousness' [!]

To enter into the details of the system would be impossible, for want of space ; nor would it be within our purpose, which is simply to show what sort of message this new gospel gives. We have seen that it may be summed up in the devil's words to Eve, *YOU SHALL BE AS GODS* ; but we have not seen what its occult science really is. It is neither more nor less than what was formerly known in England as the Black Art, and everywhere else under various names—magic, witchcraft, necromancy, etc.—and in our days as

spiritism. The difference is that the adepts of esoteric Buddhism have a deeper knowledge of their art. Mrs. Sinnett, speaking of the inferior practitioners in that line, says that

‘magic, as a source of power, has been turned from its intended use ; and instead of being recognised as a necessary attribute of real religion, the knowledge of which must be wielded for the benefit of society, has been discredited as a branch of study both from the pulpit and by the State. . . .’*

Again, at p. 18, she says that

‘Magic was and still is a Divine science.’

And she quotes with approval, at p. 20, the following words from ‘Isis Unveiled’ :

‘The proofs of this identity of fundamental doctrine in the old [*i.e.*, Pagan] religions are found in the prevalence of a system of initiation in the sacerdotal casts which had the guardianship of mystical words of power, and a public display of phenomenal control over natural forces indicating association with preter-human beings.’

Again, at p. 23, she says :

‘Alchemy, astrology, witchcraft, demonology, sorcery, spiritualism, and every other name and form of what is commonly called the supernatural, [*i.e.*, the preternatural] spring from and owe their existence to the esoteric doctrine of the Ancients.’

And Mr. Sinnett says :

‘They [the adepts] awaken the dormant sense in the pupil [a sixth sense not yet in general use], and through this they imbue his mind with a knowledge that such and such a doctrine is the real truth. The whole scheme of evolution, which the foregoing chapters have portrayed, infiltrates into the regular chela’s† mind by reason of the fact that he is made to see the process taking place by clairvoyant vision. There are no words used in his instruction at all.’‡

* ‘Purpose of Theosophy,’ pp. 28, 29.

† Aspirant to adeptship.

‡ ‘Esoteric Buddhism,’ p. 156.

At p. 19 he says:

'The dual nature of the Mahatma is so complete that some of his influence or wisdom on the higher planes of nature may actually be drawn upon by those in peculiar psychic relations with him, without the Mahatma-man being at the moment even conscious that such an appeal has been made to him.'

This, inasmuch as it is evidently impossible for anyone to communicate with another without being conscious of doing so, means, in plain English, diabolical agency, or what is called in the Old Testament 'a familiar spirit.'

Mrs. Sinnett says, at pp. 83, 84:

'The aspirant for spiritual knowledge can with the help of a master begin the work before him, the master at first being only required to give him certain advice relative to exercises for the development of his psychical faculties, and to see that in their progress and growth he does not come to grief. For such exercises . . . lay him open to the various influences resident in the unseen world, which, unless he is protected by a strong trained will-force, are liable to gather round him* and produce very dangerous results.'

No doubt they would. Nervous disorders, incurable diseases, madness and suicide, are among the well-authenticated results of spiritism, as (for instance) the petition against it of twenty thousand American citizens to the Chamber at Washington, which petition also includes divorces in its indictment, practically proves. M. Dupotet attests that almost always advanced spiritists feel an impulse to commit suicide. And Mrs. Sinnett tells us, at p. 88, that an 'ardent longing for spiritual freedom and liberation from conditioned existence' is the 'fourth and last accomplishment'

* Clearly: for God alone can move the will ('Summa,' 1a, 2æ, q. 75, a. 3), and therefore devils cannot compel it. But the cat is here let out of the bag. See the extract before-mentioned, from 'Isis Unveiled,' quoted by Mrs. Sinnett, in which Madame Blavatsky speaks of 'phenomenal control over natural forces' as 'indicating association with preter-human beings.' 'In the production of this book,' says Mr. Sinnett, in 'The Occult World,' p. 80, 'she' (Madame Blavatsky) 'was so largely helped by the Brothers, that great portions of it are not really her work at all.'

of the adept ; while Mr. Sinnett says, at page 7 of ' Esoteric Buddhism ':

' If the saint will even now put an end to this state of being, he can do so ; but the majority stand fast until Nature has reached her goal.'

What is the evident inference from this ? Plainly, that the occult practices of Buddhist adepts and of modern spiritists are derived from the same source of power ; the difference being that the adepts are much more learned and efficient in devilry.

Again, at pp. 72, 73, Mrs. Sinnett says :

' It is well known in India that Fakirs and Yogis can by the practice of asceticism and certain physical exercises, such as sitting for a long time together in a particular position, breathing at intervals laid down in accepted rules, etc., attain undoubtedly psychological powers, and perform physical phenomena. This kind of training is called Hatti Yog ; while the higher description as taught by true adepts is called Raj Yog. Between these two modes of education for the attainment of abnormal powers there is an enormous difference : the gap that separates the two, from the lowest form of the one to the highest of the other, being filled in by followers of all the many and various religions and sects scattered over the whole of Asia. These include the juggler, who can, perhaps, practise a humble kind of sorcery, for a small remuneration, and the holy man or yogi . . . Far above the best of these yogis . . . stand the Mahatmas.

At p. 71 she says :

' They [the Mahatmas] can create and disintegrate ; that is to say, they are able to gather the elements out of the Akasa [the astral light or all-pervading ether]* necessary for the production of material objects, and cause them to become visible and tangible. . . '

This preternatural composition of elements is an old story in the Catholic Church, mentioned [*e.g.*] by St. Thomas ;† nor is it surprising, when we remember that the

* ' Purpose of Theosophy,' p. 58.

† ' Summa,' p. 1, q. 114, a. 4.

fallen angels did not lose by their fall their enormous natural gifts and knowledge of the powers of nature.* But it marks the fact that Buddhist adepts deal in the Black Art.

Mrs. Sinnett goes on to say, p. 71 :

‘They [the Mahatmas] can take cognizance of people and their thoughts, regardless of distance—impress, influence, and directly communicate with them.’

This is what mediums of every kind set themselves to do ; and the fact of their often failing is no disproof of diabolical agency, but precisely the reverse.

‘For as an angel from heaven [says the *Civiltà Cattolica*]+ cannot know the mere thoughts of the human mind unless either God or man reveal them to him,‡ and cannot foreknow with absolute certainty those future events which depend on human free will, much less can an angel of hell do so. God alone reads the heart of man. God alone, to Whom all is present, is by His own nature a prophet. True it is, that the devil can but too well counterfeit both the one and the other. He imitates prophecy by prudent conjectures. Hence it is that heathen oracles and the divination of the spiritists often guess the future, and on the other hand their divination is sometimes confused and fallacious. Mere mental thoughts the devil can conjecture from the smallest signs, even from those that we give without being aware of it. He can guess them from the varying phantasms of human fancy, phantasms which indeed are simple, but not purely spiritual, since we have them in common with the brutes. In this way the devil mocks the imprudent, and makes them believe that he foreknows the future and can penetrate the hidden thoughts of man.’

Thus the devil is checked and often deceived, for he understands the natural, but not the supernatural.§ Mr.

* ‘Summa,’ p. 1, q. 64, a. 1.

+ *Civiltà Cattolica*, of December 18th, 1886, pp. 664, 665, in an article (one of a series) ‘L’Ipnotismo tornato di moda,’ which most certainly ought to be translated, as well as the very instructive pamphlet by Father Franco, ‘Idea chiara dello Spiritismo,’ and his very interesting novel, ‘Gli Spiriti delle Tenebre.’

