

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF THE THEOSOPHICAL ARCHIVES

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Know the joy of life by piling good deed on good deed until no rift or cranny appears between them.

Marcus Aurelius



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Cover: Dr Anandabai Joshee (India); Dr Kei Okami, Tokio, Japan, Dr Tabat M. Islambooly, Damascus, Syria, 10 October 1885. Photograph from the Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania (WMCP), found in the archives of Drexel University.

#### FOUNDER: Leslie Price | EDITOR: Erica Georgiades

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in the articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the editor and of FOTA.

#### **ABOUT FOTA**

FOTA (The Friends of Theosophical Archives) is a charitable organisation being formed to promote knowledge of, and support for, the Theosophical archives across the world. For this purpose, "Theosophy" is defined in the same way as in the editorial pages of Theosophical History, and is not restricted to any one tradition or country. For more information visit this link: http://www.hypatia. gr/fota/

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Chromolithograph, "Indian woman floating lamps on the Ganges," by William Simpson, 1867. Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talk%3AGanges%2FArchive\_5#/media/File:IndianWomanFloatingLamps-Ganges.jpg

The social reformer Behramji Merwanji Malabari (1853-1912), was an Indian activist supporter of women's rights who strived to outlaw children marriage in India. He described HPB, as one of the most remarkable women he ever met, but declined her invitation to join the Theosophical Society in India. As a nationalist and reformist he did not hesitate to criticize statements from foreigners - like HPB and

Olcott for example - such as *that they love India more than the Indians do*. In many instances, he considered HPB and Olcott's feelings and comments about India as fatuous flapdoodle. In the article, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky on Hindu Women marriage and Sati the editor comments on HPB's viewpoint on children marriage and the Sati tradition. Malabari's description of his meeting with HPB is reproduced in the appendix of this article, as well as his opinion about Olcott. Overall, the article questions whether HPB and Olcott ever discussed with Malabari their viewpoints on children marriage and women's rights in India, as well as what could have been the influence of the founders of the Theosophical Society on socio-cultural issues during the earlier years of the organisation in India.

The article Anandi Gopal Joshee: the First Woman from India to Obtain a Western Medical Degree, also compiled and commented by the editor, describes briefly the life of Anandi Gopal Joshee (1865 - 1887), as well as her relationship with her husband Gopalrao Vinayak Joshee (?), an early and seemly influential member of the Theosophical Society in Bombay. The connection of Anandi Gopal Joshee with the Theosophical Society is especially emphasised when she joined The Ladies Theosophical Society. The latter could be viewed as a sort of feminist movement promoting education and women's rights in India. The article closes suggesting that the early founders of the Theosophical Society supported social reforms in India such as women's rights and more. In this vein, the influence of the Theosophical Society in India's culture and thought begins with the arrival of Olcott and HPB in India and this is also evident by the number of articles and notes, published in early issues of the magazine The Theosophist, supporting and defending social reforms.

Luke Michael Ironside, in his article Annie Besant: The Pearl of the Indian Renaissance, focuses on Besant's educational work in India. He attempts to demonstrate how Besant tried to include Theosophical ideals and principles in India's educational system. When she was President of

ditorial



the Indian National Congress, she planned out a national education system which included village education; the establishing of a number of regional universities and study areas comprised of, among other things, ancient Hindu literature, science, art and crafts. Still on the matter of education, Marja Artamaa, the International Secretary of the Theosophical Society Adyar, kindly scanned and sent us a very interesting lecture entitled *The Child: Eternal Messiah* by Maria Montessori. This lecture was delivered by Montessori under the Banyan Tree, at the International Headquarters of the Theosophical Society in Adyar, India, and is reproduced here *in toto*.

Arni Narendran, from Mumbai, writes on Dr Annie Besant a Luminous Star in India's History. He mentions how the Theosophical Society may have influenced some of Gandhi's ideas and points out that nowadays Gandhians tend to believe that the Mahatma was not sympathetic to the Theosophical movement. While trying to demonstrate this is not true, he acknowledges that indeed Gandhi and Annie Besant did not agree in a number of points related to the Indian freedom movement. In the interim he points out that both "in their own way had brought in spiritual and ethical content to politics and the Indian freedom movement." Chong Sanne, from Singapure, compiled an article entitled Dr Wu Tink Fang and The History of the Theosophical Society in China, focusing on the early history of the TS in China. This is followed by a short compilation, from The Theosophist, focusing on Hong Kong, where A.P. Sinnett was for some time the editor of the Hong Kong Daily and includes a members' petition to start a new Chinese lodge, in Shanghai.

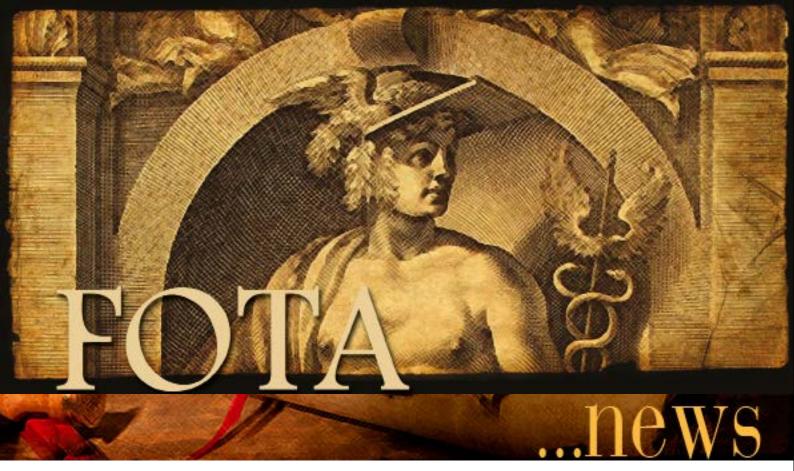
There is a number of interesting events worth of our attention. For instance, The Theosophical Society in England will be holding a two-day international conference on Annie Besant. The chair of the first day of the conference is Dr Muriel Pécastaing-Boissière, from the University of Paris-Sorbonne; she is also the author of the new biography "Annie Besant (1847-1933): la lutte et la quête." The English version of her book will be launched during the conference. The chair of the second day is Kurt Leland, author of "Invisible Worlds: Annie Besant on Psychic and Spiritual Development." This seems to be the first International Conference focusing on Annie Besant and for this reason is a quite unique event! Leslie Price also interviewed Dr Muriel Pécastaing-Boissière and discussed about her research and interest on Annie Besant. Another interesting event, recently announced by the TS, Adyar, is the 11th World Congress of the Theosophical Society, which will be held in Singapore 4 - 9 August 2018. Finally, The European School of Theosophy has also an interesting programme focusing on "The Spiritual Path."

Furthermore, there is a new issue of the Theosophical History Journal featuring, among other things, a Report on The International Theosophical History Conference: 17-18 September 2016 by Dr James A. Santucci. Janet Kerschner, Archivist of the Theosophical Society in America, shared with us a thought-provoking article written by James Morgan Pryse shedding light on the printing of the second edition of the Secret Doctrine. Leslie Price provides engaging historical hints from his Cabinet of Curiosities. Kurt Leland warns us about a probably spurious Blavatsky Watercolour for sale. There is a new book on "Madame Blavatsky: The Case for Her Defense Against the Hodgson- Coulomb Attack," by Walter A. Carrithers, Jr., edited and abridged by Daniel H. Caldwell. The book provides a minute and comprehensive assessment of the Blavatsky/Coulomb and Mahatma Letters and other issues as well. Also, you may peruse a compilation of HPB's review of Theosophical and Mystical Publications of the 19th century, as well as a catalogue of book reviews from 1889 to 1890 published in the Lucifer magazine.

