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सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

THERE IS NO RELIGION HIGHER THAN TRUTH.

[Family motto of the Maharajahs of Benares.]

## THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.\*

ONE of the most interesting, if not one of the most unexpected, phenomena of our days, is the attempt now being made to establish and constitute in the world a new Society based on the same foundations as Buddhism. Although only in its beginnings, its growth is so rapid that our readers will be glad to have their attention called to this matter.

It is still in some sort in the missionary stage, and its propagation is being accomplished without noise and without violence. It has not even a definite name; its members are grouped under the Oriental names placed at the head of their publications: Isis, Lotus, Sphinx, Lucifer. The common name which prevails among them for the moment is that of the Theosophical Society.

This Society is very young; yet it already has a history. It was founded in 1875 at New York by a very small group of persons disquieted by the rapid decadence of moral ideas in the present age.

\* Translated from the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, (Paris) July 1888. This is the concluding part of a long article on "The Influence of Buddhism in the West." The writer, M. E. Burnouf, is a scholar of great erudition and influence, and Honorary Director of the *Ecole d'Athènes*. He has compiled a Sanskrit Dictionary, translated the *Bhagavad Gita*, and written many important works, among which may be mentioned *The History of Greek Literature*, *The Science of Religions*, and *Life and Thought*. He is the son of the great M. Burnouf, who may be said to have introduced the study of Sanskrit to the Western world. The *Revue des Deux Mondes*, from which we extract this criticism, is perhaps the most influential of the European reviews, and is said to have a larger circulation than any other publication of its kind in the world. Our readers will no doubt notice some minor mistakes in the criticism, showing that the author's acquaintance with the details of the Society's work and teaching is imperfect; but the appearance of such an article by such a man and in such a magazine undoubtedly shows that the Theosophical Society has already attained a position in the world of Western thought which its most ardent supporters could hardly yet have expected, considering the tremendous forces against which it has to struggle.

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