‡ Cf. ‘Summa,’ p. 1, q. 57, a. 4.

§ Cf. ‘Summa,’ p. 1, q. 58, a. 5.

Sinnett admits the fact without naming the Esoteric Potentate, commonly known in England by the name of Old Harry.

‘The Mahatmas [he says, p. 17] are persistent in asserting that they are not infallible . . . [but are] liable to err, both in the direction of practical business in which they may be concerned and in their estimate of the characters of other men . . .’

Now if, as we are told, the seer [Mahatma], in a

‘perfectly conscious and natural state . . . [has the power of] not only exchanging ideas with the people therein [in the astral light], but also reading with great accuracy the thoughts and intentions of those living in the world,’*

the ‘characters of men’ would, of course, be open before him, and he would not ‘be quite surprisingly liable to err’ . . . † This fact is expressed in another place by Mr. Sinnett, where he says that the Mahatma-man [or adept] is ‘overshadowed’‡ by an occult power, which he calls the ‘spiritual Mahatma.’

In short, diabolical intelligence, though enormously greater than ours, is not able to read our thoughts directly, and therefore is liable to err in judgment of this or that person. Moreover, it is well known that the evil spirits invoked by spiritists often give lying answers, often refuse to answer, and often oppose each other. Our missionaries in India bear witness that sorcerers are not unfrequently called in to undo the mischief done by others, and when unsuccessful, own that the other man’s demon (which he calls a god) is more powerful than his own.

We have now seen clearly enough, I think, that esoteric Buddhism is the Black Art in perfection; but the following passage is too suggestive to be omitted :

‘For some time past [says Mr. Sinnett] it has been affirmed in esoteric writing that there are five great chohans or superior Mahatmas presiding over the whole body of the adept fraternity. When the foregoing chapter of this book was written, I was under the impression that one supreme

* ‘Purpose of Theosophy,’ p. 56.

† ‘Esoteric Buddhism,’ p. 17.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

chief on a different level again exercised authority over these five chohans. But it now appears to me that this personage may rather be regarded as a sixth chohan, himself the head of the sixth type of Mahatmas; and this conjecture leads at once to the further inference that there must be a seventh chohan to complete the correspondences which we thus discern.*

Clearly there must, for the evil spirits are not equal in rank.† And St. Paul says‡ that our wrestling is against ‘principalities and powers,’ and our Lord Himself§ speaks of Satan’s kingdom.

Mr. Sinnett goes on to say that

‘Just as the seventh principle in nature or in man is a conception of the most intangible order, eluding the grasp of any intellectual thinking, and only describable in shadowy phases of metaphysical non-significance’

(not very useful phrases, by-the-bye, if words are intended to be anything more than gibberish),

‘so we may be quite sure that the seventh chohan is very unapproachable by untrained imaginations. But even he, no doubt, plays a part in what may be called the higher economy of spiritual nature; and that there is such a personage visible occasionally to some of the other Mahatmas, I take to be the case.’

No doubt such a personage is visible occasionally to the Mahatmas, and plays a very important part: but he is commonly called the devil.

To Catholics the case is clear. For besides the authority of such men as (for instance) St. Augustine and St. Thomas, and the unmistakable teaching of the New Testament as well as the Old—for instance, ‘Wizards thou shalt not suffer to live’||—the Holy See has explicitly condemned all such dealings with the preternatural. Even magnetism, which at first sight would seem comparatively harmless, was forbidden by the Holy Father, Pius IX., as far back as 1856, in an Encyclical to all the Bishops.

* ‘*Esoteric Buddhism*,’ pp. 19, 20.

† ‘*Summa*,’ p. 1, q. 109, a. 2.

§ St. Luke xi. 18.

‡ Ephes. vi. 12.

|| Exod. xxii. 18.

Somnambulism, clairvoyance, visions of things unknown; discourses on religion, invocation of the souls of the departed, receiving answers, discovering things distant and unknown, are all forbidden in the same Encyclical, because physical means are used to produce preternatural effects. Again, in 1841, attempted communication of thoughts, medical diagnoses by people ignorant of medicine, reading out of a closed book, etc., were condemned.

We had better, all of us, bear these things in mind, remembering that outward signs, used in producing preternatural effects, are taken from the devil's ritual,* whether we are aware of it or not; and then we shall neither join in the apparently innocent game of thought-reading, nor play with the devil's tools under the plea of relieving somebody's headache by making a few passes. Outward signs, as the *Civiltà Cattolica* says in the article above referred to, are the means agreed on, explicitly or implicitly, for entering into a compact with the evil spirit.† Playing with edged tools is always dangerous, and especially so when they are forged by the father of lies.

Clearly, then, this is the new gospel, that 'seeks its purpose in detecting identities.' As Mrs. Sinnett says, a system which 'is not in itself a religion in the common acceptation of the word, and which may and does include among its followers representatives of almost every religious belief in the world, as well as many who have no belief at all,' may indeed put itself 'on friendly terms' with a great many people who might otherwise reject it.‡ Therein lies its power and the peril to us—not to any Catholic who is not either a knave or a fool, but to many outside the Church, who, having lost their bearings in that upheaval of Paganism which now shakes England to its centre, have no fixed belief, not even in error, while they crave despairingly for something better than the miserable materialism which modern progress offers and its prophets proclaim. People are no longer satisfied with believing in Paley's watch on a heath, nor with supposing that somehow John Locke knew what he was about. Philosophical works, whether there is any philosophy in them or not, are widely read, and even

* See *Civiltà Cattolica*, Dec. 18, 1886, pp. 673, 674.

† Cf. 'Summa,' p. 1, q. 110, a. 4.

‡ 'The Purpose of Theosophy,' p. 107.

works of fiction teem with some sort of religiosity ; for the thinking public of these days, whatever else it may be, is distinctly serious, looks at things in a serious light, and owing to its ignorance of the true, is fed with the false. Now feeding on the false gives a taste for the false ; and the false, being unsatisfactory, suggests a change. Esoteric Buddhism promises the forbidden fruit in the attractive shape of occult knowledge, while it disarms the sceptic by pretending to disown the preternatural. It bids in a friendly way against materialism by advertising itself as its opponent, yet holds out the right hand of fellowship to materialists by defining spirit to be a more subtle sort of matter, and throws the weight of its occult science on the materialist side by means of an ambiguous middle term. It reduces the supernatural to the level of the natural, and raises the latter to a position not its own, giving a sort of theological warrant for whatever may be put forward in the name of science. It teaches everything *ex cathedrâ*, and claims to do so by right of a higher scientific knowledge, that enlarges and explains the now prevailing doctrine of evolution and teaches human perfectability by human means, therein agreeing with positivism, with benevolent radicalism, with kid-glove revolutionism, and with every 'ism' that denies original sin. It invites the sympathy of all those who suppose themselves to 'covet truth' by reason of half believing the last thing out, on condition of being allowed to half believe something else ; for, as we have seen, Theosophy 'seeks its purpose in detecting identities rather than in emphasizing contrasts.'

Exactly so. As the devil appeared to Eve under the semblance of a serpent, so do the fallen angels appear now, suitably to the times that are, setting before mankind the temptation of the forbidden fruit, and repeating the old promise, 'YOU SHALL BE AS GODS.'

ESOTERIC BUDDHISM.

PART II.