The Nicholas Roerich Museum in Moscow is currently endangered and needs our support and help. The Statement of the International Centre of the Roerichs concerning the armed seizure of the Lopoukhins estate carried out by the State Museum of Oriental Art on 28 -29 April 2017 with the support from law enforcement agencies aimed at the annihilation of the non-governmental Museum named after Nicholas Roerich and the seizure of the Roerichs heritage, belonging to the International Centre of the Roerichs is reproduced here.

In closing, I would like to say that this year Dara Eklund departed this transitory life, she assisted Boris de Zirkoff as a researcher during the years he was working on the *Collected Writings*. She is missed by her friends and family. May she rest in peace.

·Erica Georgiades



## FOTA England Meeting

FOTA England met on 1 November 2016 at 50 Gloucester Place, with Kevin Tingay in the chair. The group considered the Theosophical History conference held in September, at which there had been a small but appreciated archival display.

It was reported that the services of a professional archivist were being sought by the TS in England to conserve and catalogue their archives. Most material had now been removed from the basement but discoveries were still being made there. There was unanimous praise for the quality of the FOTA Newsletter edited by Erica Georgiades.

## FOTA England Meeting

Notes of the meeting held at 50 Gloucester Place, London, on Wednesday 22nd March 2017. Present were Kevin Tingay, Leslie Price, Susan Snell, Robert Gilbert, Lynda Harris, Janet Lee, and Alan Walker. Apologies from Geraldine Beskin and Sarah Turner.

We were pleased to welcome Alan Walker to the meeting. We noted that work continued at Wheaton by Jennet Kushner on the archives there including digitisation. It was hoped that the Annual Reports of the Society would be digitised and available to scholars. There was no currently no archivist at Adyar. It was hoped that a suitable appointment be made and that access to that archive be expedited.

Progress continued with the material here at the HQ of the English Section. Old lantern slides had been found and it was hoped that these could be copied to contemporary formats for preservation and use. Efforts were to be made on the sorting, identification, and cataloguing of photographic material. Transcriptions were being made of the early members' registers, and it was hoped that various visitors' books could also be transcribed.

A discussion took place on the selection of a consultant professional archivist who could advise on future planning and organisation. A number of names we mentioned and Susan Snell agreed to make initial contacts. We also discussed the problem of future proofing digital material.

A conference was planned on the life and work of Annie Besant on September 30th and October 1st 2017 at 50 Gloucester Place. This would cover her whole life including her activities before joining the TS.

A call for papers and invitations would be sent to parties who might be interested in all phases of her life. The next formal meeting would take place on Wednesday October 18th at 4pm at the above address.



## Where the Universe Sings: Following Lawren Harris into the mystic

"Art is a bridge between the great moral harmony of the universe, and our own souls. What I want is for my paintings to be models of that harmony, reflections of an ordered, spiritual, and creative universe." Lawren Harris

The film, *Where the Universe Sings: Following Lawren Harris into the mystic*, directed by Nancy Lang and Ramont suggests that Theosophy was a major source of inspiration to the celebrated Canadian painter Lawren Harris (1885-1970), who was also member of the Tornoto Lodge of the International Theosophical Society in the early '20s.

https://vimeo.com/192636801

#### છાજ

## Ceylon: A Look Back At The Long Road To Freedom by Himal Kotelawala

"Buddhist revival movement led by Anagarika Dharmapala and American theosophist Henry Steel Olcott resulting in what historians such as Gananath Obeyesekere have famously called Protestant Buddhism had helped establish an ethno-religious Sinhala Buddhist identity that was clamouring for a nation free of foreign rule. gl/9DNqvg. The publication will be missed!" http://roar.lk/features/ceylon-look-back-long-road-freedom/

80CB

# How a Bengaluru road was named after a free-thinking Theosophist By Divya Shekhar

Interesting to read: "Bahman Pestonji Wadia was born into a family of shipbuilders on October 8, 1881. The lad, who grew up in Bombay and initially worked in a textile firm, successfully ran his family business after his father's untimely death. In 1904, he joined the Theosophical Society and spent hours meditating over the works of the Society's founder HP Blavatsky. He moved to Adayar in 1908 and was actively involved in the Home Rule Movement along with Annie Besant..." https://goo.gl/x8huC0

#### 80CB

## Photo exhibition showcases fauna and flora of Theosophical Society

These photographs, which are on display on the Theosophical Society premises, were taken by former professor of law A Chandrasekaran. The 10-day exhibition began on September 28 2016. https://goo.gl/GGONSA

#### 80CB

## International Conference "Modernity and Esoteric Networks: Theosophy, Arts, Literature and Politics" March 7 and 8, 2017 - National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka

"Theosophy had been underestimated unfairly, or to put it correctly, neglected by academics for a long time. It had been regarded as a bogus Buddhism, and not an appropriate theme for serious study. However, this academic tendency began to change towards the last decade of the 20th century owing to the development of several research fields: investigations on New Religious Movements, cultural studies of modern literature and art, and religious and political studies of the South Asian region; the shift was also due to the establishment of the academic discipline of Western Esotericism. In the 21st century, this trend has become evident in the growing number of scholarly publications and in the holding of international conferences in Europe, the United States and Israel, with Japan added to the list this year." Read more: https://jnaseblog.wordpress.com/2016/11/28/international-conference-modernity-and-esoteric-networks%EF%BC%9Atheosophy-arts-literature-and-politics/.



# What Parsifal Saw by Ron Regé, Jr.

"What Parsifal Saw collects much of Ron Regé, Jr's work since the 2012 release of his acclaimed opus, The Cartoon Utopia. Regé's interest in esoterica and spirituality is highlighted by "Cosmogenesis," his adaptation of the writings of 19<sup>th</sup> century occultist Helena Petrovna Blavatsky. Regé's work continues to explore a cosmic consciousness, psychedelia, outsider rawness, and pure cartoonish joy."

Source: https://goo.gl/B0ED7H

BOR

## Hilma af Klint



Massimo Introvigne informed us that Hilma af Klint (1862–1944), one of the pioneer of abstract art was actually a member of the Theosophical Society.

Hilma af Klint January 1901 source: http://goo.gl/3y2lpd

80CS



Image source: http://cindersgallery.com/product/parsifal-saw/



## HPB, G.R.S. Mead and ... ?

In this picture we can see HPB, G.R.S. Mead (on her left side), but who is the gentleman on her right side? It has been suggested he was one of the Keightley's or E. Douglas Fawcett (1866-1960) or James Pryse. If you know for sure who this getleman is send us a note. Leslie Price discusses more about this photo on his *Cabinet of Curiosities*.

