

Bhawani Lal Bhartiya.
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**AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF
PANDIT DAYĀNAND SARASVATĪ**

*Written by him expressly
for "THE THEOSOPHIST"
Edited by H. P. Blavatsky.*

ADYAR

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गुरु विरजानन्द दण्डी
संदर्भ पुस्तकालय

दयानंद महिला महाविद्यालय
कुरुक्षेत्र

वर्गीकरण नम्बर

842

पु. परिग्रहण क्रमांक



1882

B. L. Bhargava

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AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF DAYĀNAND
SARASVATĪ SVĀMI

*(Written by him expressly for THE
THEOSOPHIST. Translated from Hindi.)*

०८७१

It was in a Brahmin family of the Audīchya caste, in a town belonging to the Rajah of Morvi, in the province of Kathiawar, that in the year of Samvat, 1881, I, now known as Dayānand Sarasvatī, was born. If I have from the first refrained from giving the names of my father and of the town in which my family resides, it is because I have been prevented from doing so by my duty. Had any of my relatives heard again of me, they would have sought me out. And then once more face to face with them, it would have become incumbent upon me to follow them. I would have to touch money again,¹ serve

¹ No svāmi or sannyāsi can touch money, or personally transact any monetary business.—ED. THEOS.

them, and attend to their wants. And thus the holy work of the Reform, to which I have wedded my whole life, would have irretrievably suffered through my forced withdrawal from it.

I was hardly five years of age when I began to study the Devanāgarī characters, and my parents and all the elders commenced training me in the ways and practices of my caste and family; making me learn by rote the long series of religious hymns, mantras, stanzas and commentaries. And I was but eight when I was invested with the sacred Brahmanical cord (triple thread), and taught Gayatrī Sandhyā with its practices, and Yajur Veda Saṁhitā preceded by the study of the *Rudrādhyāya*. As my family belonged to the Śiva sect, their greatest aim was to get me initiated into its religious mysteries; and thus I was early taught to worship the uncouth piece of clay representing Śiva's emblem, known as the *Pārthiva Liṅga*. But, as there is a good deal of fasting and various hardships connected with this worship, and I had the habit of taking early meals, my mother, fearing

for my health, opposed my daily practising it. But my father sternly insisted upon its necessity and this question finally became a source of everlasting quarrels between them. Meanwhile, I studied the Samskrit grammar, learned the Vedas by heart, and, accompanied my father to the shrines, temples, and places of S'iva worship. His conversation ran invariably upon one topic: highest devotion and reverence must be paid to S'iva, his worship being the most divine of all religions. It went on thus till I had reached my fourteenth year, when, having learned by heart the whole of the Yajur Veda Samhitā, parts of the other Vedas, of the S'abda Rupāvalī and the grammar, my studies were completed.

As my father's was a banking house and as he held, moreover, the office—hereditary in my faith—of a Jamadar we were far from being poor, and things, so far, had gone very pleasantly. Wherever there was a S'iva Purān to be read and explained, there my father was sure to take me along with him; and finally, unmindful of my mother's remonstrances, he imperatively demanded that I

should begin practising *Pārthiva Pūjā* when the great day of gloom and fasting—called *Sivarātri*—had arrived, this day following on the 13th of Vadya of [the month of] Māgha, my father, regardless of the protest that my strength might fail, commanded me to fast, adding that I had to be initiated on that night into the sacred legend, and participate in that night's long vigil in the temple of Siva. Accordingly, I followed him, along with other young men, who accompanied their parents. This vigil is divided into four parts called *pracharas*, consisting of three hours each. Having completed my task, namely, having sat up for the first two *pracharas* till the hour of midnight, I remarked that the *pūjaris*, or temple *desservants*, and some of the laymen devotees, after having left the inner temple, had fallen asleep outside. Having been taught for years that by sleeping on that particular night, the worshipper lost all the good effect of his devotion, I tried to refrain from drowsiness by bathing my eyes, now and then, with cold water. But my father was less fortunate. Unable to resist fatigue

he was the first to fall asleep, leaving me to watch alone.

Thoughts upon thoughts crowded upon me and one question after another arose in my disturbed mind. Is it possible—I asked myself—that this semblance of man, the idol of a *personal* God, that I see bestriding his bull before me, and who, according to all religious accounts, walks about, eats, sleeps, and drinks; who can hold a trident in his hand, beat upon his *damaru* (drum), and pronounce curses upon men—is it possible that he can be the Mahādeva, the great Deity? The same who is invoked as the Lord of Kailāsa, the Supreme Being, and the divine hero of all the stories we read of him in his Purāṇas? Unable to resist such thoughts any longer, I awoke my father, abruptly asking him to enlighten me; to tell me whether this hideous emblem of Śiva in the temple was identical with the Mahādeva (Great God) of the Scriptures, or something else. “Why do you ask?” said my father. “Because,” I answered, “I feel it impossible to reconcile the idea of an Omnipotent, living God, with this idol,

which allows the mice to run over his body and thus suffers his image to be polluted without the slightest protest." Then my father tried to explain to me that this stone representation of the Mahādeva of Kailāsa, having been consecrated by the holy Brahmans, became, in consequence, *the* god himself; and is worshipped and regarded as such; adding that as Śiva cannot be perceived personally in this Kali-Yuga—the age of mental darkness—hence we have the idol in which the Mahādeva of Kailāsa is imagined by his votaries; this kind of worship pleasing the great Deity as much as if, instead of the emblem, he were there himself. But the explanation fell short of satisfying me. I could not, young as I was, help suspecting misinterpretation and sophistry in all this. Feeling faint with hunger and fatigue, I begged to be allowed to go home. My father consented to it, and sent me away with a sepoy, only reiterating once more his command that I should not eat. But when, once home, I had told my mother of my hunger, she fed me with sweets, and I fell into a profound sleep.

In the morning, when my father had returned and learned that I had broken my fast, he felt very angry. He tried to impress me with the enormity of my sin; but do what he could, I could not bring myself to believe that that idol and Mahādeva were one and the same god, and, therefore, could not comprehend why I should be made to fast for, and worship the former. I had, however, to conceal my lack of faith, and bring forward as an excuse for abstaining from regular worship, my ordinary study, which really left me little or rather no time for anything else. In this I was strongly supported by my mother, and even my uncle, who pleaded my cause so well that my father had to yield at last and allow me to devote my whole attention to my studies. In consequence of this, I extended them to "Nighanta,"¹ "Pūrvamīmāsā," and other Sāstras, as well as to "Karmakāṇḍa" or the Ritual.

¹A medical work. There is a treatise entitled Nighantu in the Vedas. "Nirukta" another Vedic treatise.

There were besides myself in the family two younger sisters and two brothers, the youngest of whom was born when I was already sixteen. On one memorable night, as we were attending a *nautch* festival at the house of a friend, a servant was despatched after us from home, with the terrible news that my sister, a girl of fourteen, had been just taken sick with a mortal disease. Notwithstanding every medical assistance, my poor sister expired within four *ghatakas*¹ after we had returned. It was my first bereavement, and the shock my heart received was great. While friends and relatives were sobbing and lamenting around me, I stood like one petrified, and plunged in a profound reverie. It resulted in a series of long and sad meditations upon the instability of human life. "Not one of the beings that ever lived in this world could escape the cold hand of death," I thought; "I, too, may be snatched away at any time, and die." Whither then shall I turn for an expedient to alleviate this human misery, connected with our death-bed; where shall I find the

¹ About half an hour.

assurance of, and means of attaining Mukti, the final bliss? It was there and then, that I came to the determination that I would find it, cost whatever it might, and thus save myself from the untold miseries of the dying moments of an unbeliever. The ultimate result of such meditations was to make me violently break, and for ever, with the mummeries of external mortification and penances, and the more to appreciate the inward efforts of the soul.

