

**FASHIONABLE  
PHILOSOPHY AND  
OTHER SKETCHES**

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Fashionable Philosophy and Other Sketches by Laurence Oliphant

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**LAURENCE OLIPHANT**

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BY

LAURENCE OLIPHANT

AUTHOR OF

'PICCADILLY,' 'ALTIORA PETO,' 'MASOLLAM,' ETC.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS

EDINBURGH AND LONDON

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## PREFACE.

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THAT railway travel is not, as a rule, conducive to serious thought, may fairly be inferred from the class of literature displayed on the bookstalls at the stations. I have therefore refrained from any attempt to excite the reflective faculties of the reader, excepting in the first and third of the accompanying sketches, and even in these have only ventured to suggest ideas, the full scope and pregnancy of which it must be left to his own idiosyncrasy to appreciate and develop, the more especially as they bear upon a certain current of investigation which has recently become popular.

I have to express my thanks to the Editor of the 'Nineteenth Century Review' for the



kind permission he has granted me to reproduce "The Sisters of Thibet"; and I avail myself of the opportunity thus afforded of removing the impression which, to my surprise, was conveyed to me by letters from numerous correspondents, that the article contained any record of my own personal experiences. The satire was suggested by the work of an author whose sincerity I do not doubt, and for whose motives I have the highest respect, in order to point out what appears to me the defective morality, from an altruistic and practical point of view, of a system of which he is the principal exponent in this country, and which, under the name of Esoteric Buddhism, still seems to possess some fascination for a certain class of minds.

The other articles originally appeared in 'Blackwood's Magazine,' and I wish to express my acknowledgments to my publishers for their usual courtesy in allowing me to republish them in this form.

ATHENÆUM CLUB,  
*January 1887.*

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