ଚ୍ଚର

## **Russian Books**

N. Reinke wrote an interesting biographical sketch of Dr Kamenskaya with some glimpses of the history of the Theosophical Society in Russia. For a period of time the TS in Russia was printing a lot of material on Theosophy. "Between 1908 to 1919 the "Vestnik" (in Petersburg) and "Lotos" (in Kaluga, run by E. Pisareva) publishing houses issued more than 40 titles of theosophical books, some of them going through a second or third printing." Let us know titles of Theosophical books, printed in Russian language, you may have in the library. http://www.theosophy.ru/kamensky.htm

## Secret Doctrine References

In the website of the Theosophical University Press Online Edition we can find a compilation of references used by HPB in the *Secret Doctrine*. http://www.theosociety.org/pasadena/sdrefs/sdrefs-hp.htm

#### 8003

THE COLUMNERS COUNT INCASY OF SPREAD TROUGHT

and the

Transformation of Traditions

edited by

Julie Chajes and Boaz Huss

Ben-Guzion University of the Negev Press

Appropriations

Theosophical

Esotericism, Kabbalah

The *Theosophical Appropriations Esotericism, Kabbalah and the Transformation of Traditions* is a must read for researchers interested on Theosophy. The books has been edited by Julie Chajes and Boaz Huss and counted with the contribution: Karl Baier, Julie Chajes, John Patrick Deveney, Victoria Ferentinou, Olav Hammer, Boaz Huss, Massimo Introvigne, Andreas Kilcher, Eugene Kuzmin, Shimon Lev, Isaac Lubelsky, Tomer Persico, Helmut Zander.

The thirteen chapters of this volume examine intersections between theosophical thought and areas as diverse as the arts, literature, scholarship, politics, and, especially, modern interpretations of Judaism and kabbalah. Each chapter offers a case study in theosophical appropriations of a different type and in different context. The chapters join together to reveal congruencies between theosophical ideas and a wide range of contemporaneous intellectual, cultural, religious, and political currents. They demonstrate the far-reaching influence of the theosophical movement worldwide from the late-nineteenth century to the present day.

To read more visit this link: goo.gl/JKYI0w

BOCS

## Wikipedia....not quite accurate

"Leadbeater's father, Charles Leadbeater, did indeed die of tuberculosis in 1862. And, when Leadbeater was about eight years old....according to the facts of his birth certificate and Baptismal certificate, but not according to every account he gave of his birth date, which was 1847. The Wikipedia entry fails to mention this significant discrepancy..." To read more click here https://cwleadbeater.wordpress. com/2016/09/27/wikipedia-not-quite-accurate/

## The oldest library in the world

1,157 years after it first opened, the world's oldest library has finally been restored and unveiled to the public. Located in Fez, Morocco, the al-Qarawiyyin library is part of the world's oldest continually operating university, al-Qarawiyyin University, which opened in 859. Click here to read more https://goo.gl/l2xBhp



## New Blavatsky Letter

Jerry Hejka-Ekins informed us that "the latest *Theosophical History* journal is finally available. For Blavatsky students and Theosophical Historians, this issue is of major importance because it features a complete transcription of a never before published Blavatsky letter, as well as color plates of several pages of the original letter. The letter itself is 36 pages, one of her longest letters and the content is primarily philosophical. It touches and expands upon many of the topics covered in The Secret Doctrine, and especially throws greater light upon her seven keys.

The letter was written in February 1887 while HPB was staying in Ostend, Belgium. It is addressed to Mr. James Ralson Skinner, the author of The Source of Measures, which Blavatsky quotes from and mentions over sixty times in *The Secret Doctrine*.

This issue of Theosophical History is a large one, some 147 pages and includes a biography of Mr. showing his relationship to Blavatsky and his place the greater esoteric Skinner, in Order Theosophical http://www.theohistory.org movement at the time. through History:

# Dr Wu Ting Fang and The History of the Theosophical Society in China

Compiled by Chong Sanne

#### FOTA NEWSLETTER n°7 • Winter 2016 - Spring 2017



Since 1999 Chong Sanne has been the President of the Singapore Lodge Theosophical Society. He took on the additional duties of the Presidential Representative for the Theosophical Society in Asia, East and South East from 2013. This Presidential Agency is also responsible for the promotion of Theosophy in China through a Chinese language website and on-going translation of theosophical literature into Chinese. The Chinese development will also be useful for the overseas Chinese whose native language is Chinese.

Not much information is found in the annals of The Theosophical Society regarding Theosophy in China, save a brief statement in *A Short History of The Theosophical Society* by Mrs. Josephine Ransom in the Year 1922.

"The first Chinese Lodge had been formed, with the great Chinese statesman and ambassador, Dr. Wu Ting-Fang, as President, but who passed away in June. He was intensely anxious that Theosophy should take root in his own land, for he wished the new China to be built up on the basis of brotherhood."

In the *The Golden Book of The Theosophical Society* by C. Jinarājadāsa, there was a picture in Fig. 204 with the caption "Dr. Wu Ting Fang, Author of the first Chinese Manual on Theosophy."

But who was Dr Wu Ting Fang? No further information was given in Theosophical publications regarding this Chinese pioneer of Theosophy. Though a distinguished name in China's modern history, few realize the significance of this name or the extent of his greatness. *Wikipedia* describes him as "a Chinese diplomat and politician who served as Minister of Foreign Affairs and briefly as Acting Premier during the early years of the Republic of China; a lawyer and a calligrapher." The Chinese edition of *Wikipedia* and the *Chinese Baidu Encyclopedia* give considerably more information on the illustrious background of Dr Wu Ting Fang. What was not known or not stated was the fact that Dr Wu was veritably the Father of Theosophy in China.

Wu Ting Fang (114) was reportedly born on 30 July 1842, interestingly, in Singapore, which was then known as the Straits Settlements. However, at 3 years of age, he was taken by his father back to China where a greater destiny awaited him. He had his early education in Hong Kong. In 1874 he went on to study Law in England at University College London and was called to the bar at Lincoln's Inn in 1876. Wu Ting Fang became the first ethnic Chinese barrister in history. In 1877 he had the distinction of being the first Chinese to obtain a Doctorate in Law, LL. D. It is interesting to note that at the time when The Theosophical Society was founded in New York with its attendant publicity in London, Dr Wu was in fact living in England. However, it is not known if he had any contact with early members of the Theosophical Society.

After being called to the bar in England, he returned to Hong Kong in 1877 to practise law. Dr Wu Ting Fang became the first ethnic Chinese Unofficial member of the Legislative Council of Hong Kong when he was appointed by Great Britain in 1880, a position he served until 1882.

Dr Wu was appointed by the Emperor Guangxu and served under the Qing Dynasty as Minister to the United States, Spain and Peru from 1896 to 1902. He returned to the United States to serve as the Chinese Minister for the United States, Mexico, Peru and Cuba from 1907 to 1909. During this time he became friends with President Theodore "Teddy" Roosevelt and also met with the scientist and inventor, Thomas Edison. In March 1910, Dr. Wu left the United States for Europe, Singapore and Hong Kong, enroute to Beijing.