WE began by asking ourselves what Esoteric Buddhism, as now offered to us, really is ; and we found it to be the old Black Art in a new shape, adapted to these times. Therein lies the danger, cunningly concealed. Magic, as such, though it always finds favour with some, would not go down just now ; but the so-called Theosophy, through which a certain or uncertain amount of Esoteric Buddhism is filtering for our use, begins by denying the preternatural, and attributes to the adepts nothing more than a deeper scientific training, through which they have developed in themselves faculties and powers that others, under similar conditions, may acquire, more or less. Mr. Sinnett expresses this in both his books ; and the Mahatma, Koot Hoomi, writing to him, says the same repeatedly. A more cunning contrivance for alluring 'advanced thinkers' by a direct appeal to their belief in the unlimited capabilities of human science can hardly be conceived : nor could anyone have invented a more suitable sleeping-draught for the general public.

In fact we are now being favoured by a Propaganda of Devilry, which, under the disguise of advanced science, is advocated by an Englishman who evidently believes what he says. There is internal evidence of this in Mr. Sinnett's books, and external evidence in the fact of his going bail for it (so to speak) before the public : nor have we any right to suppose that others who have taken the same line are less firmly persuaded than he is. It is easy to explain away anything on the hypothesis of fraud, without proof of it. Anyone can do that. But the evidence against such an explanation of wonders, worked in India, within the last few years, by occult power, is really too strong to be put aside, unless we are prepared to set at nought all evidence of witnesses.

For instance, Mr. Sinnett says :

‘ We had gone with her [Madame Blavatsky] to Benares for a few days, and were staying at a house lent to us by the Maharajah of Vizianagram . . . in the central hall of which we were sitting one evening after dinner. Suddenly three or four flowers—cut roses—fell in the midst of us—just as such things sometimes fall in the dark at spiritual *séances*.* But in this case there were several lamps and candles in the room. The phenomenon was so wholly unexpected—as unexpected, I am given to understand, by Madame Blavatsky, sitting in an armchair reading at the time, as by the rest of us—that it lost some of the effect it would otherwise have had on our minds.† . . . It has long since become quite plain to me, that wherever Madame Blavatsky is, there the Brothers, wherever they may be, can and constantly do produce phenomena of the most overwhelming sort, with the production of which she herself has little or nothing to do.‡ . . . Madame Blavatsky can produce in the air, without the intermediation of any solid object whatever, the sound of a silvery bell—sometimes a chime or little run of three or four bells on different notes.§ . . . I have, as I say, heard the sound in the open air produced up in the sky in the stillness of evening . . . The bell-sounds are not mere sportive illustrations . . . they serve the direct practical purpose among occultists of a telegraphic call-bell. . . . I have repeatedly heard Madame Blavatsky called in this way, when our own little party being alone some evening, we have all been quietly reading. A little ‘ting’ would suddenly sound, and Madame Blavatsky would get up and go to her room to attend to whatever occult business may have been the motive of her summons.”||

Again : There was a picnic one day near Simla, to which an unexpected guest came, making a seventh *convive* when the cups and saucers were only six. Madame Blavatsky, being applied to, answered [says Mr. Sinnett], that ‘it would

* This, as the reader will see further on, is not the only passage in which he lets out the fact that Esoteric Buddhism and Spiritism are essentially one ; and therefore essentially one with the Black Art.

† ‘The Occult World,’ p. 36.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

|| *Ibid.*, p. 41.

be very difficult to produce one, but that, if we liked, she would try.' He goes on to say :

'Madame Blavatsky, as usual, held mental conversation with one of the Brothers, and then wandered a little about in the immediate neighbourhood of where we were sitting—that is to say, within a radius of half a dozen to a dozen yards from our picnic cloth—I closely following, waiting to see what would happen. Then she marked a spot on the ground, and called to one of the gentlemen of the party to bring a knife to dig with. The place chosen was the edge of a little slope covered with thick weeds and grass and shrubby undergrowth. The gentleman with the knife—let us call him X. . . . tore up these in the first place with some difficulty, as the roots were tough and closely interlaced. Cutting then into the matted roots and earth, . . . he came at last on the edge of something white, which turned out . . . to be the required cup. A corresponding saucer was also found after a little more digging. Both objects were in among the roots which spread everywhere through the ground, so that it seemed as if the roots were growing round them. The cup and saucer both corresponded exactly, as regards their pattern, with those that had been brought to the picnic, and constituted a seventh cup and saucer when brought back to where we were to have breakfast. I may as well add at once, that afterwards, when we got home, my wife questioned our principal khit-mutgar as to how many cups and saucers of that particular kind we possessed. In the progress of years, as the set was an old set, some had been broken ; but the man at once said that nine tea-cups were left. When collected and counted, that number was found to be right, without reckoning the excavated cup. That made ten ; and as regards the pattern, it was one of a somewhat peculiar kind, bought a good many years previously in London, and which assuredly could never have been matched in Simla' (p. 47).

Again : A lady (Mrs. Hume) being unexpectedly asked by Madame Blavatsky during dinner whether there was anything that she wanted to have, answered, after some consideration, that she wanted a brooch given to her by her mother, and by herself to some one else, who had not kept it. Mrs. Hume then described the brooch minutely, and

drew a sketch of it. Madame Blavatsky thereupon took a coin off her watch-chain, wrapped it in two cigarette-papers, and hid it in her dress. The published narrative goes on to say :

‘At the close of dinner, she said to Mr. Hume that the paper in which the coin had been wrapped was gone. A little later, in the drawing-room, she said the brooch would not be brought into the house, but that it must be looked for in the garden ; and then as the party went out, accompanying her, she said she had clairvoyantly seen the brooch fall into a star-shaped bed of flowers. Mr. Hume led the way to such a bed, in a distant part of the garden. A prolonged and careful search was made with lanterns, and eventually a small paper packet, consisting of two cigarette-papers, was found amongst the leaves by Mrs. Sinnett. This, being opened on the spot, was found to contain a brooch exactly corresponding to the previous description, and which Mrs. Hume identified as that which she had originally lost. None of the party, except Mr. and Mrs. Hume, had ever seen or heard of the brooch. . . . Mrs. Hume had never spoken of it to anyone since she parted with it, nor had she, for long, even thought of it. She herself stated, after it was found, that it was only when Madame asked her whether there was anything she would like to have, that the remembrance of this brooch, the gift of her mother, flashed across her mind’ (p. 56).

