

*Madame Blavatsky on
the Bright Spot of Light*



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Frontispiece by Noah Bradley.

To the Editor of The Theosophist

Madame,

In the last issue of your valuable Journal, a member of the New York Theosophical Society seeks to be enlightened as to the cause of a bright spot of light which he has often seen. I am also equally curious to have an explanation. I attribute it to the highest *concentration* of the soul. As soon as I place myself in *that* prescribed attitude, suddenly a bright spot appears before me which fills my heart with delight — indeed, that being regarded as a special sign by the Indian devotee that he is in the right path, leading to ultimate success in the Yoga practice — that he is blessed by the special grace of the Almighty.

One evening, sitting on the ground cross-legged, in that state of innate concentration when the soul soars into the high regions, I was blessed with a shower of flowers — a most brilliant sight, and which I long to see again. I moved to catch at flowers so rare, but they eluded my grasp and suddenly disappeared, leaving me much disappointed. Finally two flowers fell on me, one touching my head and the other my right shoulder, but this time also the attempt to seize them was unsuccessful. What can it be, if not a response that God has been pleased with his worshipper, meditation being, I believe, the unique way of spiritual worship.

P.

September 18th, 1881

Editor's Note

It depends. Those of our orthodox native contributors, who worship some particular God — or, if they so prefer, the one IŚVARA, under some particular name — are too apt to attribute every psychological effect brought on by mental concentration during the hours of religious meditation to their special deity, whereas, in 99 cases out of 100, such effects are due simply to purely *psycho-physiological* effects. We know a number of mystically-inclined people who see such “lights,” and that as soon as they concentrate their thoughts. Spiritualists attribute them to the agency of their depart-

ed friends; Buddhists — who have no personal God — to a *pre-nirvānic* state; pantheists and Vedāntins to *Maya* — illusion of senses; and Christians — to a foresight of the glories of Paradise. The modern Occultists say that, when not directly due to cerebral action whose normal functions are certainly impeded by such an artificial mode of deep concentration — these lights are glimpses of the Astral Light, or, to use a more *scientific* expression — of the “Universal Ether” firmly believed in by more than one man of science, as proved by Mr. Balfour Stewart’s *Unseen Universe*. Like the pure blue sky closely shrouded by thick vapours on a misty day — is the Astral Light concealed from our physical senses, during the hours of our normal, daily life. But when concentrating all our spiritual faculties, we succeed, for the time being, to paralyse their enemy — the physical senses, and the inner man becomes, so to say, distinct from the man of matter, then, the action of the ever-living spirit, like a breeze that clears the sky from its obstructing clouds — sweeps away the mist which lies between our normal vision and the Astral Light, and we obtain glimpses into, and of, that light.

The days of “smoking furnaces” and “burning lamps” which form part of the Biblical visions are well gone by and — to return no more. But, whosoever, refusing natural explanations, prefers *supernatural* ones, is, of course, at liberty to imagine that an “Almighty God” amuses us with visions of flowers, and sends burning lights before making “covenants” with his worshippers.