Dr Wu Ting Fang resided in the West for a considerable period of time, some four years in England and eight years in the United States. His mastery of the English Language and his knowledge of the current affairs worldwide could be seen from the delightful book he authored, *America Through the Spectacles of an Oriental Diplomat*. This book is immensely readable. Interestingly, he was coaxed to write this, his only English book, by an American lady friend as it says in the Preface:

"Such a race should certainly be very interesting to study. During my two missions to America where I resided nearly eight years, repeated requests were made that I should write my observations and impressions of America. I did not feel justified in doing so for several reasons: first, I could not find time for such a task amidst my official duties; secondly, although I had been travelling through many sections of the country, and had come in contact officially and socially with many classes of people, still there might be some features of the country and some traits of the people which had escaped my attention; and thirdly, though I had seen much in America to arouse my admiration, I felt that here and there, there was room for improvement, and to be compelled to criticize people who had been generous, courteous, and kind was something I did not wish to do. In answer to my scruples I was told

that I was not expected to write about America in a partial or unfair manner, but to state impressions of the land just as I had found it. A lady friend, for whose opinion I have the highest respect, said in effect, "We want you to write about our country and to speak of our people in an impartial and candid way; we do not want you to bestow praise where it is undeserved; and when you find anything deserving of criticism or condemnation you should not hesitate to mention it, for we like our faults to be pointed out that we may reform." I admit the soundness of my friend's argument. It shows the broad-mindedness and magnanimity of the American people. In writing the following pages I have uniformly followed the principles laid down by my American lady friend. I have not scrupled to frankly and freely express my views, but I hope not in any carping spirit; and I trust American readers will forgive me if they find some opinions they cannot endorse. I assure them they were not formed hastily or unkindly. Indeed, I should not be a sincere friend were I to picture their country as a perfect paradise, or were I to gloss over what seem to me to be their defects."

This delectable book is witty, humorous, if sometimes satirical, but written with great humility. It was written in 1914 when Dr Wu Ting Fang had taken up important portfolios in the new Republic of China.

Dr Wu supported the Xinhai Revolution and negotiated on the revolutionaries' behalf in Shanghai. He served briefly in early 1912 as Minister of Justice for the Nanjing Provisional Government, where he argued strongly for an independent judiciary, based on his experience studying law and travelling overseas. After this brief posting, Dr Wu became Minister of Foreign Affairs for the ROC. He served briefly in 1917 as Acting Premier of the Republic of China.

Dr Wu joined Dr Sun Yat-sen's Constitutional Protection Movement and became a member of its governing committee. He advised Dr Sun against becoming the "extraordinary president" but stuck with Dr Sun after the election. He then served as Dr Sun's foreign minister and as acting president when Dr Sun was absent. He was the Minister of Foreign Affairs from September 1917 to June 1922 and also concurrently as the Minister of Finance from May 1921 to June 1922. He died shortly after Chen Jiongming rebelled against Dr Sun.

It was during the last three years of his life that he did the most work for the Theosophical Society while still holding the dual portfolios of Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Finance. In 1920, aged 78, while residing in Shenjiang, Shanghai, he actively promoted The Theosophical Society. He initially named Theosophy Daodetongshenxue and renamed it Tianrenmingdaoxue (注意通知) before finalizing on the name Zhengdaoxue (天人明道學).The choice of the final Chinese name for the Theosophical Society was explained as follows:

此會名由英文翻譯其英文係 Theosophical Society 按照原文字意。是 "神智會"。查近日所刊英華字典。譯解"通神會"。惟恐閱者 未知內容。疑本會與鬼神通感。誤為旁門左道。故添道德二字。 表明宗旨正大耳,近仍有西士函評通神二字尚未妥當,蘭斟酌再 改。是以與友人研究討論。再定名證道學會。其理由詳述於下, 僅按世界宗教,其原皆出於天,其所研究主張之理,即天與人關 係之理也、若泛言天道、而忽略人事。或徒論人事而蔑視天道, 均不能以天道管攝人事,及以人事證明天道、繁言冗說,終是不 明。不明即不通,欲侍此化導眾生,甚難覺悟,故談天遊者必須 有統条。有證據,以科學之條理。求大道之指歸。切於人事,當 於人心。使人易知易明,不使人迷惑失據。天道人事,一以貫 之。到此境界。謂之天道人道。均無不可。惟此種道理。經數千 年宗教家道德家反覆陳說,尚苦其未明,故中國漢代儒家董仲舒 云。"天人之際。甚難明也。"即指此理而言。今將神人死生及 靈魂肉體種種未易說明之道。求所以明之,故定名為證道學會。

Every Thursday Dr Wu would invite Chinese and Western members to get together at his house to study the true teachings of the various religions, the deep mystery and secrets of heaven and earth (Nature), man's constitution, etc., in short, Theosophy. According to his followers, whenever he had any leisure after his official duties, Dr Wu would enthusiastically talk to the Chinese and Western members on Theosophy, occult science and teachings.

Evidently, Dr Wu gave public talks on Theosophy long before the first Chinese Lodge was officially chartered. It was reported in the press that on 12 March 1916 Dr Wu, in his capacity as a Theosophist, was invited by the Shanghai Shangxian Tang (上海尚官堂 The International Institute of China) to give a talk on "The Relationship Between the Soul and the Body" to an audience of hundreds of people.

三月十二日四時,上海尚賢室時通神社伍延芳君演説人之靈魂與身種之關係 到音數百人,(《伍延芳演記靈魂》、《款育過報》(杭州),第124期,1916 年)

In June 1921, Dr Wu Ting Fang translated and published

Information for Enquirers (管首學 指南) by Annie Besant. In July 1921, he wrote and published Outline of Theosophy (首道學 會要旨). In the latter publication he gave the reasons with an insightful explanation of the choice of the final name Zhengdaoxue (證道學) .On 14 February 1922, Dr. Wu published Elementary Lessons on Karma (因果读我) which he translated from Annie Besant's writing. The latter was published four months before his death on 23 June 1922.

On 8 March 1923, the Shenjiang Theosophical Society (伸江證道學會太陽會所) Sun posthumously Lodae published Dr Wu Ting Fang's Dialogues On Theosophy (值延芳證這學說 These dialogues were recorded answers by Dr Wu to questions on Theosophy. In the Preface to this book, tribute was paid to Dr Wu Ting Fang "as a great sage of the Republic of China who led a life with careful words and deeds, and who did not seek luxury. Everything he did was based on morality as the yardstick." This book was published together with a compilation of the three other works of Dr. Wu, viz. Outline of Theosophy, Elementary Lessons on Karma and Information for Enguirers. This compilation of Dr Wu's works on Theosophy can be found in the archives of the National Library of China although the last two titles appear to be missing.

Dr Wu Ting Fang lived in the era of the founding of The Theosophical Society and the first half a century of its existence. He was a contemporary of the early leaders of the Society. It is not known whether he has ever met any of them but evidently he had great admiration for the leaders such as Annie Besant, who incidentally was five years younger than Dr Wu. In America *Through the Spectacles of an Oriental Diplomat*, published in 1914, he referred to Annie Besant more than once.

"The immigration laws in force in Australia are, I am informed, even more strict and more severe than those in the United States. They amount to almost total prohibition; for they are directed not only against Chinese laborers but are so operated that the Chinese merchant and student are also practically refused admission. In the course of a lecture delivered in England by Mrs. Annie Besant in 1912 on 'The citizenship of colored races in the British Empire', while condemning the race prejudices of her own people, she brought out a fact which will be interesting to my readers, especially to the Australians. She says, 'In Australia a very curious change is taking place. Color has very much deepened in that clime, and the Australian has become very yellow; so that it becomes a problem whether, after a time, the people would be allowed to live in their own country. The white people are far more colored than are some Indians.' In the face of this plain fact is it not time, for their own sake, that the Australians should drop their cry against yellow people and induce their

Parliament to abolish, or at least to modify, their immigration laws with regard to the yellow race?"