But I kept my determination secret, and allowed no one to fathom my innermost thoughts. I was just eighteen then. Soon after, an uncle, a very learned man and full of divine qualities, one who had shown for me the greatest tenderness, and whose favorite I had been from my birth, expired also; his death leaving me in a state of utter dejection, and with a still profounder conviction settled in my mind that there was nothing stable in this world, nothing worth living for, or caring for, in a worldly life.

Although I had never allowed my parents to perceive what was the real state of my mind, I yet had been imprudent enough

to confess to some friends how repulsive seemed to me the bare idea of a married life. This was reported to my parents, and they immediately determined that I should be betrothed at once, and the marriage solemnity performed as soon as I should be twenty.

Having discovered this intention, I did my utmost to thwart their plans. I caused my friends to intercede on my behalf, and pleaded my cause so earnestly with my father that he promised to postpone my betrothal till the end of that year. I then began entreating him to send me to Benares, where I might complete my knowledge of the Samskrit grammar, and study astronomy and physics until I had attained a full proficiency in those difficult sciences.¹ But this once, it was my mother who opposed violently my desire. She declared that I should not go to Benares, as whatever I might feel inclined to study, could be learned at home as well as abroad; that I knew enough as it was, and had

¹ Astronomy includes Astrology in India, and it is in Benares that the subtlest of metaphysics and so-called occult sciences are taught.

to be married anyhow before the coming year, as young people through an excess of learning were apt to become too liberal and free sometimes in their ideas. I had no better success in that matter with my father. On the contrary; for no sooner had I reiterated the favour I begged of him, and asked that my betrothal should be postponed until I had returned from Benares, a scholar, proficient in arts and sciences, than my mother declared that in such a case she would not consent even to wait till the end of the year, but would see that my marriage was celebrated immediately.

Perceiving at last, that my persistence only made things worse, I desisted, and declared myself satisfied with being allowed to pursue my studies at home, provided I was allowed to go to an old friend, a learned pandit who resided about six miles from our town in a village belonging to our Jamadāri. Thither then, with my parent's sanction, I proceeded, and placing myself under his tuition, continued for some time quietly with my study. But while there,

I was again forced into a confession of the insurmountable aversion I had for marriage. This went home again. I was summoned back at once, and found upon returning that everything had been prepared for my marriage ceremony. I had entered upon my twenty-first year, and had no more excuses to offer. I fully realized now that I would neither be allowed to pursue any longer my studies, nor would my parents ever make themselves consenting parties to my celibacy. It was then, driven to the last extremity, that I resolved to place an eternal barrier between myself and marriage.

On an evening of the year Samvat 1903, without letting any one this time into my confidence, I secretly left my home, as I hoped, for ever. Passing that first night in the vicinity of a village about eight miles from my home, I arose three hours before dawn, and before night had again set in I had walked over thirty miles, carefully avoiding the public thoroughfares, villages, and localities in which I might have been recognized. These precautions proved useful to me, as on the third day after I had absconded,

I learned from a Government officer that a large party of men including many horse-men, were diligently roving about in search of a young man from the town of . . . who had fled from his home. I hastened further on, to meet with other adventures. A party of begging Brahmans had kindly relieved me of all the money I had on me, and made me part even with my gold and silver ornaments, rings, bracelets and other jewels, on the plea that the more I gave away in charities, the more my self-denial would benefit me in the after-life. Thus, having parted with all I had, I hastened on to the place of residence of a learned scholar, a man named Lāla Bhagat, of whom I had much heard on my way, from wandering Sannyāsis and Bairāgis (religious mendicants). He lived in the town of Sayale, where I met with a Brahmachāri who advised me to join at once their holy order, which I did.

After initiating me into his order and conferring upon me the name of S'uddha Chaitanya, he made me exchange my clothes for the dress worn by them—a reddish-yellow garment. From thence, and in this

new attire, I proceeded to the small principality of Kauthagangad, situated near Ahmedabad, where, to my misfortune I met with a Bairāgi, the resident of a village in the vicinity of my native town, and well acquainted with my family. His astonishment was as great as my perplexity. Having naturally enquired how I came to be there, and in such an attire, and learned of my desire to travel and see the world, he ridiculed my dress and blamed me for leaving my home for such an object. In my embarrassment he succeeded in getting himself informed of my future intentions. I told him of my desire to join in the Mela¹ of Kārtik, held that year at Siddhapore, and that I was on my way to it. Having parted with him, I proceeded immediately to that place and taking my abode in the temple of Mahādeva at Nilkanṭha, where Daradi Svāmi and other Brahmachāris, already resided. For a time, I enjoyed their society unmolested, visiting a number of learned scholars and professors of divinity who had

¹ Mela is a religious gathering, numbering at times hundreds of thousands of pilgrims.

come to the Mela, and associating with a number of holy men.

Meanwhile, the Bairāgi, whom I had met at Kauthagangad had proved teacherous. He had despatched a letter to my family, informing them of my intentions and pointing to my whereabouts. In consequence of this, my father had come down to Siddhapore with his sepoy, traced me step by step in the Mela, learning something of me wherever I had sat among the learned pandits, and finally, one fine morning appeared suddenly before me. His wrath was terrible to behold. He reproached me violently, accusing me of bringing an eternal disgrace upon my family. No sooner had I met his glance than, knowing well that there would be no use in trying to resist him, I suddenly made up my mind how to act. Falling at his feet with joined hands, and in supplicating tones, I entreated him to appease his anger. I had left home through bad advice, I said; I felt miserable, and was just on the point of returning home, when he had providentially arrived; and now I was willing to follow him home again. Notwithstanding such

humility, in a fit of rage he tore my yellow robe into shreds, snatched at my *tumba*¹, and wresting it violently from my hand flung it far away, pouring upon my head at the same time a volley of bitter reproaches, and going so far as to call me a matricide. Regardless of my promises to follow him, he gave me in the charge of his sepoy, commanding them to watch me night and day, and never leave me out of their sight for a moment.

But my determination was as firm as his own. I was bent on my purpose and closely watched for my opportunity of escaping. I found it the same night. It was three in the morning, and the sepoy whose turn it was to watch me, believing me asleep, fell asleep in his turn. All was still; and so softly rising and taking along with me a *tumba* full of water, I crept out, and must have run over a mile before my absence was noticed. On my way, I espied a large tree, whose branches were overhanging the roof of a pagoda; on it I eagerly climbed, and hiding

¹ A vessel to hold water, made of a dried gourd.

myself among its thick foliage upon the dome, awaited what fate had in store for me. About four in the morning, I heard and saw, through the apertures of the dome, the sepoys enquiring after me, and making a diligent search for me inside as well as outside the temple. I held my breath and remained motionless, until finally, believing they were on the wrong track, my pursuers reluctantly retired. Fearing a new encounter, I remained concealed on the dome the whole day, and it was not till darkness had again set in that, alighting, I fled in an opposite direction. More than ever I avoided the public thoroughfares, asking my way of people as rarely as I could, until I had again reached Ahmedabad, from whence I at once proceeded to Baroda. There I settled for some time; and, at Chetan Maṭh (temple) I held several discourses with Brahmānand and a number of Brahmachāris and Sannyāsis, upon the Vedānta philosophy. It was Brahmānand and other holy men who established to my entire satisfaction that Brahmā, the deity, was no other than my own Self—my *Ego*. I am Brahmā, a portion

of Brahmā; *jīva* (Soul) and Brahmā, the deity, being one.¹ Formerly, while studying Vedānta, I had come to this opinion to a certain extent, but now the important problem was solved, and I have gained the certainty that I am Brahmā.