This is attested in writing and signed by nine witnesses, one of whom was Secretary to the Government of India. Moreover, the question was quite unexpected ; and no one there, not even Mrs. Hume, knew what had become of the brooch. Now unless we assume that nine people in respectable positions conspired, at the evident risk of their reputation, to attest with their signatures what they knew to be false, the brooch *was* brought somehow ; and certainly it could not have been brought by any means natural to us. But it could be brought by the natural power of a fallen angel, which is preternatural to us ; and when Mr. Sinnett says that bodies occultly brought are disintegrated, conveyed on currents, and then reintegrated,* he says what is in accordance with their power of composing, and therefore of de-

* ‘The Occult World,’ pp. 59, 60.

composing bodies.* The discovery of where the lost brooch was, when asked for, is equally within the power of the fallen angels, because distance is no impediment to their knowledge,† and they had by nature a perfect knowledge of all natural things,‡ and this natural knowledge was not taken away nor diminished.§ It must here be remarked that Madame Blavatsky, when or just before she asked Mrs. Hume whether there was anything she would like to have, had occultly perceived, says Mr. Sinnett, 'that one of the Brothers was present "in astral body," invisible to the rest of us in the room. It was following his indications, therefore, that she acted in what followed.'||

This astral body, which Koot Hoomi calls the astral spirit, and which, he says, is 'a faithful duplicate of the body in a physical and spiritual sense'¶ (whatever that extraordinary juxtaposition of words may happen to mean), can, we are told, be projected at will by the adepts, who apparently get through a great many morning calls in that way. But inasmuch as certain personages, whose acquaintance is much to be avoided, have often assumed the appearance of human beings, while the projection of a physical and spiritual duplicate of a body is not even intelligible, the style and title of the mysterious brooch-finder is evident. Several instances are mentioned of letters being occultly transmitted, usually through the intervention of Madame Blavatsky, from Mr. Sinnett and others to Koot Hoomi, and answers received in his recognised handwriting so quickly, that by no human power could they have been fetched and carried. One of them, which is called 'the pillow incident,' may as well be mentioned, because there is no way of accounting for it naturally, unless we resort to the unjust and unreasonable expedient of supposing that all the people who depose to the facts had agreed together to be deliberate liars. We had better have it in Mr. Sinnett's words. He says:

'Accompanied by our guests we went to have lunch one day on the top of a neighbouring hill. The night before, I

* 'Summa,' p. i., q. cxiv., a. 4, ad 2.

† *Ibid.*, p. i., q. lv., a. 2, ad 3.

‡ *Ibid.*, cf. p. i., q. lxxxix., a. 3.

§ *Ibid.*, p. i., q. lxiv., a. 1.

|| 'The Occult World,' p. 55.

¶ *Ibid.*, p. 114.

had had reason to think that my correspondent, Koot Hoomi, had been in what, for the purpose of the present explanation, I may call subjective communication. [What subjective communication means we are not told.] . . . After discussing the subject in the morning, I found on the hall-table a note from Koot Hoomi, in which he promised to give me something on the hill, which should be a token of his (astral) presence near me the previous night. We went to our destination, camped down on the top of the hill, and were engaged on our lunch, when Madame Blavatsky said Koot Hoomi was asking where we would like to find the object he was going to send me. . . . It was by an absolutely spontaneous choice of my own that I said, after a little reflection, "Inside that cushion," pointing to one against which one of the ladies present was leaning. . . . My wife cried out, "Oh no, let it be inside mine," or words to that effect. I said, "Very well, inside my wife's cushion." . . . The particular cushion then selected had never been out of her possession all the morning. . . . The cushion itself was very firmly made of worsted-work and velvet, and had been in our possession for years. . . . When the cushion was agreed to, my wife was told to put it under her rug, and she did this with her own hands, inside her jampan. It may have been there about a minute, when Madame Blavatsky said we could set to work to cut it open. I did this with a penknife, and it was a work of some time, as the cushion was very securely sewn all round, and very strongly. . . . When one side of the cover was completely ripped up, we found that the feathers of the cushion were enclosed in a separate inner case, also sewn round all the edges. There was nothing to be found between the inner cushion and the outer case ; so we proceeded to rip up the inner cushion ; and this done, my wife searched among the feathers. The first thing she found was a little three-cornered note [from Koot Hoomi], addressed to me. . . . While I was reading this note, my wife discovered, by a further search among the feathers, the brooch referred to, one of her own, . . . which she generally left on her dressing-table when it was not in use' (pp. 75-77).

Surely all this is proof enough to any candid Christian

that a preternatural power was at work behind the scenes, and, therefore, that the adepts who pulled the wires were nothing more than advanced sorcerers. We have seen this already; but a further search will enable us to see it better. I abstain from entering fully into the details of the system. To examine, *au grand sérieux*, for instance, the Buddhistic dogma of successive incarnations, diversified by a sort of intermediate heaven 'of rosy sleep,'* or a temporary and not unpleasant hell, prepared by no one for the 'aristocrats of sin,'† would not serve our present purpose. Nor should we gain any useful information, as regards the object of this inquiry, by labouring to understand the races and the rounds of humanity, and how this world, after seven races have lived in it, passes into pralaya and becomes an empty chrysaloidal case.‡ There seems to be a more extensive pralaya when the human tide-wave, which passes onwards by 'rushes and gushes,'§ has passed through the seven planets of our planetary chain; and lastly, when all the other planetary chains have run their course, there comes 'the great cosmic night,' when 'the whole universe, in its collective enormity, . . . passes itself into pralaya.'|| These pralayas are puzzling; and no wonder, since the meaning of their correlative manvantaras is of 'infinite elasticity.'¶ The solar pralaya means, we are told, annihilation of all the planets then existing in the seven planetary chains;** but the entities

' . . . rest in their lethargic sleep in space, until brought into life again at the new solar manvantara. The old elementals will rest till they are called on to become in their turn the bodies of mineral, vegetable and animal entities on another and a higher chain of globes, on their way to become human entities, while the germinal entities of the lowest forms—and at that time there will remain but few of such—will hang in space like drops of water suddenly turned into icicles. They will thaw at the first hot breath of the new solar manvantara, and form the soul of the future globes' (pp. 198, 199).

Leaving the germinal entities to perform this remarkable

* 'Esoteric Buddhism,' p. 94.

§ *Ibid.*, pp. 45 and 132.

¶ *Ibid.*, p. 197, 198.

† *Ibid.*, p. 93.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 197.

** *Ibid.*, p. 198.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 197.

feat of evolution, we naturally ask whether the entities will thaw after the great cosmic night, or whether there is no awakening from it in prospect. We have no intelligible answer on that point. But inasmuch as Mr. Sinnett thinks it 'end enough to satisfy any reasonable mind,' that such sublimely perfected beings as the Planetary Spirits come thus into existence and live, etc., through vistas of time which are equivalent to all we can imagine of eternity,* the big thaw is improbable, and it would seem that everything will end at some time or other, except the Androgynous element, which appears to be something that 'may be regarded indifferently as space, duration, matter, or motion; not as something having these four attributes, but as something which is these four things at once and always.†

But enough of this. I have already given sufficient reasons for inferring that Esoteric Buddhism, latterly introduced under the name of Theosophy, instead of being what it claims to be, is, in plain English, the Black Art; and the evidence of respectable witnesses who, as we have seen, could not have been deceived, points clearly, against their own belief and their own will, to the same conclusion. Nevertheless, the question at issue is, as being a question at all, so frightfully important, that I must crave the reader's indulgence and examine further. There are many marks by which the nature of this new gospel may be known. We can see it for instance:

Firstly, in the significant fact that what the devil, speaking through a serpent, offered to Eve, the same potentate offers to us through Esoteric Buddhism.

Secondly, in the fact, explicitly acknowledged by the Mahatma, Koot Hoomi, that Esoteric teaching shuns the light, and puts forth its doctrine to the outer world from a secret somewhere in Thibet, using big words to communicate nothing definite except the teacher's hatred of Almighty God and of His Church.

Thirdly, in the uncertain power of the occultists; which uncertainty accords with the known fact that fallen angels are not always willing, nor always able, to use their natural powers.

Fourthly, in the trifling and solemnly ridiculous character

* 'Esoteric Buddhism,' p. 206.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 200, 201.

of its wonder-working, and the conspicuous absence of anything really beneficial to human beings whom it conditionally deifies in the future.

Fifthly, in the diabolical compact by which aspirants, cunningly tempted to adeptship, are barred from returning.

