

DEVACHAN.

Will you kindly permit me a question?

In Vol. 4, No. 2, on page 29, I find, that in the state described as Devachan the spiritual monad leads for very long periods an existence of unalloyed satisfaction and *conscious* enjoyment, however without activity, without exciting contrasts between pain and pleasure, without pursuit and achievement.

Now, how can a conscious existence without activity or pursuit be one of satisfaction or enjoyment? Would not annihilation be preferable to such a state of indolence? In the Christian heaven there is at least the waving of palm-leaves and harping. A poor amusement indeed; but better than nothing?—Please explain.

Hoping that my inquisitiveness will give no offence.

GEORGETOWN, } I am very respectfully,
COLORADO, } Your obedient servant,
January, 31. } R. HARTMANN. F. T. S.

EDITOR'S NOTE:—Our correspondent's question has been already anticipated by the important appendices added to the recent "Fragment" on Devachan. To realise the conditions of spiritual existence of any sort it is necessary to get above the plane of merely physical perceptions. One cannot see the things of the spirit with the eyes of the flesh, and one cannot successfully appreciate subjective phenomena by help only of those intellectual reflections which appertain to the physical senses. "How can a conscious existence without activity or pursuit be one of satisfaction or enjoyment?" It would only emphasise the mistaken idea which this question embodies if one were to ask instead, "how can a conscious existence without athletic sports and hunting be one of enjoyment?" The cravings of man's animal or even bodily human nature are not permanent in their character. The demands of the mind are different from those of the body. In physical life an ever recurring desire for change impresses our imagination with the idea that there can be no continuity of contentment, without variety of occupation and amusement. To realise completely the way in which, a single vein of spiritual consciousness may continue for considerable periods of time to engage the attention—not only the contented, but the delighted attention,—of a spiritual entity, is probably possible only for persons who already in life have developed certain inner faculties, dormant in mankind at large. But meanwhile our present correspondent may perhaps derive some satisfaction, from the fact,—as explained in recent essays on the subject,—that one sort of variety is developed in Devachan in a very high degree; viz., the variety which naturally grows out of the simple themes set in vibration during life. Immense growths for example, of knowledge itself are possible in Devachan, for the spiritual entity which has begun the "pursuit" of such knowledge during life. Nothing can happen to a spirit in Devachan, the key-note of which has not been struck during life; the conditions of a subjective existence are such that the importation of quite external impulses and alien thoughts is impossible. But the seed of thought once sown,—the current of thoughts once set going (the metaphor may freely be varied to suit any taste,)—and then its developments in devachan may be infinite for the sixth sense there, and the sixth principle are our instructors, and in such society there can be no isolation, as physical humanity understands the term. The spiritual ego in fact, under the tuition of his own sixth principle, need be in no fear of being dull, and would be as likely to sigh for a doll's house or a box of ninepins as for the harps and palm-leaves of the mediæval Heaven.

THE SEVENTEEN-RAYED SUN-DISC.

[The following interesting letter was received by us from Fresno, California. As it is a private one, we can give but extracts from it.—Ed.]

EXPLORING Copan and Quinqua in Honduras and Guatemala last year, I had the good fortune to make a discovery, which I am sure will interest you. As you are aware, the most prominent sculptured monuments in Copan consist of four-sided columns of from 10 to 12 feet high. These columns represent generally only on one side large sculptured personages in high relief.

The other sides again contain ornaments and glyptic inscriptions, hitherto not read or deciphered. One pillar not previously described, however, contains only hieroglyphics arranged on all sides. It seems to be a record perhaps of laws, perhaps of historical events. This pillar is about 10 feet high, and the sides 3 and 4 feet wide respectively. But the most remarkable is that this pillar was covered by a cap in the shape of a very low truncate pyramid. On this pyramid was seen a forced dead head of colossal dimensions and surrounding the same was an expanded "sun-disc," crowning the very cap.