At Baroda hearing from a Benares woman that a meeting composed of the most learned scholars was to be held at a certain locality, I repaired thither at once; visiting a personage known as Satchidānand Paramahansa, with whom I was permitted to discuss upon various scientific and metaphysical subjects. From him I learned also that there were a number of great Sannyāsis and Brahmachāris who resided at Chanoda, Kanyali. In consequence of this I repaired to that place of sanctity, on

¹ बडोदरे शहरमे जाकर ठहरा। वहां चेतन मठमें ब्रह्मानन्द आदि ब्रह्मचारी और संन्यासियोसे वेदान्त विषयका बहुत बात की। और मैं ब्रह्म हूं अर्थात् जीव ब्रह्म एकहे ऐसा निश्चय उन ब्रह्मानन्दादिने मुमुक्षु को करा दिया प्रथम वेदान्त पढते समय भी कुल २ निश्चय हो गयाथा परन्तु वह ठीक दृढ होगया कि मैं ब्रह्म हूं।

This passage is of such importance that the original is here appended for the consideration of the learned.
—ED. THEOS.

the banks of Narbada, and there at last met for the first time with real *Dikshis*, or initiated Yogis, and such Sannyāsis as Chid-āsrāma and several other Brahmachāris. After some discussion, I was placed under the tuition of one Parmānand Paramahansa, and studied for several months “Vedānta-sāra,” “Ārya Harimide Toṭak,” “Vedānta Paribhāṣā,” and other philosophical treatises. During this time, as a Brahmachāri I had to prepare my own meals, which proved a great impediment to my studies. To get rid of it, I therefore concluded to enter, if possible, into the 4th Order of the Sannyāsis.¹

¹ *Sannyāsa*. There are different conditions and orders prescribed in the Sāstras. (1) *Brahmachāri*—one who leads simply a life of celibacy, maintaining himself by begging while prosecuting his duties; (2) *Grhasthāsrāma*—one who leads a married but a holy life; (3) *Vānaprastha*—who lives the life of a hermit; (4) *Sannyāsa* or *Chaturthāsrāma*. This is the highest of the four; in which the members of either of the other three may enter, the necessary conditions for it being the renunciation of *all* worldly considerations. Following are the four different successive stages of this life: (a) *Kutichaka*—Living in a hut, or in a desolate place and wearing a red-ochre coloured garment, carrying a three-knotted bamboo rod, and wearing the hair in the centre of the crown of the head, having the sacred thread, and devoting oneself to the contemplation of *Parabrahma*;

Fearing, moreover, to be known under my own name, on account of my family's pride, and well aware that once received in this order I was safe, I begged of a Deccani pandit, a friend of mine, to intercede on my behalf with a *Dikshit*—the most learned among them, that I might be initiated into that order at once. He refused, however, point-blank to initiate me, urging my extreme youth. But I did not despair.

Several months later, two holy men, a Svāmi and a Brahmachāri came from the Deccan, and took up their abode in a solitary, ruined building, in the midst of a jungle, near Chanoda, and about two miles distant from us. Profoundly versed in the Vedānta philosophy, my friend, the Deccani pandit, went to visit them, taking me along with

(b) *Bahūdaka*—one who lives quite apart from his family and the world, maintains himself on alms collected in seven houses, and wears the same kind of reddish garment ; (c) *Hamsa*—the same as in the preceding case except the carrying of only a one-knotted bamboo ; (d) *Paramahamsa*—the same as the others ; but the ascetic wears the sacred thread, and his hair and beard are quite long. This is the highest of all these orders. A Paramahamsa who shows himself worthy is on the very threshold of becoming a *Dikshit*.

him. A metaphysical discussion following brought them to recognize in each other *Dīkshits* of a vast learning. They informed us that they had arrived from "Śṛṅgeri Maṭh," the principal convent of Śaṅkarāchārya, in the South, and were on their way to Dvāraka. To one of them, Pūrṇānand Sarasvatī, I got my Deccani friend to recommend me particularly, and state at the same time, the object I was so desirous to attain and my difficulties. He told him that I was a young Brahmachāri, who was very desirous of pursuing his study in metaphysics unimpeded; that I was quite free from any vice or bad habits, for which fact he vouchsafed; and that, therefore, he believed me worthy of being accepted in this highest probationary degree, and initiated into the 4th order of the Sannyāsis; adding that thus I might be materially helped to free myself from all worldly obligations, and proceed untrammelled in the course of my metaphysical studies.

But this Svāmi also declined at first. I was too young, he said. Besides, he was himself a Maharāshtrian, and so he advised me

to appeal to a Gujarāti Svāmi. It was only when fervently urged on by my friend, who reminded him that Deccani Sannyāsis can initiate even *Gauḍas*, and that there could exist no such objection in my case, as I had been already accepted, and was one of the five *Drāviḍas*, that he consented. And on the third day following, he consecrated me into the order, delivering unto me a *Dand*¹ and naming me Dayānand Sarasvatī. By the order of my initiator though, and my proper desire, I had to lay aside the emblematical bamboo—the *Dand*, renouncing it for a while, as the ceremonial performances connected with it would only interfere with and impede the progress of my studies.

After the ceremony of initiation was over, they left us and proceeded to Dvārakā. For some time, I lived at Chanoda Kanyali as a simple Sannyāsi. But, upon hearing that at Vyāsāśram there lived a Svāmi whom they called *Yogānand*, a man thoroughly

¹ The three and seven knotted bamboo of Sannyāsis given to them as a sign of power, after their initiation.

versed in Yoga,¹ to him I addressed myself as an humble student, and began learning from him the theory as well as some of the practical modes of the science of Yoga or *Yoga Vidyā*. When my preliminary tuition was completed, I proceeded to Chhinūr, as on the outskirts of this town lived Krishna Sāstri, under whose guidance I perfected myself in the Samskrit grammar, and again returned to Chanoda where I remained for some time longer. Meeting there two Yogis—Jvālānand Pūri and S'ivānand Giri, I practised Yoga with them, also, and we all three held together many a dissertation upon the exalted science of Yoga; until finally, by their advice, a month after their departure, I went to meet them in the temple of Doodheshwar, near Ahmedabad, at which place they had promised to impart to me the final secrets

¹ A religious "magician," practically. One who can embrace the past and the future in one *present*, a man who has reached the most perfect state, of clairvoyance, and has a thorough knowledge of what is now known as mesmerism, and the occult properties of Nature, which sciences help the student to perform the greatest phenomena; such phenomena must not be confounded with *miracles* which are an absurdity.

गुरु विरजानन्द दण्डा

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842

and modes of attaining Yoga Vidya. They kept their promise, and it is to them that I am indebted for the acquirement of the practical portion of that great science. Still later, it was divulged to me that there were many far higher and more learned Yogis than those I had hitherto met—yet still *not* the highest—who resided on the peaks of the mountain of Abu, in Rajputana. Thither then, I travelled again to visit such noted places of sanctity as the *Arvada Bhavānī* and others; encountering at last, those whom I so eagerly sought for, on the peak of *Bhavānī Giri*, and learning from them various other systems and modes of Yoga. It was in the year of Samvat 1911 that I first joined in the Kumbha Mela at Hardwar, where so many sages and divine philosophers meet, often unperceived, together. So long as the Mela congregation of pilgrims lasted, I kept practising that science in the solitude of the jungle of Chandee; and after the pilgrims had separated, I transferred myself to *Rṣikes* where sometimes in the company of good and pure

Yogis¹ and Sannyāsis, oftener alone, I continued in the study and practice of Yoga. ~~///~~

After passing a certain time in solitude, ^{see} on the R̥ṣikes, a Brahmachāri and two mountain ascetics joined me, and we all three went to Tidi. The place was full of ascetics and *Rāj* (Royal) pandits—so called on account of their great learning. One of them invited me to come and have dinner with him at his house. At the appointed hour he sent a man to conduct me safely to his place and both the Brahmachāri and myself followed the messenger. But what was our dismay upon entering the house, to first see a Brahmin preparing and cutting meat, and then, proceeding further into the interior apartments, to find a large company of pandits seated with a pyramid of flesh, rumpsteaks, and dressed-up heads of animals before them! The master of the house cordially invited me in; but, with a few brief words—begging them to proceed with their good work and not to disturb themselves on

¹ One may be a Yogi, and yet not a *Dīkshīt*, i.e., not have received his final initiation into the mysteries of Yoga Vidyā.

my account, I left the house and returned to my own quarters. A few minutes later, the beef-eating pandit was at my side, praying me to return, and trying to excuse himself by saying that it was on *my account* that the sumptuous viands had been prepared! I then firmly declared to him that it was all useless. They were carnivorous, flesh-eating men, and myself a strict vegetarian, who felt sickened at the very sight of meat. If he would insist upon providing me with food, he might do so by sending me a few provisions of grain and vegetables which my Brahmachāri would prepare for me. This he promised to do, and then, very much confused, retired.