Dr Wu Ting Fang was also an advocate of vegetarianism. In the concluding chapter of the same book, Chapter 17 on Sports, he writes:

"As an ardent believer in the natural, healthy and compassionate life I was interested to find in the Encyclopaedia Britannica how frequently vegetarians have been winners in athletic sports. They won the Berlin to Dresden walking match, a distance of 125 miles, the Carwardine Cup (100 miles) and Dibble Shield (6 hours) cycling races (1901-02), the amateur championship of England in tennis (four successive years up to 1902) and racquets (1902), the cycling championship of India (three years), half-mile running championship of Scotland (1896), world's amateur cycle records for all times from four hours to thirteen hours (1902), 100 miles championship Yorkshire Road Club (1899, 1901), tennis gold medal (five times). I have not access to later statistics on this subject but I know that it is the reverse of truth to say, as Professor Gautier, of the Sarbonne, a Catholic foundation in Paris, recently said, that vegetarians 'suffer from lack of energy and weakened will power.' The above facts disprove it, and as against Prof. Gautier, I quote Dr. J. H. Kellogg, the eminent physician and Superintendent of Battle Creek Sanitarium in Michigan, U.S.A., who has been a strict vegetarian for many years and who, though over sixty years of age, is as strong and vigorous as a man of forty; he told me that he worked sixteen hours daily without the least fatigue. Mrs. Annie Besant, President of the Theosophical Society, is another example. I am credibly informed that she has been a vegetarian for at least thirty-five years and that it is doubtful if any flesh-eater who is sixty-five can equal her in energy. Whatever else vegetarians may lack they are not lacking in powers of endurance."

Here again, Annie Besant is mentioned.

It was indeed a loss for the Theosophical Society that Dr Wu passed away only three years after he formed the first Chinese lodge. Being a Chinese scholar highly proficient in both the English and Chinese languages and in a position of power and influence, he was pre-eminently qualified to translate Theosophical literature to spread Theosophy throughout Greater China. Then again, he was already 80 years old when he died. However, his legacy was preserved and the name he chose for The Theosophical Society was kept active until the Second World War.

In *The Seventy-Fifth Anniversary Book of The Theosophical Society* by Josephine Ransom we have this statement in the Year 1936:

"Mr. A. F. Knudsen was appointed Presidential Agent for East Asia. He and his wife made Shanghai their centre— 'a better place than Hong Kong to contact the real China'. An appreciable amount of Theosophical literature had already been translated into Chinese."

Indeed, Mr. Knudsen presented one of these translated books, Theosophy (副目) in Chinese to Adyar on 21 January 1938. It is not known when the book was first published. The translator's name is given in Chinese as *Yuanhujinhuilian* (管话会管证先生). This is a rather comprehensive book and the closest to a Chinese Theosophical manual.

Two versions of *At the Feet of the Master* were found with the Chinese title Shixun (印創). One of them has a preface by Mr. Knudsen dated 17 April 1937. However, the translator was not named. The other version is undated but evidently an older version translated by *Lin Haohua* (三大村:吉里).

In A Short History of The Theosophical Society in the year 1937, the following was reported about Mr. C. Jinarājadāsa on his way back from Japan:

"On his return journey he spent a longer time in Shanghai, where he gave one public lecture and addressed the Lodge several times, and gave a lecture on Buddhism to the 'Pure Karma Society,' which was translated into Chinese."

In The Seventy-Fifth Anniversary Book of The Theosophical Society in the year 1939, we have this report:

"In Shanghai Mr. Knudsen was preparing, with the help of scholars, translations into Chinese of *First Principles of Theosophy*, by C. Jinarājadāsa, and *The Ancient Wisdom*, by Annie Besant."

We do not know whether translations were actually carried out as Chinese translations of these books were not to be found.

Then came World War II. In *The Seventy-Fifth Anniversary Book* in the year 1944, was the ominous pronouncement:

"In Burma, Netherlands East Indies and the Philippine Islands the Society was practically extinguished by the Japanese, as were the Lodges in Shanghai (China), Hong Kong and Singapore." After World War II and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution of The People's Republic of China taking place from 1966 through 1976, The Theosophical Society ceased existing in China. However, another version of *At the Feet* of the Master with the Chinese title of *Lizugongtinglu* 

(書兄恭善詩) translated by Mr. Maurice Chu (朱亮) was published in Hong Kong by a private group in 1961 and reprinted in 1972. Up till then, The Theosophical Society was still referred to by the Chinese name given by Dr Wu – *Zhengdaoxuehui* (普道學會). This book, together with the aforementioned seven, are the only eight Chinese books kept in the Adyar Library and Research Centre and are believed to be the only ones extant.

The Theosophical Society is currently not present in the country with the highest population in the world. As it is verily the mission of the Society to "popularize a knowledge of Theosophy", we must not neglect China, with its population of 1.37 billion people. In this respect, under the auspices of the Indo-Pacific Federation of the Theosophical Society, a Chinese Project Team was set up in December 2011 at the Singapore Lodge to promote Theosophy to the Chinese-literate population of the world, primarily in China. To this end, we have developed a dedicated Chinese website www.chinesetheosophy. org as the vehicle for the dissemination of Theosophical teachings. Fortunately, China has high computer literacy. Of the population of 1.37 billion, there are an estimated 621 million internet users according to statistics as of 30 June 2012. This is 50% of all users in Asia. The work of the Chinese Project Team consists of on-going translation of theosophical literature into Chinese which is progressively posted on the website and also facilitating online forums for interactive discussions of theosophical subjects. Work has only just begun. We have uploaded images of the eight Chinese books made available by the Adyar Library and Research Centre to our Chinese website. We expect to accomplish more in time to come.

And we have reverted to and shall propagate the Chinese name *Zhengdaoxuehui* **Chinese** composed by Dr Wu Ting Fang as the official name for The Theosophical Society thereby preserving his legacy. After all, that name has been recognized as the official Chinese name for The Theosophical Society from 1920 until at least 1972. It is an interesting twist in history that the Chinese Project Team should be established in Singapore, the country of birth of Dr Wu, to continue his theosophical work in China.

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#### FOTA NEWSLETTER n°7 • Winter 2016 - Spring 2017

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See also other compilations on the history of the lodges in East & South East Asia in Japan; Malaysia; Myanmar; Singapore by visiting this link http://theosophyasia.net/overview.htm

## FROM THE PAGES OF THE THEOSOPHIST

A long-cherished hope realised itself on July 8, 1922, in the signing of an application for a charter for our first Chinese Lodge-not another English Lodge in China. It is signed by Wu Ting Fang, Git Cho Chan, Chin Hua Lin, Sen Yuen Chan, -Wan A. Hee, Lum King Lou, Yue Sing Tseng, Sum Chuen Tong, Chan Lun Kee, and by Oakland Lu, G. F. L. Harrison, H. L. Park. Dr Wu Ting Fang was elected President, and as he has now become a "Guest of Heaven"— according to the- beautiful Chinese way of looking at the "living Dead"— he remains as Hon. President. To him belongs the merit of working for and founding the first really Chinese Lodge, and in connection with this we must mention the name of the pioneer of Theosophy in China, Mr. Spurgeon Medhurst. May the seed thus sown spring up a hundredfold, in one of the most ancient civilisations on earth and one of the most remarkable types of mankind, intellectually, morally and spiritually.

I am sure that my readers will like to read the application, which came to me as a shining golden scroll, with exquisitely written Chinese characters, most delicately wrought I am having it framed, as the first of its kind, to hang in the Museum As we outer barbarians cannot read the beautiful thing, here is the translation of the 'application:

#### SHANGHAI

#### China

#### July 8th, 1922

We, the undersigned Members of the Saturn Lodge of the Theosophical Society, Shanghai, China, being desirous of forming a Chinese Lodge, hereby beg to make an application fora Charter to be granted us in the name of The Sun Lodge, Shanghai.