Lastly (or space would fail us), we can find in it the essential identity of Esoteric Buddhism with Spiritism, and of both with the Black Art; which identity is acknowledged by the Mahatma Koot Hoomi himself.

Hitherto I have quoted almost exclusively from 'Esoteric Buddhism' and 'The Purpose of Theosophy'; but Mr. Sinnett's earlier work, 'The Occult World,' is more to our present purpose, because it gives a clearer account of occultism, as such. Let us proceed to examine the above-mentioned marks.

Firstly, then: The thing offered to Eve was advanced knowledge, through which Adam and herself were to be 'as gods' (Gen. iii. 6), on condition of their rebelling against Almighty God. Now, in the name of common-sense, what else does this theosophical flourish of trumpets mean? The thing offered to us by the adepts, through their go-between, the Theosophical Society,* is advanced knowledge, through which we may eventually 'become as gods.†' This mysterious offer of conditional knowledge and conditional Godship runs through the discordant utterances of theosophy like the drone of a bagpipe; but lest there should be any mistake about the knowledge, Koot Hoomi tells us that occultism is 'the very science which leads to the highest goal of the highest knowledge, to the real tasting of the tree of life and wisdom.‡' And Mr. Sinnett tells us that 'every man must grow his own tree of knowledge for himself.§' Of course he must, because every soul must be saved or lost by its own act; but the truth is here let out.

Secondly: That it shuns the light is evident in the fact of its being occult, and in the means taken to secure secrecy. Both are openly acknowledged. Mrs. Sinnett, quoting from 'Isis Unveiled,' says:

* 'The one and only association which at present is linked by any recognised bond of union with the Brotherhood of Adepts in Thibet. — 'The Occult World,' p. 139.

† 'Esoteric Buddhism,' p. 188.

‡ 'The Occult World,' p. 101.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

‘Every approach to the mysteries of all these nations was guarded with the same jealous care, and in all the penalty of death was inflicted upon initiates, of any degree, who divulged the secrets entrusted to them . . . while with the Hindoos, from whom they were all derived, the same rule has prevailed from time immemorial.’*

And Mr. Sinnett says :

‘From time immemorial there had been a certain secret region in Thibet, which to this day is quite unknown to and unapproachable by any but initiated persons, and inaccessible to the ordinary people of the country as to any others, in which adepts have always congregated.’†

And Koot Hoomi, writing to Mr. Sinnett, says :

‘Is any of you so eager for knowledge and the beneficent powers it confers, as to be ready to leave your world and come into ours? Then let him come, but he must not think to return until the seal of the mysteries has locked his lips even against the chances of his own weakness or indiscretion.’‡

And Mr. Sinnett says :

‘The door, as I have been told by one who is himself an adept, is always open to the right man who knocks ; but the road that has to be travelled before the door is reached is one which none but very determined travellers can hope to pass. It is manifestly impossible that I can describe its perils in any but very general terms . . . Never, I believe, in less than seven years from the time at which a candidate for initiation is accepted as a probationer, is he ever admitted to the very first of the ordeals, whatever they may be, which bar the road to occultism. . . . The trials through which the neophyte has to pass are no fantastic mockeries nor mimicries of awful peril . . . It is inherent in the nature of the science that has to be explored that its revelations shall stagger the reason and try the most resolute courage. . . .’

Yet he adds :

There would be nothing to prevent a gentleman in

* ‘Purpose of Theosophy,’ pp. 20, 21.

† ‘Esoteric Buddhism,’ pp. 181, 182.

‡ ‘The Occult World,’ p. 73.

London society from being in full training for occult candidature without anybody about him being the wiser.*

The adepts never grant a personal interview to outsiders—not even to Mr. Sinnett, President of the London Lodge of the Theosophical Society; and, as Koot Hoomi says, unless the candidate for adeptship

‘has reached the point in the path of occultism from which return is impossible by his having irrevocably pledged himself to our association, we never—except in cases of utmost moment—visit him, or even cross the threshold of his door in visible appearance.’†

Besides refusing to be seen by the unpledged, the adepts give us no intelligible explanation of their own doctrine. Mr. Sinnett, after telling us that ‘the final purpose of occult philosophy is to show what Man was, is, and will be,’‡ says in the following page that

‘neither in “Isis” nor in any other book on occult philosophy which has been or seems likely to be written yet awhile, must anyone hope to obtain a cut-and-dried, straightforward and perfectly clear account of the mysteries of birth, death, and the future. At first, in pursuing studies of this kind, one is irritated at the difficulty of getting at what the occultists really believe as regards the future state, the nature of the life to come, and its general *mise en scène*, (p. 115).

The Mahatmas’ hatred of Almighty God and of His Church is the one doctrine clearly expressed by them. Koot Hoomi says, for instance, in a letter quoted by Mr. Sinnett:

‘. . . This is the moment to guide the recurrent impulse which must soon come, and which will push the age towards extreme atheism, or drag it back towards extreme sacerdotalism, if it is not led to the primitive soul-satisfying philosophy of the Aryans. He who observes what is going on to-day, on the one hand among the Catholics, who are breeding miracles as fast as the white ants do their young,

* ‘The Occult World,’ pp. 17-19.

† *Ibid.*, 73.

‡ § *Ibid.*, p. 114.

on the other among the freethinkers, who are converting, by masses, into Agnostics—will see the drift of things.’*

Of course he will, if he observes intelligently ; for the age of compromise in religion is passing away, and the tendency is towards the Church of God on the one side, and the church of the devil on the other. Hence the howl about ‘breeding miracles ;’ but how does he reconcile the said miracles with his denial of miracles,† and with the fact that Catholics, not being occultists, cannot work wonders by occult means ? In the same page he says :

‘Its chief aim [*i.e.*, that of the Theosophical Society] is to extirpate current superstitions and sceptism. . . . The terms, Unscientific, Impossible, Hallucination, Imposture, have hitherto been used in a very loose, careless way. . . . And this is why our chiefs have determined to shed upon a few recipient minds more light upon the subject. . . .’‡

And he goes on to say that

‘these phenomena must and *will* come with an overpowering influence upon the world of sceptics and bigots. They *have* to prove both destructive and constructive—destructive in the pernicious errors of the past, in the old creeds and superstitions which suffocate in their poisonous embrace, like the Mexican weed, nigh all mankind, but constructive of new institutions of a genuine practical Brotherhood of Humanity. . . .’§

And at p. 92 he says :

‘If we had the powers of the imaginary Personal God, and the universal and immutable laws were but toys to play with, then, indeed, might we have created conditions that would have turned this earth into an Arcadia for lofty souls.’

What might happen if immutable laws were toys to play with, is a question that may be reasonably asked when two and two shall have been shown to be possibly five ; but, at

* ‘The Occult World,’ p. 94.

† The wisacres say, ‘The age of miracles is past ;’ but we answer, ‘It never existed.’—‘The Occult World,’ p. 101.

‡ *Ibid.*, pp. 94-101.

§ *Ibid.*

any rate, Koot Hoomi here denies Almighty God with such excessive spite, that he forgets the meanings of words.

Thirdly : That the adepts, like spiritual mediums and sorcerers of all kinds, are not always able to get things done, clearly appears in the pages of 'The Occult World.' For instance, Madame Blavatsky, who usually worked through their help, almost always answered, when applied to, that she would try ; and at p. 84 we find Koot Hoomi saying 'in a guarded way' that, 'as often as it was practicable to communicate with' Mr. Sinnett, it would be done.

