

fire-eating exhibitions, by rolling head over heels for hundreds of miles, or by wandering about in the c'oths in which he was born with unkempt hair twisted into a turban. Nor could these methods for showing a friendliness toward the Almighty be questioned, for the mystic power of the fakir also freed him from all authority save that of his spiritual guide, or of Allah himself, speaking directly to his soul.

From this description of the Eastern fakir, it may be seen that he was spiritually enthusiastic, intellectually subtle and morally selfish. His spiritual enthusiasm and intellectual subtlety were the cause of peculiar results when combined with the selfishness of his morality. The combination was productive of a character of great energy, with a readiness to undergo much personal inconvenience for the purpose of attaining prosperity or acquiring influence and popular applause. Finally, the man with this object in view habitually resorted to cunning schemes, subtle devices and other questionable, if not dishonest, ways of furthering his aims, justifying himself by clever excuses and selfish constructions of moral obligations. He was, in short, what we would now call a schemer or sharper. "Schemer" is, possibly, too mild; "sharper" is, possibly, too strong to be used as a synonym of what we now generally mean by "fakir." Still, between the two, or in companionship with both, our benighted preacher might find light. This interpretation excludes the common sleight-of-hand man who may be found at our own country fairs, or on the street corners of our small towns and villages, disposing of his soap cakes or "gold" rings wrapped up in ten dollar bills, which suddenly vanish when the package is opened by the speculative purchaser, as it does the professional magician who displays his powers upon the stages of our most respectable theatres. These two classes may be distinguished from the class above specified by the fact that they profess to be nothing but what they appear. If the wide-