

seventh heaven),” or, shortly, “the sectarians were overjoyed.” The same words occur in the Ḥabib-us-Siyar’s chapter on ‘Ali Pādishāh’s death.

Page *ib.*, line 5 from foot. “Foster-brothers.” The text has *hamshārehgān*, plural of *hamshāreh*, which means a foster-sister, but is now used by men for sister in general; women more frequently employ the word *khwāhar*.—Yours very truly,

A. HOUTUM-SCHINDLER, M.R.A.S.

*To the Secretary of the Royal Asiatic Society.*




#### 4. THE BUDDHIST GODDESS TĀRĀ.

DEAR PROFESSOR RHYS DAVIDS,—I notice in the number of the Journal for January, 1896, pp. 241–246, that M. L. Poussin, in reviewing M. de Blonay’s essay on Tārā, repeats the old mistaken notion “that Tārā is a Brahmanic goddess of naturalistic origin, for her name signifies a star.” He will find conclusive evidence against such views, also much new information on the subject, in my article on Tārā in the Journal for January, 1894, and in my *Buddhism of Tibet*.

L. A. WADDELL.

#### 5. “ANTIQUITY OF EASTERN FALCONRY.”

DEAR SIR,—Mr. W. F. Sinclair asks, on p. 793 of the J.R.A.S. for 1896, for some authority for the use of trained falcons in the East before the first century A.D. It is true that hunting with the falcon cannot be proved from the Assyrian sculptures, but I published in 1884<sup>1</sup> extracts from some omen tablets which seem to show that falconry was practised at the time those texts were written, probably at a very early period.

The bird in question is called   , *surdū*, and is said to hunt; and if, when doing so, it crossed from the

<sup>1</sup> Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology for Jan. 8 of that year.

right to the left (or from the left to the right) of the king, then the king would make a conquest of his enemy, etc. There are also omens from the *surdū* tearing his prey with his beak, hunting his prey at the house of a man, etc.; and certain incomplete lines speak of him fighting with the eagle.<sup>1</sup> This bird also fought with the raven (𒍪𒍪𒍪𒍪 𒍪𒍪𒍪𒍪 𒍪𒍪𒍪𒍪 𒍪𒍪𒍪𒍪, *uga=aribu*), and there are omens for the king from the *surdū* killing, or being killed by, the former. Books of natural history tell us that contests such as are here spoken of, between the falcon and the raven, actually occur. Another name of the *surdū* was *kasusu*.

See also Fried. Delitzsch's *Assyrisches Handwörterbuch*, pp. 511*b*, 545*a*, 164*b*.

THEOPHILUS G. PINCHES.

## 6. THE MEANING OF TAO.

SIR,—With regard to our discussion on the Tao after General Alexander's paper on the 10th November, the point for which I then contended, namely, that the expression which was so often on the lips of the keeper of the archives at Loh-yang could never be faithfully rendered in English by 'God,' I have since found confirmed by a reference to the Tao-tē King itself.

In the fourth chapter of that work Lao-tse says: "The Tao is empty: he who uses it must not be full. Oh! the Abyss! It is like the origin of all things. He (who uses it) blunts his sharp points that he may unravel their tangles, and subdues his light that he may share their ignorance. How still is the Tao, as though containing all things! I do not know whose son it is. It existed before the form (of Heaven), before God himself!"

The word here used is *Ti*, which is sometimes applied to the emperor, but in philosophical works is almost invariably equivalent to Tien-Chu, 'Heaven-Lord,' the expression chosen

<sup>1</sup> *Surdu u našru lâ mitguru-ma imtaḥḥaṣu*, "the *surdū* and the eagle do not agree, and fight."