At pp. 44, 45, we hear of a Brother who occultly made an appointment with Madame Blavatsky without enabling her to find him. Mr. Sinnett, anticipating the obvious question arising from this curious failure, which he partly attributes to her having 'lost her scent' of the 'occult currents,' excuses the Brother by asserting that 'the situation was not one in which the Brother in question was anxious to prove his existence to a jury of intelligent Englishmen.' How his not wanting to prove his existence before an English jury somewhere else can possibly be a sufficient reason, or any reason at all, for letting Madame Blavatsky lose her scent of the occult currents, we are not told.

Another lame excuse occurs at pp. 64-66 of 'The Occult World.' Mr. Sinnett, being duly impressed by the importance of inducing as many people as possible to deny Almighty God, had boldly affirmed that he, on the one part, 'would undertake to convert everybody in Simla who was capable of linking two ideas together, to a belief in the possibility of obtaining by occult agency physical results which were beyond the control of ordinary science,' if Koot Hoomi, on the other part, would occultly convey to India a copy of the *Times* on the day of its publication in London—which was clearly impossible by any means known to scientists. Koot Hoomi, however, did not see his way to this comfortable arrangement. His answer is remarkable ; for he implies the possibility of doing the thing required, and lets out a good deal by the weakness of his excuse. 'Precisely,' he said, 'because the test of the London newspaper would close the mouths of the sceptics, it was inadmissible :' and the reason given is, that

'as on the one hand science would find itself unable, in its

present state, to account for the wonders given in its name, and on the other, the ignorant masses would still be left to view the phenomenon in the light of a miracle, everyone who would thus be made a witness to the occurrence would be thrown off his balance, and the result would be deplorable.'

How the act of silencing disbelievers in occultism could be considered inadmissible by an occultist, is a question to which the answer is not apparent from any point of view. Scientists, not being able to account for a wonder-work witnessed by all Simla, must have either acknowledged the preternatural (which most of them would avoid doing, if possible), or accepting the alternative, made an act of faith in the superior science of the adepts, and asked for initiation, though on somewhat milder terms, perhaps, than Mr. Sinnett and Koot Hoomi describe. Some of 'the ignorant masses' might indeed consider it a miracle, though many of them in India know very well what devilry is. But what if they did? 'The imaginary Personal God'* would be out of the question, and the Thibetian Brethren would enjoy full credit with the said masses, pending further enlightenment. No one would be thrown off his balance who had any balance to be thrown off; but the Theosophical Society would have a rare chance of upsetting weak-kneed and uninstructed Christians by calling their attention to the apparently miraculous character of the act. These hearers, quite as ignorant on that point as the masses could be, would not distinguish between that which is beyond the order of a particular nature and that which is beyond the order of *all* nature,† nor between that which is miraculous *simpliciter* and that which is only miraculous *quoad nos*.‡ Therefore they would not see the difference between an act of (to us) preternatural power and an act of Divine power, such as raising the dead, which exceeds that of any creature. A grand opportunity this would have been for the evangelists of the 'Wisdom-Religion.' Mr. Sinnett evidently knew that it would, and Koot Hoomi must have known as much, for indeed it would be clear to anyone who thought at all

* 'The Occult World,' p. 92.

† 'Summa,' p. 1, quæst. cx., a. 1.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 1, quæst. cx., ad l.

about the question. The only possible inference is that he was unable to get it done.

At page 91 we meet with a very ignoble excuse for non-performance of a beneficial action, declared to be occultly feasible. Koot Hoomi, taking occasion to say, that if the sun were to 'hatch granite chickens out of a boulder,' men of science would not care about their not being alive, 'so as to feed the hungry and the starving,' adds, 'but let a *shaberon* [a superior adept] cross the Himalayas in a time of famine and multiply sacks of rice for the perishing multitude—as he could—and your magistrates and collectors would probably lodge him in gaol to make him confess what granary he had robbed.'

This multiplying of rice would be a big thing to do ; but let that pass. Koot Hoomi asserts that shabérons could do it, and excuses them for not doing it by saying, that if they did, they would be imprisoned. Such an excuse would be contemptible in anyone, seeing how very remote would be the danger of being imprisoned by a British official for robbing nobody. What then shall we say of it, when put forth by a Mahatma trumpeting the 'immense love of the initiated Brethren' for 'Humanity as a whole*?' One cannot conceive, in the order of natural virtues a more detestable dereliction of an obvious duty than what is here expressed under the shelter of a hypothesis.

Fourthly : The trifling and solemnly ridiculous character of the wonders worked by the adepts, as by spiritists and all other practitioners of the Black Art, has, if I mistake not, already been perceptible to the intelligent reader ; for in fact it has been apparent in the falling flowers, in the bell-rings, in the postal pillows, etc., etc., etc. Clearly there is nothing beneficial in all that, unless a cunning temptation to apostasy is good for mankind ; yet, according to Koot Hoomi,

'The same marvels that the spiritualists quote in opposition to the dogmas of eternal perdition and atonement, the Catholics swarm to witness as proof of their faith in miracles.'†

We are not told what Catholics would gain by merely

* 'The Occult World,' p. 104.

† *Ibid.*, p. 94.

proving the fact of their own faith in miracles ; but if raising the dead and healing the sick are to be considered as on a par with hiding things in cushions and pillow-cases, dropping flowers on people's heads and throwing letters into their laps, without benefiting anyone, but only with a view to making them deny Almighty God, there is an end of all distinction, and we had better say at once that, after all,

‘Thinking is but an idle waste of thought,
And nought is everything, and everything is nought.’*

Our Lord worked a miracle to feed the starving ; and He publicly healed all the sick who came to Him, knowing that He would be crucified in consequence.† The shaberon, Koot Hoomi assures us, could multiply rice in times of famine, but in deference to magistrates and collectors,‡ they confine their manifestations within the range of common spiritism.§

Nevertheless, they are wise in their generation. The puerile character of their wonder-working can always be pointed out as a plausible reason for laughing at the whole thing, while the fact that such manifestations are preternatural to us, and are worked by mysterious beings behind the scenes, is clear enough to convince those who are friendly to the system, so that sympathizers are confirmed and many opponents are put off the scent. Thus it is now ; but will it always be so ? Some day—we know not when—‘great signs and wonders’ will be occultly worked, ‘in so much as to deceive (if it were possible) even the elect ;’|| and Koot Hoomi tells us that ‘phenomenal elements previously unthought of, undreamed of, will soon begin manifesting themselves day by day with constantly augmented force, and disclose at last the secrets of their mysterious workings.’¶

* ‘Rejected Addresses.’

† ‘The chief priests, therefore, and the Pharisees, gathered a council, and said : What do we, for this Man doth many miracles ? If we let Him alone so, all men will believe in Him. . . . From that day, therefore, they devised to put Him to death.’—St. John xi. 47, 48, 53.

‡ ‘The Occult World,’ p. 91.

§ ‘Certainly there have been cases in which, under the influence of mediumship, the agencies of the ordinary spiritual *séance* have transported letters half across the globe.’—‘The Occult World,’ p. 135.

|| St. Matt. xxiv. 24.

¶ ‘The Occult World,’ p. 101.

These italics are mine.

I leave the Christian reader to interpret the words. Enough of this. Let us pass on.