The rays of the sun-disc were distinctly marked. The similarity of the same and the sun-discs common in the Egyptian monuments was so marked, that it immediately struck me that the number of rays must be 17, the sacred number of the Egyptian sun-disc. Upon counting the rays they were found to be as expected—17.

Now is this a pure "coincidence" or is it another link in the broken and scattered chain, whose finding points toward an ancient connection between the Central American peoples, the Mayas and other races, and the Egyptians by means of a connecting Atlantis?

Another curiosity, naturally a "coincidence," is worthy of notice. One of these sculptured personages dressed in priestly robes and holding in his hand a small square box, has his legs above the sandals ornamented with the CRESCENT. The same sign was used by the Romans to signify immortality and similarly placed above the sandals.

Cannot your trans-Himalayan Brothers give us any clue to these hieroglyphics inscribed on the Central American Monuments? Or have you no Psychometrists who could decipher them psychometrically. If any one should be willing to try to do so, I would send him a small portion of one of the glyphs I have in my possession, and may be some good will come out of it.

E. G.

EDITOR'S NOTE:—Assuredly the discovery mentioned in the above letter,—the pillar with its 17-rayed sun-disc,—points once more to an ancient connexion between the central American peoples and the lost continent of Atlantis. The uniformity in the symbolical meanings of American antiquities, and of antiquities connected with "the wisdom religion" in Egypt or any other parts of Europe or Asia where they may be observed, is certainly far more remarkable than would be agreeable to theorists who wish to account for it by help of that hard-worked servant—coincidence. It has been traced with great patience through many different departments of archæology by Mr. Donnelly in his recent "Atlantis; or the Antediluvian World." The second part of the title of this volume, by the by, will not be quite acceptable to students of the subject who approach it from the side of occult science. The deluge is better left alone until cosmogony is more generally understood than at present. There is no one deluge that can conveniently be taken as a turning point in the world's history,—with everything before that antediluvian, and everything of later date—postdiluvian. There have been many such deluges cutting the various races of mankind at the appointed time in their development. The situation has already been referred to in the "Fragments of Occult Truth." During the occupation of the Earth for one period by the great tidal wave of humanity, seven great races are successively developed, their end being in every case marked by a tremendous cataclysm which changes the face of the earth in the distribution of land and water. The present race of mankind, as often stated, is the fifth race. The inhabitants of the great continent of Atlantis were the fourth race. When they were in their prime, the European continent was not in existence as we know it now, but none the less was there free communication between Atlantis and such portions of Europe as did exist, and Egypt. The ancient Egyptians themselves were not an Atlantic colony. Mr. Donnelly is mistaken on that point, but the wisdom Religion of the initiates was certainly identical and hence the identities of symbolical sculpture. This is what the "Himalayan Brothers" say, whether any of our psychometrists will see any further, depends on the degree of their development, at any rate, we accept the offer of our esteemed correspondent with thanks and will expect the promised portion of the glypt, before we venture to say anything further.

KUMARILA BHATTA.

In the Editorial note in reply to a Hindu Theosophist's query, whether some Rishis of old do exist in the flesh and blood, you pertinently ask him whether he is prepared to accept literally the popular interpretation of—

(Ahalyāya jārāh surapati rabhudātmatanayām; praja natho, &c. &c.) wherein Indra is accused of adultery with Ahalya and Brahma of attempting criminal violence on the person of her own daughter; and you refer him to Kamarila Bhatta (not Kulluka Bhatta as the printer's devils make you say). For the edification of your readers, such as may not readily lay hold of the passage alluded to, I beg to transcribe the learned Bhatta's rationalistic explanation of that mythical tradition. The translation in English that follows is from the pen of Dr. Max Müller, and is taken from his history of ancient Sanskrit Literature, p. 529:—

"Prajāpati, the lord of the creation, is the name of the sun; and he is called so, because he protects all creatures. His daughter Ushas is the dawn. And when it is said that he