

*Atma* the highest ruler in the world of perceptions, and in the will, the highest executive energy (power), then may he, under the time-honoured rules, be taken in hand by one of the Initiates. He may then be shown the mysterious path at whose thither end the Chela is taught the unerring discernment of *Phala*, or the fruits of causes produced, and given the means of reaching *Apavarga* — emancipation, from the misery of repeated births (in whose determination the ignorant has no hand), and thus of avoiding *Pretya-bhava* — transmigration.

But since the advent of the Theosophical Society, one of whose arduous tasks it was to reawaken in the Aryan mind the dormant memory of the existence of this science and of those transcendent human capabilities, the rules of Chela selection have become slightly relaxed in one respect. Many members of the Society becoming convinced by practical proof upon the above points, and rightly enough thinking that if other men had hitherto reached the goal, they too if inherently fitted, might reach it by following the same path, pressed to be taken as candidates. And as it would be an interference with Karma to deny them the chance of at least beginning — since they were so importunate, they were given it. The results have been far from encouraging so far, and it is to show these unfortunates the cause of their failure as much as to warn others against rushing heedlessly upon a similar fate, that the writing of the present article has been ordered. The candidates in question, though plainly warned against it in advance, began wrong by selfishly looking to the future and losing sight of the past. They forgot that they had done nothing to deserve the rare honour of selection, nothing which warranted their expecting such a privilege; that they could boast of none of the above enumerated merits. As men of the selfish, sensual world, whether married or single, merchants, civilian or military employees, or members of the learned professions, they had been to a school most calculated to assimilate them to the animal nature, least so to develop their spiritual potentialities. Yet each and all had vanity enough to suppose that their case would be made an exception to the law of countless centuries' establishment as though, indeed, in their person had been born to the world a new *Avatara*! All expected to have hidden things taught, extraordinary powers given them because — well, because they had joined the Theosophical Society. Some had sincerely resolved to amend their lives, and give up their evil courses: we must do them that justice, at all events.