Staying at Tidi for some time, I inquired of the same pandit about some books and learned treatises I wanted to get for my instruction; what books and manuscripts could be procured at the place, and where. He mentioned some works on Samskrit grammar, classics, lexicographies, books on astrology, and the *Tantras*—or ritualistics. Finding that the latter were the only ones unknown to me, I asked him to procure the

same for me. Thereupon the learned man brought to me several works upon this subject. But no sooner had I opened them than my eye fell upon such an amount of incredible obscenities, mistranslations, misinterpretations of text and absurdity, that I felt perfectly horrified. In this ritual I found that incest was permitted with mothers, daughters, and sisters (of the Shoemaker's caste), as well as among the *Pariahs* or the outcastes—and worship was performed in a perfectly nude state.¹ Spirituous liquors, fish, and all kinds of animal food, and *Mudrā*² (exhibition of indecent images) . . . were allowed, from Brahmin

¹ For reasons which will be appreciated we prefer giving the text in Hindi :

तब उन्होनें छोटे बड़े ग्रन्थ मुझको दिये, मैंने देखतो बहुत भ्रष्टाचारकी बातें उनमें देखी कि माता, कन्या, भागनी, चमारी, चांडाली, आदीसें संगम करना, नम्र करके पूजना, मद्य, मांस, मन्डी, मुद्रा, अर्थात् ब्रह्मणसेलेके चांडालपर्यंत एकत्र भोजन करना, और उक्त स्त्रियोंसे मैथुन करना, इन पांच मकारोंसे मुक्तिका होना, आदि लेख उनमें देखके चित्तको खेद हुआ कि जिनने ये ग्रन्थ बनाये हैं वे कैसे नष्ट बुद्धि थे ।—ED.

² The word *Mudrā* has been variously understood and interpreted. It means the signet of a royal as well as of a religious personage; a ring seal with

down to *Mañg*. And it was explicitly stated that all those five things of which the name commences with the nasal¹ *m*, as for instance, *Madya* (intoxicating liquor); *Mīna* (fish); *Māmsa* (flesh); *Mūtra* . . .; and *Mai-thunā* . . . were so many means for reaching *Mukti* (salvation)! By actually reading the whole contents of the *Tantras*

initials engraved upon it. But it is also understood in another sense—the pristine and esoteric.

Bhūchāri, *Chachari*, *Khechari*, *Charāchari*, [?] [?] and *Agochari*—these five were the *Mudrās* practised by the Āryas to qualify themselves for Yoga. They are the initiative stages to the difficult system of *Raja-Yoga*, and the preliminaries of *Dhautipauti*, the early discipline of *Hatha-Yoga*. The *Mudrā* is a quite distinct and independent course of Yoga training, the completion of which helps the candidate to attain *Animā*, *Laghimā* and *Garimā*. For the meaning of these *Siddhis*, see article on *Yoga-Vidyā* in the November number of THE THEOSOPHIST (1879). The sense of this holy word once perverted, the ignorant Brahmins debased it to imply the pictorial representation of the emblems of their deities, and to signify the marks of those sexual emblems daubed upon their bodies with *Gopichand* made of the whitish clay of rivers held sacred. The *Vaiṣṇavas* debase the mark and the word less than the *Saivas*; but the *Sāktas* by applying it to the obscene gestures and the indecent exposures of their filthy ritual, have entirely degraded its Āryan meaning.—ED.

¹ The following are the five nasals in Samskrit (1) ङ (ṅa), (2) ञ (ña), (3) ण (ṇa), (4) न (na), (5) म (ma).

I fully assured myself of the craft and viciousness of the authors of the disgusting literature which is regarded as RELIGIOUS! I left the place and went to Srinagar.

Taking up my quarters at a temple, on Kedār Ghat, I used these *Tantras* as weapons against the local pandits, whenever there was an opportunity for discussion. While there, I became acquainted with a Sādhu, named Ganga Giri, who by day never left his mountain where he resided in a jungle. Our acquaintance resulted in friendship as I soon learned how entirely worthy he was of respect. While together, we discussed *Yoga* and other sacred subjects, and through close questioning and answering became fully and mutually satisfied that we were fit for each other. So attractive was his society for me, that I stayed over two months with him. It was only at the expiration of this time, and when autumn was setting in, that I, with my companions, the Brahmachāri and the two ascetics, left Kedār Ghat for other places. We visited Rudra Prayāg and other cities, until we reached the shrine of Agastya

Muni. Further to the North, there is a mountain peak known as the Shivpuri (town of Śiva) where I spent the four months of the cold season; when, finally parting from the Brahmachāri and the two ascetics, I proceeded back to Kedār, this time alone and unimpeded in my intentions, and reached *Gupta Kāsī*¹ (the *secret* Benares).

¹ *Gupta Kāsī*—*Gupta* secret, hidden, *Kāsī*, the ancient name of Benares—is a holy place enshrouded in mystery. It is about 50 miles from Badrīnāth. Outwardly there is seen only a temple with columns; but a firm belief prevails among pilgrims to the effect that this shrine only serves as a landmark to indicate the locality of the sacred hidden Benares—a whole city, in fact, underground. This holy place, they believe, will be revealed at the proper time, to the world. The *Mahātmas* alone can now reach it, and some inhabit it. A learned Svāmi friend, and a native of Badrīnāth, highly respected at Bombay, has just told us that there is a prophecy that in 25 years from this time Benares will begin to decline in every other respect as it has long done in holiness, and, owing to the wickedness of men, will finally fall. Then, the mystery of *Gupta Kāsī* will be disclosed and the truth begin to dawn upon men. Svami P. solemnly avers that, having often visited this very shrine, he has several times observed, with his own eyes, as it were, shadowy forms disappearing at the entrance, as though half visible men, or the wraiths of men were entering.—ED.

I stayed but few days there, and went thence to the *Triyugi*¹ Narayan shrine, visiting on my way Gaurī Kuṇḍ tank, and the cave of Bhimgupha. Returning in a few days to Kedār, my favourite place of residence, I there finally rested, a number of ascetic Brahmin worshippers—called Bandas, and the devotees of the Temple of Kedār, of the Jaṅgam sect—keeping me company until my previous companions, the Brahmachāri with his two ascetics, returned. I closely watched their ceremonies and doings, and observed all that was going on with a determined object of learning all that was to be known about these sects. But once that my object was fulfilled, I felt a strong desire to visit the surrounding mountains, with their eternal ice and glaciers, in quest of those true ascetics I have heard of, but as yet had never met—the *Mahātmas*.²

¹ Three yugas, or the Three Epochs.