We have been associated with the Saturn Lodge for a period of three years and believe the time has now come to inaugurate our own Lodge.

Our late and venerable member, Dr Wu Ting Fang, was particularly interested in this matter and was in communication with us regarding making application for a Charter up to the moment of his passing over.

We therefore consider it fitting to include his name as one of the founders — he had already signified his acceptance of the office of President—in view of the personal and practical interest he has always shown in, and his devotion to, the cause of Theosophy in China; thus shall his name be recorded for the future history of our Society in China.

Only Theosophy, in our opinion, can unite the three religions of China, and through the propagation of its teachings and ideals, together with the daily practice thereof by the peoples of China, will our country again be able to take its right place among the nations of the world. With assurances of our complete devotion and loyalty to you, and fraternal greetings to all Brothers,

#### Source: The TheosophistSeptember 1922, pp 555-557.

http://www.iapsop.com/archive/materials/theosophist/theosophist\_v43\_n1-n12\_oct\_1921-sep\_1922. pdf

**The Hong-Kong Daily** Press discloses that Mr. A.P.Sinnett, late Editor of the *Pioneer*, was for some

years editor of that paper." Mr. Sinnett never made a mystery of it we believe?

A Chinese newspaper, entitled the *Chinese American*, published by Americans and edited by a Mr. Wiggehin Foo, has been started at New York. It is a weekly paper. When shall we see a Native of India, or rather a Bengali, editing a newspaper in New York like his Chinese brother? ---Indian Mirror.

[The paper is edited by Mr. Waug-Chin-Foo, an old friend and brother of ours, whom we know since 1877. The editor is a young man of remarkable intellectual and oratorical powers, who lectures with great success in the west of the United States for several years, and delivered a lecture or two in New York where he had gone to visit the Founders. Mr. Wang-Chin-Foo has a perfect mastery over the English language which he learned in an incredibly short time in California. His life and the reasons why he had to leave China are quite romantic.—Ed]

Supplement to The Theosophist, May, 1883, p. 6

http://www.iapsop.com/archive/materials/theosophist/theosophist\_v4\_n44\_may\_1883.pdf



## **CALL FOR PAPERS** INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ANNIE BESANT (1847-1933), LONDON, 30 SEPTEMBER - 1 OCTOBER 2017



The Theosophical Society in England (http://www.theosoc.org.uk) is holding a two-day international conference on Annie Besant (1847-1933) at the TSE Headquarters at 50 Gloucester Place, London W1U 8EA on Saturday and Sunday, 30 September and 1 October 2017.

The chair of the first day of the conference, which is primarily concerned with Annie Besant's public work as a feminist, secularist, socialist and anti-imperialist, will be Dr Muriel Pécastaing-Boissière of the University of Paris-Sorbonne, Paris 4 (author of the new biography Annie Besant (1847-1933) : la lutte et la quête, soon to be published in English).

Those who wish to submit a paper for the first day on any aspect of the subject should send a summary of not more than 200 words by 1 June 2017 to Mr Leslie Price, secretary of Programme Committee, at TSE History & Archives (history&archives@theosoc.org.uk), copied to leslie@theosoc.org.uk. Speakers will normally have 30 minutes including questions. Conference participants will be responsible for their own travel, meals and accommodation. Those presenting papers will be exempt from registration fees and will also be admitted free to the second day, chaired by Kurt Leland (author of Invisible Worlds: Annie Besant on Psychic and Spiritual Development), which is a study day concerned with research problems in assessing Besant's Theosophical work. If you wish to register for the conference, or to be kept informed of the programme, please contact The Theosophical Society in England (office@theosoc.org.uk).

[Muriel Pécastaing-Boissière writes:] It is impossible to study late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Britain without coming across Annie Besant's name. So the fact that she has fallen into relative obscurity, at least among the general public, remains difficult to understand.

From a historiographical point of view, Besant seems to have become a victim of trends in historical research that increasingly favour highly specialised and circumscribed studies. Most research has been limited to specific struggles, especially her pioneering fight in 1877–78 for the right to information on birth control and her support of the Match Girls' Strike of 1888. Her influence on British secularism and socialism are just beginning to be re-evaluated. Yet the logic behind her personal evolution, leading from an early religious crisis to secularism, socialism, Theosophy, and Indian nationalism, has barely been addressed.

Besant's conversion to Theosophy remains poorly understood and has even been ridiculed by researchers who underestimate the scope of the late-Victorian spiritual and occult revival, in which the Theosophical Society played a critical role. Some writers even lose interest in the second half of Besant's life or evaluate her earlier struggles with scepticism in light of this conversion. Conversely, though the Theosophical Society has done a remarkable job in preserving and making available Besant's Theosophical texts, many of its members remain unfamiliar with Besant's life prior to her conversion.

Furthermore, in a climate of understandable post-colonial guilt, the role that this British woman played in India is an embarrassment to some Western historians, who tend to minimise it. Thus her presidency of the Indian National Congress in 1917 has been almost completely forgotten in the West — even though Indians themselves have preserved the memory of Besant as one of their freedom fighters. Streets in Chennai, Mumbai and indeed many other places in India bear her name and a prominent golden statue of Besant stands on the Chennai seafront alongside monuments to other influential Indian leaders. Despite the criticism of her cautious reformist approach that was expressed in her lifetime by more radical nationalists — including Gandhi — and that are occasionally repeated by Indian historians, Besant remains sufficiently well-known for the State Bank of India to have used her name and image in a publicity campaign in the early 2010s, with a slogan proudly proclaiming: "The banker to this Indian."

Sadly, Annie Besant's having been a woman may also have prevented her from passing into posterity. Though she worked and fought alongside a number of talented men in a spirit of brotherhood, many of them would be surprised today to learn that their memory has often eclipsed that of their female comrade.

The purpose of the Theosophical Society in England's two-day international conference on Annie Besant is to bring together researchers on all aspects of her public life and work, so as to reflect on Besant's ideological and spiritual evolution within the religious, ethical, social, and political context of her time.

# Interview with Muriel Pécastaing-Boissière by Leslie Price



Picture of Muriel Pécastaing-Boissière by Dimitri JEAN



**Leslie Price** is the founder of "Theosophical History" and "Psypioneer" journal, and a past editor of "The Christian Parapsychologist". Currently an associate editor of TH and sub-editor of "Psypioneer" journal. He was the Secretary of the first Society for Psychical Research conference in 1977, and served on the SPR's Library Committee and as a member of Council and is currently an Honorary Member.

#### How did you become interested in Annie Besant?

As you know, I am a Senior Lecturer in Victorian Studies at La Sorbonne and it is impossible to study Victorian Britain without coming across Annie Besant's name at one point or another. I first encountered it twenty years ago, while working on my Doctorate Thesis on the social status of Victorian actresses, because of Besant's connection with fellow Fabian, playwright George Bernard Shaw. Later on, I often read about Besant, while preparing classes on the Victorian era, alongside matchgirls and dockers on strike in the East End of London at the end of the 1880s, or suffragettes before the First World War. Working more specifically on the condition of Victorian women, I discovered Besant's pioneering struggle in the 1870s for the right to information on birth control. All of which already meant how remarkable a Victorian woman she was. My interest in Annie Besant intensified when I decided to refocus my academic research on the underestimated links between the late-Victorian Socialist movements, fight for women's rights, and spiritual and Occult revival.