Fifthly: The blasphemies with which the new gospel abounds are openly stated, as in fact they must be, seeing that without openly blaspheming our blessed Lord, and explaining Him away as an occultist, which Koot Hoomi does,* it would simply be crushed under the weight of His words and works. I cannot dwell on this, nor would the reader wish me to do so. It is enough to have been under the necessity of soiling the paper by stating the fact. We have already seen that 'no such conception [as that of a Personal God] enters into the great Esoteric Doctrine of Nature,'† and Koot Hoomi, in one of his letters, is pleased to be facetious about it.‡ Again, the aforesaid Koot Hoomi says that St. Paul, when he speaks of having been caught up into the third heaven, is alluding 'to the beatific vision of an initiated seer;§ and Mr. Sinnett had before assured us that St. Paul was an occultist.|| Neither of them appears to see how degrading this assertion is to occultism; yet there is nothing more evident. St. Paul's doctrine differs fundamentally from that of occultism, for he teaches, *e.g.*, the dogmas of eternal punishment and of the atonement, in opposition to which the spiritualists, as Koot Hoomi remarks with much emphasis, quote their marvels;¶ and in the Old Testament, to which we find St. Paul continually appealing, occult practices, such as consulting spirits, seeking the truth from the dead, are distinctly forbidden.** The statement, then, amounts to this, that St. Paul, who died for the faith which occultism denies, believed precisely the reverse of what he bore witness to by his life and by his death, and while inculcating the highest principles, was, in practice, a solemn impostor. Anyone who is able to believe that, would be ready to believe anything except the truth; but he must be in a muddle about right and wrong. The morality of Esoteric Buddhism, Mr. Sinnett answers us in its praise, is 'pitilessly inflexible,'†† and in that respect, by-the-bye, as in

* 'The Occult World,' pp. 112, 113.

† 'Esoteric Buddhism,' p. 207.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

†† 'Esoteric Buddhism,' p. 154.

‡ 'The Occult World,' p. 92.

|| *Ibid.*, p. 13.

** Deut. xviii. 10, 11.

every other, shows its opposition to Almighty God, who spared the Ninevites and lengthened the life of Ezechias; but the morality shown in calumniating St. Paul by making a hero of him as an imaginary impostor for the purpose of claiming him as a brother occultist is not of a very high type.

Lastly : The essential identity of occultism with spiritism, and of both with the Black Art, is evident in the practices of each. *Operari sequitur esse*. In each case there is communication with distant people, transportation of distant things, thoughts apparently read, influence exercised over others from a distance; and when, after being told that planetary spirits are the 'perfected humanity of the last preceding manvantara,* one learns that the adepts 'commune with these planetary spirits,'† one fails to find any essential difference between such communings and those of every necromancer. Perfected or not, the supposed planetary spirits are represented as human beings who once lived on this earth; and he who claims to commune with such, claims to commune with the dead, unless we are to do away with the meanings of words for the purpose of helping the adepts, through the Theosophical Society, to catch people in a trap of ambiguous terms baited with conditional promises of indefinitely advanced knowledge. Communication with distant people, transportation of distant things, apparent communication of thoughts, influence exercised over others from a distance, are common to all three; and since the Black Art is avowedly what it is, the inference is clear. But we need not trouble ourselves with internal evidence when the fact is revealed by Mr. Sinnett and by the Mahatma Koot Hoomi, as we shall see. Mr. Eglinton, a spiritist medium, staying at Calcutta, had been led by the 'spirit-guides' to disbelieve in the Brothers :

'But a very remarkable change [says Mr. Sinnett]‡ came over their utterances at last. Shortly before Mr. Eglinton's departure from Calcutta, they declared their full knowledge of the Brotherhood, naming the "Illustrious" by that designation, and declaring that they had been appointed to

* 'Esoteric Buddhism,' p. 102.

† *Ibid.*, p. 205.

‡ 'The Occult World,' pp. 131, 132.

work in concert with the Brothers thenceforth. On this aspect of affairs, Mr. Eglinton left India in the steamship *Vega*, sailing from Calcutta, I believe, on the 16th of March. A few days later, on the morning of the 24th, at Allahabad, I received a letter from Koot Hoomi, in which he told me that he was going to visit Mr. Eglinton on board the *Vega* at sea, convince him thoroughly as to the existence of the Brothers, and if successful in doing this, notify the fact immediately to certain friends of Mr. Eglinton's at Calcutta. The letter had been written a day or two before, and the night between the 21st and 22nd was mentioned as the period when the astral visit would be paid. . . . The promised visit was *actually paid*, and not only that, but a letter written by Mr. Eglinton at sea on the 24th, describing it—and giving in his adhesion to a belief in the Brothers fully and completely—was transported instantaneously that same evening to Bombay, where it was dropped ("out of nothing," like the first letter I received on my return to India) before several witnesses; by them identified and tied up with cards written on by them at the time; then taken away again and a few minutes later dropped down, cards from Bombay and all, among Mr. Eglinton's friends at Calcutta, who had been told beforehand to expect a communication from the Brothers at that time. All the incidents of this series are authenticated by witnesses and documents. . . .'

Mr. Eglinton, in a letter to Mrs. Gordon, whose husband, Colonel Gordon, had been one of the witnesses to the fact of its falling suddenly in a room, announces his conversion, and says :

'I have been forced to a *complete belief* in their being living distinct persons, and just in proportion to my scepticism will be my *firm unalterable* opinion respecting them. I am not allowed to tell you all I know; but Koot Hoomi *appeared* to me in person two days ago, and what he told me dumfounded me.*

But let us hear Koot Hoomi. In the following paragraph, he distinctly owns the connection of the adepts with present and former followers of the Black Art :

'We have [he says] but to bear in mind the recent perse-

* 'The Occult World,' p. 133.

cutions of mediums in England, the burning of supposed witches and sorcerers in South America, Russia, and the frontiers of Spain, to assure ourselves that the only salvation of the genuine proficient in occult sciences lies in the scepticism of the public. The charlatans and the jugglers are the natural shields of the adepts. The public safety is only ensured by our keeping secret the terrible weapons which might otherwise be used against it. . . .'*

At p. 89 he laughs at the 'experimenters' for not knowing about 'conscious life in separate elements,' and about the 'worlds of semi-intelligent, if not intellectual forces at work in hidden corners of nature.' At p. 92 he says:

'Earth is the battle-ground of moral, no less than of physical, forces; and the boisterousness of animal passion, under the stimulus of the rude energies of the lower group of etheric agents, always tends to quench spirituality.'

These very suspicious characters, the 'etheric agents,' would indeed do as he says, and, moreover, their connection with the Prince of the Powers of the Air will be evident, I think, to any Christian reader.

At p. 101, Koot Hoomi, explaining to Mr. Sinnett the deficiencies of non-occultists, writes thus:

'How could you make yourself understood, *command*, in fact, these semi-intelligent Forces, whose means of communicating with us are not through spoken words, but through sounds and colours in correlations between the vibrations of the two? For sound, light and colour are the main factors in forming those grades of intelligences, those beings of whose very existence you have no conception . . . ' (p. 100).

Koot Hoomi may call them semi-intelligent forces, or anything else, to conceal what they are; but he cannot undo the term, 'grades of intelligences,' by which he unwittingly confesses them to be fallen angels.

Again, Mr. Sinnett (who, it must be remembered, writes under the direction of Koot Hoomi) says:

'Hitherto in this treatise [*'Esoteric Buddhism'*] little has been said of the "elementals," those semi-intelligent crea-

* '*The Occult World*,' p. 69.

tures of the astral light, who belong to a wholly different kingdom of Nature from ourselves.'