² The Mahātmas, or literally great souls, from two words—*Mahā*, great, and *ātma*, soul—are those mysterious adepts whom the popular fancy views as “magicians,” and of whom every child knows in India, but who are met with so rarely, especially in this age of degeneration. With the exception of some Svāmīs and ascetics of a perfectly holy life,

I was determined—come what might—to ascertain whether some of them did or did not live there as rumoured. But the tremendous difficulties of this mountainous journey and the excessive cold forced me, unhappily, to first make enquiries among the hill-tribes and learn what they knew of such men. Everywhere I encountered either a profound ignorance upon the subject or a ridiculous superstition. Having wandered in vain for about twenty days, disheartened, I retraced my steps, as lonely as before, my companions who had at first accompanied me, having left me two days after we had started through dread of the great cold. I then

there are few who know positively that they *do* exist, and are no myths created by superstitious fancy. It will be given, perhaps, to Svāmi Dayānand, the great and holy man, to disabuse the skeptical minds of his degenerating countrymen; especially of this young decorated generation, the *Jeunesse Doree* of India, the LL. B. and M. A. aristocracy—who, fed upon Western materialism, and inspired by the cold negation of the age, despise the traditions, as well as the religion of their forefathers, calling all that was held sacred by the latter, a “rotten superstition”. Alas! they hardly remark themselves that from idolatry they have fallen into *fetichism*. They have but changed their idols for poorer ones, and remain the same.

ascended the Tunganath Peak.¹ There, I found a temple full of idols and officiating priests, and hastened to descend the peak on the same day. Before me were two paths, one leading West and the other South-west.

¹ At Badrīnāth (Northern India), on the right bank of the Biṣengāṅgā, where the celebrated temple of Viṣṇu, with hot mineral springs in it, annually attracts numerous pilgrims, there is a strange tradition among the inhabitants. They believe that holy Mahātmas (anchorites) have lived in the inaccessible mountain peaks, in caves of the greatest beauty for several thousand years. Their residence is approachable only through a cavern perpetually choked with snow, which forbids the approach of the curious and the skeptical. The Bhadrīnāth peaks in this neighbourhood are above 22,000 feet high.

Since the above was written one of our most respected and learned Fellows has informed us that his *Guru* told him that while stopping at the temple of Nārāyaṇ, on the Himālāyas, where he had passed some months, he saw therein a copper plate bearing date, with an inscription, said to have been made by Śāṅkarāchārya that that temple was the extreme limit where one should go in ascending the Himālāyas. The *Guru* also said that farther up the heights, and beyond apparently unsurmountable walls of snow and ice, he several times saw men of a most venerable appearance, such as the Āryan Ṛṣis are represented, wearing hair so long as to hang below their waist. There is reason to know that he saw correctly, and that the current belief is not without foundation that the place is inhabited by adepts and *no one* who is *not* an adept *will ever* succeed in getting an entrance.—ED.

I chose at random that which led towards the jungle, and ascended it. Soon after, the path led me into a dense jungle, with rugged rocks and dried-up waterless brook. The path stopped abruptly there. Seeing myself thus arrested, I had to make my choice to either climb up still higher, or descend. Reflecting what a height there was to the summit, the tremendous difficulties of climbing that rough and steep hill, and that the night would come before I could ascend it, I concluded that to reach the summit that night was an impossibility. With much difficulty, however, catching at the grass and the bushes, I succeeded in attaining the higher bank of the Nala (the dry brook), and standing on a rock, surveyed the environs. I saw nothing but tormented hillocks, highland, and a dense pathless jungle covering the whole, where no man could pass. Meanwhile the sun was rapidly descending towards the horizon. Darkness would soon set in, and then, without water or any means for kindling a fire, what would be my position in the dreary solitude of that jungle!

By dint of tremendous exertion, though, and after an acute suffering from thorns, which tore my clothes to shreds, wounded my whole body, and lamed my feet, I managed to cross the jungle, and at last reached the foot of the hill and found myself on the high-way. All was darkness around and over me, and I had to pick my way at random, trying only to keep to the road. Finally I reached a cluster of huts and learning from the people that that road led to Okhī Maṭh, I directed my steps towards that place, and passed the night there. In the morning, feeling sufficiently rested I returned to the *Gupta Kāsī* (the Secret Benares), from whence I had started on my northward journey. But that journey attracted me, and soon again I repaired to Okhī Maṭh, under the pretext of examining that hermitage and observing the way of living of its inmates. There I had time to examine at leisure, the ado of that famous and rich monastery, so full of pious pretences and a show of asceticism. The high priest (or Chief Hermit), called *Mahānt*, tried hard to induce me to remain

and live there with him, becoming his disciple. He even held before me the prospect, which he thought quite dazzling, of inheriting some day his lacs of rupees, his splendour and power, and finally succeeding him in his *Mahāntship*, or supreme rank. I frankly answered him that had I ever craved any such riches or glory, I would not have secretly left the house of my father, which was not less sumptuous or attractive than his monastery, with all its riches. "The object, which induced me to do away with all these worldly blessings," I added, "I find you neither strive for, nor possess the knowledge of." He then enquired what was that object for which I so strived. "That object," I answered, "is the secret knowledge, the *Vidyā*, or true erudition of a *genuine* Yoga; the *Mukti* which is reached only by the purity of one's soul, and *certain attainments* unattainable without it. Meanwhile, the performance of all the duties of man towards his fellow-men, and the elevation of humanity thereby."

The *Mahānt* remarked that it was very good, and asked me to remain with him for

some time at least. But I kept silent and returned no reply ; I had not yet found what I sought. Rising on the following morning very early, I left this rich dwelling and went to Joshee Maṭh. There, in the company of Dakṣiṇee, or Maharāshtra S'āstri and Sannyāsis, the true ascetics of the 4th Order— I rested for a while.

Dec-81

THE PUPIL OF SVĀMI DAYANAND
AT THE CONGRESS OF
ORIENTALISTS

~~Dec 8~~
July 82

A CALCUTTA paper gives the following summary of the doings of the Congress of Orientalists :

The Congress of Orientalists, an account of whose first meeting we published the other day, is rendered chiefly interesting to us this year in consequence of the presence of a young Indian who is taking an active part in it. In this issue we shall present our readers with a few extracts from the proceedings of two more meetings. On the 13th ultimo Professor Weber, the President of the Āryan Section, in the course of his opening speech, "dwelt on the indirect influence which the discovery of the Indo-European brotherhood had exercised on the Natives of India. It had raised them in their own estimation, and made them feel proud again of their ancient language,

literature and religion. It had fostered a healthy national pride, without which no nation could achieve great things." Besides the scientific occupations of the Congress much was done, we are told, for their amusement and instruction. The Minister of Education, Von Gossler, received the principal members at a brilliant evening-party, at which, we are informed, the young Indian Pandit, Shyāmaji Krishnavarman, appeared in the famous Parsi coal-scuttle and what the Americans would have called "a duster". Several Samskrit scholars present attempted to converse with him in Samskrit, but to judge from the Pandit's laughter, without much success. The two Buddhist priests from Japan, who accompanied Professor Max Muller, came in the most correct evening costume and were most kindly received by the Minister. On the 14th Professor Jacobi read an essay on Kālidāsa's epic poems, showing a most intimate acquaintance with the peculiarities of Kālidāsa's style and of the intricacies of his metres, which seemed to surprise the Indian Pandit who was present at the meeting.

On the 15th, Professor M. Williams, as has been already stated, read an account of the "Sandhyā and Brahman Ceremonies and Prayers," which was rendered both interesting and amusing by the performances of Pandit Shyāmaji Krishnavarman, who showed how these prayers had to be recited, and exhibited, in fact, some of the most sacred rites of the Brahmans. The Pandit afterwards read a most valuable paper in English on "Samskrit as a Living Language in India". Both papers were received with the loudest applause, and afforded to all present both instruction and entertainment.

The young Pandit was also present at a dinner. Being invited to speak, he rose, and—
Declared that he spoke in the name of 256 millions of human beings, though, after his public performances of the sacred rites of the Brahmans and the visitation of the Gayatri before Mlecchas, it is doubtful whether even the sect to which he belongs would continue to recognize him as their representative. Though he declared that he never touched wine, he ended with drinking

“The Health of the Minister of Education, and of all the great Masters of the World.”