## Is she not a considerable challenge to biographers, having left archives in several continents?

My main purpose was not to uncover still potentially unexplored archives, but to make Annie Besant both better known and better understood by the general public. In her main two English-language biographies — the first by Arthur Nethercot in 1960-1963, the second by Anne Taylor in 1992 — Besant's conversion to Theosophy is described as vet another fracture in a life thought by these two authors to be fragmented to the point of incoherence. Neither managed to establish a link between Besant's freethinking, socialism, feminism, criticism of the Empire, and conversion to Theosophy. To make it worse, both works suffer from gender-biased interpretations and prejudices as regards Theosophy so strong as to impair these authors' reflection. I therefore decided to try and remedy the situation, and, to do so, I chose to recall and to explain Besant's life choices and actions in their moral, social, and spiritual contexts, while relying as much

as possible on her own published writings. I own some of Besant's original editions, including Thought-Forms, and a number of issues of her 1880s monthly Our Corner. Besant's two autobiographies, as well as most of her essays, lectures, articles and pamphlets are now available either as reprint or on the Internet. This is especially true of her Theosophical texts, and I have to say the Theosophical Society did a magnificent job in that respect. Getting hold of her free-thinking, socialist or Indian political texts proved more challenging. Dr Marie Terrier had to spend days sifting through archives and non-scanned periodicals in London when researching her Doctorate Thesis on Besant's socialism.

#### Annie was a socialist before she was a Theosophist? How significant was this?

Considering Dr Terrier wrote the Chapter on Besant's socialism, and researched an excellent Sorbonne Doctorate Thesis on this topic, I asked her to answer to this question:

"It was indeed very significant that Annie Besant was a Socialist before becoming a Theosophist. First of all, according to Besant herself, she became a Theosophist after she had identified what she considered the limits of Socialism. In Why I Became a Theosophist (1889), she highlighted the failures of the materialist conception of human beings that was key to her freethought and socialist thinking. A few years later, in her autobiography (1893), she explained that, in the socialist movement, she had felt 'there was not a real movement of self-sacrificing devotion, in which men worked for Love's sake only, and asked but to give, not to take'. When she left the socialist movement, she was convinced that Socialists were right in their desire to fight against social inequalities, but she wanted to stress to need to carry out moral reforms too. Secondly, Besant's radical and socialist past deeply influenced her understanding and practice of Theosophy. As a Theosophist, especially once she moved to India (1895) and became International President of the Theosophical Society (1907), she insisted on the necessity to promote social and political reforms. Though she believed in Karma and in the powers of mind over matter, she never

really denied the potency of environmental determinism over the majority of people. As a Socialist, and as a Theosophist, though by different means and to achieve different ends, she sought to free every free human being from these kinds of determinism so that they might be able to develop their individuality and morality to the utmost of their abilities."

#### From joining the TS in 1889, Annie had an esoteric dimension to her life. Were you given any access to esoteric archives in your research for the book?

I think I managed to read all of Besant's esoteric texts mentioned by Kurt Leland in his exhaustive bibliography of Besant's published writings. From what I and Marie Terrier gathered, comparatively few of Besant's letters survive and they tend to be quite matter-of-fact. To the best of my knowledge, Besant did not keep a diary either. I felt that she expressed almost all of herself in her published texts, and this is why I decided to start from them and to keep the focus on them.

I'd like to mention that a post-graduate student of mine, Gaëlle Manika, who researched Besant's fight for Home Rule in India for her MA, went to Adyar in April 2014 in hope of gaining access to the library and to archives, but this was denied to her in spite of her excellent credentials.

## Can you update us on translations from the original French edition?

The German translation was published by Aquamarin Verlag this spring. The English translation will be published thanks to tenacious help and support from Janet Lee and Tim Wyatt at the Theosophical Society in England (TSE). I am incredibly grateful to the TSE's educational charity, the Foundation for Theosophical Studies, who put up the capital to publish my book in English, and as a result were persuaded into reviving the Theosophical Publishing House (London), making this book the first to be released under the new imprint — a completely unexpected honour. Tim Wyatt is overseeing the production of the finished manuscript, and Leslie Price and Kurt Leland are doing a fantastic job helping me proofread the book over the summer, so that it will be published just on time for Annie Besant's 170th birthday on 1 October 2017, and the International Annie Besant Conference that Kurt, Leslie, Janet and I jointly organize in London for that weekend.

#### A famous British politician said: "All political lives, unless they are cut off in midstream at a happy juncture, end in failure, because that is the nature of politics and of human affairs". Would that be true of Mrs Besant?

It is rather ironical that you should choose to quote Enoch Powell, considering his views on the Raj, as well as on most other issues, could not be more different from Besant's. The quote perfectly describes Powell's own failure as a politician, by the way. As for Besant, if you take her pioneering struggles one by one, you realise that she often lived long enough to see their positive outcomes. Her struggle for secularism alongside Bradlaugh directly led to Atheists being emancipated in 1888. Besant, who fought for British and Indian women's rights, saw universal suffrage implemented in Britain in 1928. Before that, when the local Madras parliament decided to grant women the right to vote in 1921, Besant was logically invited to the celebrations that followed. In 1927, she also was the guest of honour of the Malthusian League, during the dinner organised to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Knowlton trial that Besant had used to promote freedom of speech on birth control — but also the fact that the House of Lords had just approved the implementation of clinics in poor neighbourhoods, where married women could obtain information on contraceptive methods. In 1924, Labour, that Besant and most of her old Socialist friends had joined by then, had become one of the main two British political parties, and proved that they were fit to govern. As concerns the Theosophical Society, in spite of tensions around Krishnamurti and evolutions some opposed, the TS throve under Besant. When she was first elected President in 1907, there were approximately 11,000 members worldwide; by 1928, there were 45,000. Admittedly, Besant did not live to see India's independence, but, contrary to Powell's delusions — as a student he dreamt of being appointed Viceroy of India!- it was obvious that India was on the path to at least becoming a dominion by 1933, and Besant had greatly contributed to this. So I do not think that Besant's long eventful life ended in failure, quite the contrary.



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Annie Besant with Her Daughter and Granddaughter Source: https://goo.gl/VRVxG9

## Annie Besant: The Pearl of the Indian Renaissance Luke Michael Ironside

#### FOTA NEWSLETTER n°7 • Winter 2016 - Spring 2017



Luke Michael Ironside is a lecturer and writer on Theosophical and esoteric subjects; comparative religion, occultism, and philosophy; and the history of the Theosophical Movement.

Originally from the UK, Luke has lectured extensively at Theosophical lodges and groups in England, India, and the Philippines, and among these has delivered lectures at the historic Leeds Lodge, at the School of the Wisdom in Adyar, and at the Manila Lodge in the Philippines. He was the facilitator of the Youth Forum at the 141st International Convention of the Theosophical Society in 2017. He will be a speaker at the upcoming International Convention in 2018.

His writings have appeared in TheoSophia, the journal of the Theosophical Society in New Zealand; in Vidya, the journal of the United Lodge of Theosophists in Santa Barbara; in The Light Bearer, the journal of the Canadian Theosophical Association; and in the Theosophy Forward magazine. He has recently completed his first full-length book, titled The Nectar of Theosophia, consisting of his collected writings and lectures.

Luke resides in the Philippines, where he gives weekly lectures at the National Headquarters of the Theosophical Society. He is presently serving as the President of the Pandacan Lodge.