And he adds that knowledge concerning them 'is scrupulously withheld by the adepts of occultism.' Then he goes on to show, evidently without intending to do so, the essential oneness of Esoteric Buddhism and common sorcery, for he says :

'It is by command over the elementals that some of the greatest physical feats of adeptship are accomplished ; and it is by the spontaneous playful acts* of the elementals that the greatest physical phenomena of the *séance*-room are brought about.† So also with almost all Indian fakirs and yogis of the lower class, who have power of producing phenomenal results. . . . They may not necessarily understand the action of the forces they employ, any more than an Indian servant in a telegraph office, taught how to mix the ingredients of the liquid used in a galvanic battery, understands the theory of electric science. He can perform the one trick he has been taught ; and so with inferior yogi. He has got influence over certain elementals, and can work certain wonders' (pp. 105, 106).‡

These admissions appear to be drawn from Mr. Sinnett unwillingly, for he says at p. 8 of 'The Occult World' :

'Occult phenomena must not be confused with the phenomena of spiritualism. The latter, whatever they may be, are manifestations which mediums can neither control nor understand.'

There is no difficulty in believing the latter half of this statement, it being evident that spiritist occultism is less advanced than the occultism of the adepts. But what of that ? Given any number of degrees in proficiency, the fact remains that Esoteric Buddhism, spiritism, and sorcery, are ESSENTIALLY ONE.

* These playful acts of the so-called elementals are described by Görres. See his famous work, entitled, in the French translation, 'La Mystique Divine Naturelle et Diabolique.'

† Here again he confesses the essential identity of Esoteric Buddhism and spiritism.

‡ Precisely so : for, as Father Franco reminds us, the compact may be only implicit.

Into this mystery of iniquity we are invited to enter, and Mr. Sinnett tells us how :

‘Some readers [he says] who are interested, but slow to perceive what practical action they can take, may ask what they can do to show appreciation of the opportunity. My reply will be modelled on the famous injunction of Sir Robert Peel: “Register, register, register!” Take the first step towards making a response to the offer which emanates from the occult world—register, register, register! In other words, join the Theosophical Society—the one and only association which at present is linked by any recognised bond of union with the Brotherhood of Adepts in Thibet. There is a Theosophical Society in London, as there are other branches in Paris and America, as well as in India.’*

‘The door,’ then, ‘leading to occult knowledge is still ajar,’ as he tells us in the same page, but is more than ajar in our Indian possessions.

‘There are [says Mrs. Sinnett] branches [of the Theosophical Society] in active working order in almost every town in the three Presidencies of India, while in Ceylon the movement has taken, if possible, still firmer root. Owing to the energetic measures started by Colonel Olcott in this island, he has, in addition to winning over great numbers of adherents to the Society, been the means of organizing and bringing into active working order many Buddhist schools, where native children can now obtain a good education. Formerly these children had either to be sent to schools presided over by Christian missionaries, or they had to go without any regular instruction.†

This Colonel Olcott composed a Buddhist Catechism, of which Mr. Sinnett mentions the fourteenth thousand, saying that he wrote it ‘under the direct instruction of his Adept Guru.’‡

‘If we look at Ceylon [says Koot Hoomi] we shall see the most scholarly priests combining, under the lead of the Theosophical Society, in a new Exegesis of Buddhistic philosophy; and at Galle, on the 15th of September, a

* ‘The Occult World,’ p. 139.

† ‘Purpose of Theosophy,’ pp. 104, 105.

‡ ‘Esoteric Buddhism,’ p. 79.

Secular Theosophical School for the teaching of Singalese youth opened with an attendance of over three hundred scholars ; an example about to be imitated at three other points in that island.*

This is clear evidence of an anti-Christian conspiracy, worked through a cosmopolitan association which has a lodge here.

The duty of this London Lodge, as of all the other Lodges, and of all those who wish to help the Brothers in Thibet, is, as Koot Hoomi tells us, 'that of sweeping away, as much as possible, the dross left to us by our pious forefathers.'† Precisely so ; but they have to be careful, and they will be careful, in 'detecting identities,'‡ for the purpose of enlisting as many sympathizers as possible. Thus, counting on the religious confusion and aggressive unbelief that mark the times in which we live, they bid for the votes of the British public, in the hopes of alluring those who, more or less earnestly seek and know not where to find.

In the pages before me some notable confessions of truths denied in the same are quite unintentionally made. For instance, we read of

'The deep reverence with which the teacher and pupils of the esoteric doctrine approach the subject of the Great Law—the Unconscious, Infinite, Ultimate Reality. . .§

Now, inasmuch as no sane person could really feel this boundless reverence for an unconscious thing, the said teachers and pupils, if they do feel it, confess *ipso facto* the Personal God whose existence they deny.

Again: In 'that all-pervading Judge, that Seventh Principle or Universal Spirit, which exists everywhere,' who is 'Undefinable, Incomprehensible for us at our present stage of enlightenment,'|| and who is 'the only God recognised by Esoteric knowledge,' Almighty God is confessed, and the fact of our seeing 'through a glass in an obscure manner,'¶ plainly admitted.

True, He is here called the Seventh Principle, which, being one of the elements that constitute a complete or

* 'The Occult World,' p. 93.

† 'Purpose of Theosophy,' p. 107.

‡ 'Esoteric Buddhism,' p. 204.

† *Ibid.*, p. 102.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

¶ 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

perfect man,* would indicate a sort of evolutionary Pantheism, exclusive of the failures annihilated at the final sorting out;† but the fact remains that a Universal Spirit, undefinable and incomprehensible for us, is, and can be no other than Almighty God.

Again : 'The eternal reign of immutable law, unchanging and unchangeable, in regard to which there is only an Eternal Now,‡ either means an Eternal Law in relation to an Eternal Lawgiver, or is downright nonsense. Common-sense tells us that a law must be made by some one, and therefore cannot be, either in or out of time, without some lawgiver. But the Eternal Giver of an Eternal Law is distinctly He whom we call God. Thus the Being of God, which Esoteric Buddhism labours to disprove, without showing even an intelligible reason for doing so, is implicitly acknowledged; and this is the necessary consequence of deifying His Eternal Law, really indistinguishable from Himself. Moreover, the fact that He who eternally IS is God, and cannot have a past or future, is unwittingly admitted.

Again : When Koot Hoomi, writing to Mr. Sinnett, says that humanity 'is the great orphan, the only disinherited one upon this earth, my friend,'§ his words have but one intelligible meaning. For humanity as a whole is the sum-total of human beings; and, according to the doctrine of the Thibetian Brotherhood, all human beings may, if they will, 'become as gods.' Therefore, how can it be said, according to Esoteric Buddhism, that humanity is disinherited? Yet we know that it *was* disinherited at the fall of man; and the disinheritance is not removed from those who wilfully refuse to accept the Redemption. In that sense, and in no other, humanity, as meaning the sum of those human beings who, depending on human power only, reject the Divine Atonement offered to them, *is* disinherited, or rather, disinherits itself, and is indeed, in the fullest sense of the word, an orphan. There is a horrible pathos in that involuntary confession—that smothered cry of despair.

Here I take leave of the 'Wisdom-religion', and thank-

* 'Esoteric Buddhism,' p. 24.

† 'The Occult World,' p. 102.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

ful I am to have ended a task unwillingly begun. A more painful work I could hardly have set myself to do. I did it simply because no one, so far as I knew, had yet shown what Esoteric Buddhism, examined in the light of its own teaching, as offered to us by the Brotherhood in Thibet, secretly is.