The above paragraph is, of course, re-published from some English paper. We hope, however, for the glory of India as for the sake of our esteemed young Brother, Shyāmaji Krishnavarman, that the report is exaggerated and incorrect. He may have only offered toasts, not actually “drunk”. Anyhow, we seriously hope that the favourite pupil of one of “the great masters of the world” to whose health he is alleged to have drunk wine, could not have forgotten so soon the wise recommendations of his master Svāmi ,Dayānand Sarasvatī and fallen as easily as that into the snares of Western Civilization.

AN "HONEST" ENQUIRY INTO
THE AIMS OF OUR SOCIETY

Feb 82

(A Pamphlet published by a Good and
Holy Man)

WE have been kindly favoured with a copy of a little pamphlet entitled "THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY AND ITS FOUNDERS; an honest Enquiry into their Aims and Proceedings." MAGNA EST VERITAS (!!)

We have no doubt that the compiler is a good, simple man, very modest—since his compilation is published *anonymously*—and means well, as his production is sold by the Christian Tract Society, evidently under the auspices of the good missionaries. But good intentions alone will not unfortunately suffice to produce an useful, or even a readable, pamphlet; some mental capacity is requisite to understand the points at issue, and some judgment to avoid reproducing, under the belief that they are facts, fictions

and forgeries, put forward by less well-intentioned persons than himself and patrons. That the compiler is well intentioned (to his own party) no one can doubt. He is well intentioned—for, he writes *pro bono publico*; that his character is saintly may be inferred from the holy horror he shows at the *undeniable* deceit, perversity and ungodliness of the heroes of his *expose*—the Founders of the Theosophical Society; and that he is a man of culture—who can doubt—since he calls Madame Blavatsky “a liar”? She is a *liar*, he says, since she publicly denies in print that “the Theosophical Society was ever a Branch of the Ārya Samāj”. And yet her above-given statement is proved by documentary evidence over the signature of Svāmi Dayānand himself in the “Extra Supplement” of this issue (which please read). Among the many *truthful* statements in this “Honest Enquiry” into the proceedings of the leading Theosophists, we find such sensational news as the following :

“Mr. Sinnett before bringing out his book, entitled “The Occult World,” had several

private interviews with the Pandit (Dayānand) *from whom he borrowed many ideas respecting 'Yoga Vidya' (i.e., Occult Science)*. Accordingly, Mr. Sinnett *cannot lay claim to the originality of the work!!*" If the good compiler, who winds up by begging (vain prayer, we fear!) that the world may hear no more of Theosophy, could only realize the number and extent of the mis-statements that he has succeeded in embodying in his little pamphlet, we fear that his remorse would prevent him from undertaking any such literary work in the future, —which would be a pity. The pamphlet is sold *for two annas* at the Tract Society Depot; and—offered *free* at the Office of THE THEOSOPHIST for comparison with the Extra Supplement in the present number.

Mardh

GLEANINGS FROM THE WORKS OF
SVĀMI DAYĀNAND SARASVATĪ.¹

BY "IL PENSEROSO"

Translator's Preface

WHAT makes the New Dispensation Brahmos extol the Christians' Jesus above all other religious teachers, since they do not believe in his "miracles"?² Is it the influence of English education, or is it but a prudent policy that suggests to the new sectarians the expediency of gaining the sympathy and support of the Christian

¹ The eminent Founder of the Ārya Samāj.—ED.

² I beg to state at once that I have no desire to annoy either the *New Dispensation* Brahmos or the Christians; the latter will find that I have considered Christ from the "New Dispensation" not their point of view. For many Brahmos personally, I entertain a very high regard, though I could never persuade myself to acquiesce in their rather bungled up ideas of Jesus Christ.—Il Penseroso.

community? These are the questions which suggest themselves to every impartial and unprejudiced thinker. If Jesus is to be venerated solely for his self-sacrifice, his meekness and humility, then have we had many sages in our own country—nay, some such there are yet to be found, even in our days—who possessed all of the said virtues in a still higher degree. The latter being so slighted and made subservient to the Christian Saviour, whose history shows no other claim to superiority over our modern sages than that very equivocal one of working “miracles,”¹—the above question becomes still more significant.

Instead of comparing Jesus with the *Rsis* of the past ages, the authenticity of whose history many may doubt, why not establish such a comparison between the ancient Jewish and our contemporary Hindu reformer—Dayānand Sarasvatī? We will now see how far the analogy holds good between the two. Meanwhile, I beg to state most

¹ To a Christian, of course, his superiority is due to a quite distinct consideration—his relation and even identity with God, as his “begotten son.”—*Il Penseroso*.

distinctly that it is not my intention to lay any claim for adoration on behalf of Svāmi Dayānand. "A man of genius and virtue is but a man," and it would be folly to expect to find every virtue and perfection equally developed in every man. However good Svāmi Dayānand Sarasvatī's moral character, he cannot be held altogether free from human weaknesses. But no more can the character of Jesus, as a *man*—estimating it from the incidental and contradictory accounts, given of it by his devoted followers, and in an age when critical analysis was unknown—be held altogether free from blemish. Of our contemporary, however—Dayānand Sarasvatī—we know both his great virtues and his weak points. The latter we propose to specify further on.

Dayānand Sarasvatī was born a Brahmin, an heir to a large estate, which, had he but so wished it, he might have well enjoyed. Seeing, however, the corruptions that had crept into the creed of his forefathers, he abandoned the comforts of his parents' house, and in the prime of youth, just when he was about to be married, a period,

which is considered to be the happiest one in our lives,—he voluntarily chose to encounter, instead, the greatest privations and hardships of *Yoga* life. He did all this in the mere hope of finding out the truth, to search for which and make humanity benefit by it, he henceforth devoted his whole life.

Jesus, on the other hand, was the son of an obscure and poor man. Jesus had to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow for years before he began to preach his doctrines. It is, therefore, evident that the position, in which he was born, had nothing to attract him. The life of a poor working man is always hard and full of trouble, and but few can attach any value to it. But what will not a man do for the sake of fame? Does not History furnish us with numerous instances in which men have sacrificed their very lives to gain fame, to glorify their faith or simply to do what they regarded as their duty? Since the *New Dispensationists* neither believe in doctrine of atonement by the blood of Christ, nor that Jesus is the very God himself—how can they, in the name of logic and justice, give to him the precedence over all

other great men? While in the four Christian Gospels, we find abundant proofs that Jesus shrank from death and prayed that his life should be spared—we have authenticated evidence to show that Svāmi Dayānand was never afraid of death and was ever ready to risk his life. His only anxiety has been to see the work of reformation to which he has wedded his life, at least partially accomplished before his death. But human nature is proverbially wicked, and obdurate hearts will ever detest truth. There are men in India who, seeking his death, have, upon several occasions, actually administered poison to him,—happily without success.¹

¹ When at Meerut, Svāmiji told us before numerous witnesses that not only poison had been administered to him, but that a man had once tried to kill him with a sword. Having penetrated into the room where Dayānand slept, *he could not find him* and so was frustrated in his evil object. The Yogī—said Svāmi explaining to us *Yoga Philosophy*—“can have no fear of either of steel or poison.” In Rajputāna, near Mount Abu, he knew, he said, a great Yogī who could swallow with impunity any amount of the most violent poison. This statement will be sneered at and challenged by skeptics and missionaries. Nevertheless and notwithstanding the distinct statement in Mark (XVI-18) . . . “and if they (the Apostles) drink of any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them,”

Of Svāmi's piety, no one intimately acquainted with him can ever doubt. In this, if he has not outdone Jesus, he is, at least, to be considered on a par with him. As Jesus spent a part of his leisure in preaching his views, so Dayānand spends his time in preaching, and moreover, in writing what he preaches, in this respect, yielding the palm but to those men, whose whole time is occupied in silent devotion and constant acts of charity. I believe though, that preaching and writing books on religion and true morality, with the object of benefiting mankind, can be rightly regarded as one of the grandest acts of charity.

