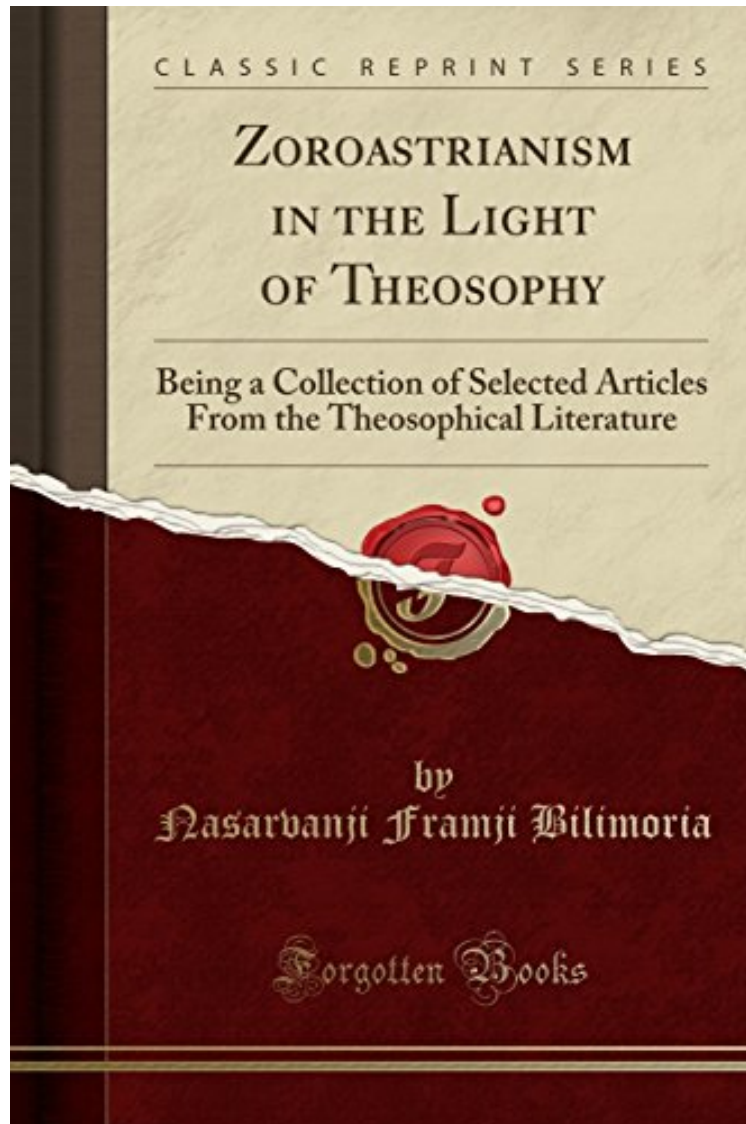


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Nasarvanji Framji Bilimoria

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Excerpt from Zoroastrianism in the Light of Theosophy: Being a Collection of Selected Articles From the Theosophical Literature The history of the world's religions is contained to a very insignificant extent, we may believe, in the various scriptures that have come down to our days from antiquity. Such writings are few in number, and often comprise but fragments of the primitive cults. A much larger proportion is to be found in mural pictures and inscriptions, architectural carvings and symbolical embellishments and crumbling ruins. Of some of the old religions we were quite ignorant at the beginning of this century, but are now learning much from the results of excavations, the discovery of tile libraries, the decipherment of hieroglyphs. Sometimes a new 'find' shocks our fixed ideas to their bases, or compels us to recast our chronologies and alter our beliefs. At this moment, for example, M. Le Plongeon, the French archaeologist, proclaims that he has found by deciphering the inscriptions in Yucatan that all the ancient schools of the Mysteries, including those of Eleusis, Samothrace, even Egypt, were derived from the mother-school and fountain head in Mayax and the Quichi country: he even discovers in the simple Greek alphabet a distinct narrative of the destruction of Atlantis. Early in this century, books were written to prove the derivation of the Sanskrit from the Hebrew; Hue and Gabet saw in the ritualistic observances of Tibetan Buddhism a travesty of those of the Roman Catholic Church; Western orientalists have steadfastly laboured to minimize the dates of Indian civilisation and literature. Sometimes they have done this in the interest of Biblical chronology, sometimes, perhaps, to save the West from the mortification of having its own brief historical cycle made to seem still briefer and less impressive by comparison with those of the ancient peoples.