Our Calcutta admirers of Christ argue that his love for mankind was manifest from his praying to his Father that those who subjected him to torture and infamy, might be forgiven, as "they knew not what they did". This is certainly an act of admirable forbearance. But were his knowledge of human nature in the least keen, then must

. . . we are afraid that were two men—a *Yogī* and a *padri*—forced to swallow prussic acid, he who would tremble least would be the *Yogī*.—ED.

he have well known that adherence to the last moment of his life to principles of charity and forgiveness inculcated by himself was the surest means of gaining the world's sympathy, and of attracting a larger number of followers than he otherwise would. Having once commanded his disciples to suffer without ever seeking for retaliation, what wonder that he should have personally exemplified his own teaching?

The next virtue for which Jesus is extolled by the New Dispensationists is his great humility, and the injunction to his disciples to be "meek and lowly". But what better policy could he have followed under the circumstances, considering the age he lived in, than to silently submit to unavoidable insults? He could not possibly claim any authority over the Jews; and if he limited his pretensions to the title of a "spiritual" King, it is because of the fact that, had he assumed any other, his movements would have acquired a political significance, and his liberty and very life might have been jeopardised by it. His only alternative was to assume humility and

meekness; why then should necessity be construed into a virtue? ¹ Dayānand, on the other hand, was a rich man and became a sannyāsi—now living on alms. He does not even touch money. He covers his body with the coarsest raiments and is as humble in his mode of life as Jesus ever could be. The charge that during his lectures he often betrays egotistic and angry feelings is frequently brought against him.

I prefer to believe that his anger is not real, but that he resorts to emphasis to impress his hearers the more. At any rate he does no more than Jesus did, when calling Peter "Satan," his scoffers "a generation of vipers," committing an assault upon the money-changers in the temple, and cursing an innocent fig-tree. If to illustrate his views the better, Svāmi often cites from

¹ If our correspondent will go so much out of his way to dive into the mists of Ancient History to find examples of the most unalloyed self-sacrifice and devotion to Humanity, why does he not take Gautama Buddha as a *pendent* to Svāmi Dayānand? Is it because the latter would lose in the comparison, or that the doctrines preached by the great "World's Saviour" are entirely antagonistic to, and would unavoidably upset, those of the author of the "Veda-Bhāshya"?—ED.

his own personal experience, putting himself forward as an exemplar, in what respect does he so err? If, instead of his own, he should cite the histories of the reformers—Dhruva or Chaitanya—both of whom are strongly mixed up with mythical lore and exaggeration, he would fail to make any lasting impression upon the hearts of the present generation. In our days we reject as false almost anything that is not supported by modern instances or attested by authentic history.

If then, the New Dispensation Brahmospay their reverence to Jesus only for the sake of *his* virtues, why do they not do the same in regard to the great Yogis and Brahmachāris of this country who have possessed the same virtues in a pre-eminent degree? As men, neither Dayānand nor any other person is entitled to any homage beyond what could be possibly offered to fallible man, one of our own erring mankind. Nor could anything be further from Dayānand's thoughts than the ambition of receiving adoration. The object of my making the above analogy between Jesus and Dayānand

is simply this. Unless we admit in Christ something higher than mere human virtues developed by self-exertion; and, unless we believe that he was possessed of divine, "supernatural" powers, we will find many men as noble, as good and as virtuous as he is shown to us to have been.¹ If the Brahmōs do not believe in the Christian *Revelation* then they cannot hold the Bible in any higher respect than the Vedas. The Hindu scriptures, if correctly understood, will be found to inculcate as monotheistic a religion as that of the Jews, with the highest principles of morality taught in them besides; principles which if

¹ Quite recently, the Editor of this Journal was suspected by a reverend gentleman—whose kind and polite letter she gratefully begs to acknowledge—of shutting out from the columns of this journal "the other side of things"—*viz.*, Defence of Christianity. Here is a good chance for intelligent missionaries, and other Christians to defend Jesus—*as a man*, not *as a God*, of course, for the latter is a matter of absolute faith and incapable of demonstration. And it is as good an opportunity for us to prove our perfect willingness to afford a chance for advocating and defending his religion to any living man of whatever creed. Let any Brahmō of the *New Dispensation*, or any Christian upset the arguments of *Il Penseroso* in a temperate article, and it will be forthwith published without abbreviation.—ED.

found in the New Testament are most conspicuously absent from the Old Testament.

True, our Vedas are far more difficult to understand. Even our most renowned Oriental poems are written in such an inflated, figurative phraseology, that their real meaning is incomprehensible to one who would adhere but to the dead letter of the text. The most absurd of the episodes in the *Mahābhārata* are but historical facts depicted in allegories and parables, in accordance with the custom of those remote ages. Written in a language of metaphors which have now become too antiquated and abstruse to be easily understood by the non-initiated reader, they are generally misinterpreted. The Vedas are written in the same literary style. To understand them requires a profound familiarity with our Āryan mode of thinking. Notwithstanding the various revolutions that convulsed from time to time this country, its races and religion, and in spite of the introduction of many foreign words and languages, this mode of thinking of the Hindus, and their peculiar construction of their phraseology have not since

then much changed. With nearly all of the nations of Europe, the modes of the expression of thought are nearly identical; not so in India. In his efforts to learn the English language, the Hindu finds an almost insurmountable difficulty in mastering the English mode of thinking and expressing thought, it being so different from his own. The Englishman finds, perhaps, a still greater difficulty in learning the idiosyncracies of our speech. Even after having resided in our country for a number of years, after having learned to read and speak well the Hindi, the foreigner can hardly express himself or construct a long sentence without committing mistakes, and thus betraying his nationality.

The literary productions of the Āryans, therefore, can be well understood but by Hindus alone. However erudite a European may be, however vast his knowledge and reading of Samskrit literature, he cannot catch at the hidden or esoteric meaning which underlies the deadletter phraseology of the Vedas. The Vedic version by Dayānand, whose honesty of purpose one could never

question, must needs, therefore, be more correct than that made by any foreigner. There are some orthodox Pandits, who find fault with Dayānand Sarasvatī's interpretations of certain portions of the Vedas. But, so long as the Pandits do not come forward and refute his arguments publicly through the medium of a magazine, the final issue of the debates held by the disputants at the Durbar of H. H. the Maharāja of Benares, will always be shrouded in a veil of mystery.¹ I understand that the Svāmi's opponents find fault with his interpretations of those portions of the Vedas which relate to the

¹ We would feel really happy to find the vexed question fathomed and settled at last. We believe that our learned and esteemed friend Pandit Parmada Dasa Mitra would be the fittest and most competent person to answer this direct accusation against those erudite Benares Pandits who took an active part in the above-mentioned and well-known controversy. Our Society is closely allied with both the Samskrit Sabhā of Benares and the Ārya Samāj, and it feels an equal respect for the learning of both parties. Unable, however, to decide upon their relative merits, we would feel heartily glad to have the truth published, if possible, in the columns of this journal. We invite the learned Benares Pandits and the equally learned Svāmiji Dayānand Sarasvatī and his defenders to lay their proofs before our readers.—ED.

worship of elements and certain idolatrous rites. Svāmijī has explained these from an enlightened though, to the Pandits, an iconoclastic point of view, and has thereby rendered the Vedas far worthier of respect. If his interpretations are, however, wrong, and those of his enemies are right, the Vedas deserve no more veneration than any other book of fiction. The educated Hindus can have no respect for a book which inculcates idolatry and absurd rites.

It cannot be denied even by the enemies of the Svāmi that the object which he has in view throughout his labours in the cause of Reformation, is highly commendable. This object is to blend together the various tribes of the Hindus, and of humanity in general, into a homogeneous whole, and to do away with the many curses of our society without shocking the feelings of the various communities. The Hindus have a natural veneration for the Vedas, and if they find the alleged absurdities in them explained to them in a logical manner, their respect for our sacred scriptures will be all the more increased.

The minds of Hindu youths have been so completely occidentalised by the system of education imparted to them in the colleges, that they are apt to look down upon the philosophy and religion of their ancestors, even though they see that the work of the Āryans in this department is now engaging the closest attention of some of the most learned men of Europe. Their contempt for the work of their ancestors originates in their ignorance of the same. For the benefit of these men especially, has Svāmi Dayānand written so many treatises in Hindi on the religion, manners and customs of the ancient Āryans; and as he is recognized as one of the greatest Samskrit scholars of the age, and his moral character falls short of that of Jesus neither in point of purity nor of transcendental piety, some extracts from his writings cannot fail to prove interesting to the readers of THE THEOSOPHIST. Many of Svāmi's views, being so diametrically opposed to those of European scholars, will appear no doubt strange and peculiar. This makes it the more important that his views should be made more generally known than

they now are. Once let his works be published in a European language, and Svāmi will be found as great a scholar and thinker, as any in the West.¹

The Editor of the *Indian Mirror* in his issue of the 8th September, says: "A dissemination of the knowledge of the ancient laws, literature and institutions of the Hindus, is most desirable in this degenerate age. For ourselves, we wish we could begin life anew, make ourselves masters of the Samskrit language, and read the *Purānas* just as they were written in ages which stretch far beyond the range of authentic history. For such is our reverence for our ancient Samskrit works on the literature, philosophy and science of our native land." He might as well have added "religion" to his list of objects revered, unless his views are identical with those of the Editor of the *Sunday Mirror*.

¹ It is not so much the European scholars who accuse Svāmi Dayānand of misinterpreting the Vedas as the learned Samskritists and Pandits of his own nationality and caste. The quarrel has then to be first settled between the orthodox and the reforming Hindus, between the Benares and Kashmir Pandits and Dayānand Sarasvatī.—ED.

May 82

SVĀMI DAYĀNAND SARASVATĪ

AND

THE PANDITS OF LAHORE

THE Hindi *Mitra Vilāsa* of Lahore sends to us the following translation for insertion :

“After the Rev. J. Cook of America had slandered the Theosóphical Society, its Founders, and Mr. D. M. Bennett, and had equally abused the Vedas and insulted the old faith of the Natives of India, we find him challenged simultaneously by Col. Olcott, Mr. Bennett, and Svāmi Dayānand Sarasvatī, to meet them in a public discussion at the Framjee Hall, Bombay, and to substantiate his charges. Instead of accepting the challenge, however, we hear that Mr. Cook, upon seeing the printed challenges, preferred to run away to Poona, thus leaving behind him an undesirable reputation for slander and untruthfulness.

“But, at the same time, we are surprised to find Svāmi Dayānand Sarasvatī, who

always felt vexed at the idea of allowing any intermediaries (on the occasion of certain discussions) to interfere between himself and the orthodox Hindu party, now himself stipulating in his challenge to Mr. Cook, that a few respectable and learned witnesses be present on behalf of each party. Were Svāmiji to show himself as ready to set aside his unwillingness in our case, and, should he consent to accept ten or fifteen respectable persons as witnesses, between himself and the orthodox Hindu Samāj, the point at issue between them would soon be settled. The Pandits of Lahore are ready for a discussion with Svāmi Dayānandji. But, in their opinion, such a discussion, before respectable witnesses are chosen and accepted, would be fruitless and highly injudicious. If Pandit Dayānandji agrees to our condition of selecting witnesses, he is invited to write to us, and we shall make all the necessary arrangements for a discussion between him and the Pandits of Lahore."

Editor's Note:—We are sure that our respected friend and ally, Svāmijī Dayānand, would never decline to accept a challenge, should a befitting opportunity occur. And we feel as confident that he will take up the gauntlet now thrown, if he be satisfied that any good would result from such a discussion.

Mane

IS IDOLATRY TAUGHT IN THE YAJUR-VEDA?

(An esteemed Brahmin Correspondent sends from Southern India the following questions, which have been suggested by the reading of Svāmijī Dayānand's *Veda Bhāṣya*. As they are put in a decent and respectful manner, we give them place, as we have, on former occasions, to queries addressed to ourselves about Theosophy. The point raised is one for settlement by Pandits alone.—Ed.)

TO THE EDITOR

I HAVE just been reading some of the prominent teachings of Śrī Dayānand Sarasvatī Svāmijī. But in the course of digesting his ideas, I am interrupted by a few questions that suggest themselves, and which any Brahmin, who may have had access to those

teachings, would naturally desire to be set right upon, by the Svāmijī.

Before stating my difficulties, I should premise that I am aware that the publication of the very words of Vedas is (with or without any strong reason) prohibited, though their substance may be communicated to the world at large; and, if the said restraint is well grounded, I transgress a religious rule by quoting hereunder a few words of the Vedas. However the adage, "Of two evils choose the less," amply justifies the quotation even at the risk of being guilty of an offence.

In the last Anuvaka of the 73rd Prasna of the Yajur-Veda (which consists of 82 Prasnas), we find the sentence अश्मानमाखणं प्रपद्ये (Asmānam Akhaṇam Prapadye) in an enumeration of various objects of worship. That part of the Veda (aforesaid) where this enumeration is to be found is called "Aruṇa". The literal meaning of the Vedic sentence above quoted is, "I worship well-hewn stone."

Now, what I ask is : (1) Does the Svāmijī consider the said verse to be a portion of

the Yajur-Veda ? (2) If so, what is the construction he would put upon it ? What is the reason and object of it ?

D.

SRĀDDHA AND PIṆḌA

A letter was received by us recently which was forwarded to Svāmijī Dayānand Sarasvatī with a request that he would answer it. The following is the letter and Svāmijī's reply, which also expresses our own views :

THE LETTER

Bombay

8th February 1880

MADAM,

Will you oblige a section of your readers by inserting in the next issue of THE THEOSOPHIST a paragraph explaining your views on the Hindu custom of performing *S'rāddha* to departed ancestors ?

The points requiring notice are (a) how such a custom arose, *i.e.*, its philosophical origin ; (b) whether the offering of *piṇḍa* benefits in any way the persons for whom

they are offered, in the sense that their non-offering would subject the *manes* to any suffering or privation in the other world; and, if so, (c) why no *S'rāddha* is performed to children who have died young.

I shall be thankful if you could also give the views of Svāmi Dayānand Sarasvatī on this question.

SVĀMI'S ANSWER

श्राद्ध (ओरिजिन्) अर्थात् असली है श्राद्ध शब्द के अर्थ श्रद्धा के हैं । पुत्रको माता पिता आदिकी सेवा श्रद्धासे उनके जीवन पर्यन्त करना अवश्य है । परन्तु जो लोग मरे हुए माता पिताका श्राद्ध करते हैं । वह असली नहीं है । क्योंकि जीते माता पिता आदिकी सेवा श्रद्धासे करनी श्राद्ध कहाता है । मृतक के लिये पिण्ड देना व्यर्थ है क्योंकि मरे हुए को पिण्ड देनेसे कुछ लाभ नहीं होता ।

दयानन्द सरस्वती

(Translation.) The original meaning of the word *S'rāddha* is *S'raddhā*, "devotion". It is the duty of every son to serve his parents with all possible devotion while they are living. But the performance of *S'rāddha* in honour of the *dead* does *not* bear out the original idea at all. *S'rāddha* really signifies

to serve the living parents with all devotion, not the dead. And it is, therefore, useless to offer Piṇḍa (rice balls) in honour of the dead, as it results in no good.

DAYĀNAND SARASVATĪ

गुरु विरजमिन्दु वादी
 मन्दार्थे सुखमयान्तः
 पु पुष्पिप्रणय कपय
 दयानन्द महिला महा

849