#### 80CB

"She loved India with a fervor and devotion all her own. Our country's philosophy, our history or legends, our spiritual heritage, our achievements in the past, our sorrows in the present, our aspirations for the future were part and parcel of Mrs Annie Besant's own life."

#### Sri Prakasa in Indian Political Thought

A consideration of Annie Besant's role in the cultural and spiritual Renaissance of India – in a period from the dusk of the 19th century to the dawn of the 20th – must be appropriately examined in the context of the larger Renaissance movement which began with the Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772 - 1833), founder of the Brahmo Sabha movement, in the early years of the 19th century. Affectionately deemed the "Herald of a New Age," Ram Mohan was, no doubt, largely responsible for laying the groundwork for the revitalisation of the Indian spirit which was to follow.

Upon his death, the Brahmo Sabha became moribund, and out of its eclipse emerged the movement that would become the Brahmo Samaj [1], considered from an historical perspective as a significant contribution to the making of modern India, and among the most influential religious movements to spring forth from Hindu soil. The purpose of this latter was, in short, the total Renaissance of Hindu culture; this to be accomplished by the rejection of scripture as an authoritative source of spiritual truth; the denial of the infallibility of Avatars; a denunciation of polytheism and idol-worship; a breaking down of caste systems; and freedom of thought as regards the doctrines of Karma and Rebirth. [2]

Also significant to the Hindu reformation movement was the establishment of the Arya Samaj in 1875. This Samaj was opposed, in certain of its objectives, to those of the Brahmo Samaj; and yet its influence is significant to the later work of Annie Besant towards the revival of the Hindu religion and cultural identity. The Arya Samaj was founded by the sannyasi, Dayananda Saraswati (1824 - 1883), who advocated the infallible authority of the Vedas and denounced the idolatry and ritualistic worship so prevalent in Hindu society at that time. The significance of this movement in paving the way for the reclamation of the Hindu identity led Annie Besant to state that, "It was Dayanand Saraswati who first proclaimed that India was for the Indians" [3]. This movement is noteworthy in Theosophical history for the fact of the 1878 alliance between the Arya Samaj and the Theosophical Society, this emerging out of Colonel Olcott's (1832 - 1907) extensive correspondence with the President of the Bombay Branch of the former [4]. Whilst short-lived, this alliance is evidence of the importance of Hindu reformation in the thought of the Theosophical Founders; a perspective which would, in time, spur the activism of Annie Besant towards the accomplishment of a Hindu revival.

That period of the Indian Renaissance which was to follow, was undeniably due, to some significant extent, to the selfless and unabating toil on the part of Annie Besant for the liberation of the spirit of the Indian nation; to kindle in the darkness of the chasm of despondency a bright flame of hope and brotherhood to illuminate the way for troubled souls whose path were shrouded by the shadows of oppression.

Much of the academic study which has been published on the life and work of Annie Besant has tended to emphasise her political and activist endeavours; and whilst these are, no doubt, highly significant aspects of her spectacular and spirited life, equally worthy of acknowledgement are her great efforts towards the liberation of the spiritual essence of India in the re-

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vitalisation of Hindu culture and the development of education.

Such was the impact of her multifarious work that distinguished persons of vastly varied backgrounds and temperament were unanimous in their praise and admiration for her industrious travail, her prodigious commitment, her unparalleled oratorical potency, her generosity towards the underprivileged, and her fairness in dealing with associates and adversaries alike.

Annie Besant's life was a necessarily public one; indeed, she consider herself a humble servant and missionary of the Masters in the guiding of humanity along the evolutionary path. Her role was the carry out the outer work of the Inner Government of the World by the means of selfless service and in the practical promulgation of the ideals of Truth, Unity, Altruism, and Brotherhood. As she wrote at the close of her *Autobiography*:

"I am but the servant of the Great Brotherhood, and those on whose heads, but for a moment, the touch of the Master has rested in blessing, can never again look upon the world save through eyes made luminous with the radiance of the Eternal Peace" [5].

In many ways, her early years – prior to her involvement with the Theosophical Society – may be considered, from a historical standpoint, as a "training ground" for the work that was to follow. The rare qualities which would be necessarily endowed in the individual who was to follow in the noble footsteps of H. P. Blavatsky, were suitably imbued in Annie Besant from those days of her youth; both by the blessings of congenital inherence, further due to the endeavours and trials of earlier life. Thus, did she possess all those qualities of bodily vitality, a brightness and intensity of intellect, an unequalled power of oratorical ability, moral integrity and courage, and, more significant than all the aforementioned, a sensitive and indomitable solicitude for the weak, the needy, the destitute, the subjugated, the oppressed, and the suffering. For over a decade prior to her momentous meeting with H. P. Blavatsky in 1889, she had been preparing the way for the Theosophical work which would constitute the greater portion of her life; undergoing, as had been the case in Britain, the arduous training in public service (spurred, in significant part, by the ruin of her own private life), and in fearless defence for the rights of workers and woman alike.

After her move to India, she worked tirelessly for the religious, social, educational, and political reform which seemed to her and the vast population alike, to be imperative to the development of a new India, freed from the shackles of colonialisation. Central to her impact on the educational advancement and revitalisation of the Indian nation was the founding of the Banaras Hindu University [6]. This was initially intended to be a Theosophical college, however later took shape along the lines of Hindu spirituality, as an institution dedicated the ideals of unity, rationality, and harmony between differing sects and subdivisions then existent in the Hindu community.

In line with her support of Indian self-rule, Annie Besant advocated for placing Indian education in the hands of Indians, and sought to inject a spirit of patriotism into the developing educational outlook of the nation. In the establishment of a Hindu university, she hoped to reunite education with the essence of religion, and further to bring it into affinity with the emerging fields of Western science and technology. Like Ram Mohan Roy, Annie Besant advocated for social reforms in Indian culture and spoke highly of the advantages of Western education in the elevation of the Indian people. However, unlike the earlier reformer, she also supported the revival of traditional Hindu education, endorsing a full-rounded system of instruction which integrated the two spheres of thought. She emphasised that whilst Western education would be an enriching complement to traditional teachings, India must be cautious not to succumb to the pressuring grasp of Westernisation, and that the Hindu people must, rather, return to the glory and greatness of their own Oriental past and culture for inspiration and encouragement [7].

This conception of a Hindu university followed in the wake of the establishment of a number of such religious institutions, challenging the heretofore strictly Western and secular education offered by the existing universities of that period. Among these was were the various colleges and schools which had been established by the Arya Samaj in the late nineteenth century, and the traditional gurukuls - consisting of shishya, or students, in a residential setting with a guru residing nearby - which epitomised the Samaj's ideals of reformed Hindu culture [8]. There was also the Khalsa College in Amritsar, founded in 1892 by the leaders of the Singh Sabha movement, which would become a highly significant educational institution for adherents of Sikhism, and which aimed to revive Sikh religion by the means of formal religious instruction. The Muslim community was also actively attempting to establish a university, with a proposal to transition the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College into the Aligarh Muslim University. This proposal was, however, initially met with considerable opposition from the secular government at that time, which was not inclined towards acceptance of what they perceived to be faith-based and sectarian educational endeavours - whether Muslim or Hindu. The transformation would not be finalised until 1920, when the Aligarh Muslim University Act was enacted by the imperial legislation [9].

All these endeavours – Annie Besant's Central Hindu College, the Arya Samaj colleges and schools, the Sikh Khalsa College, and the Aligarh Muslim University – could be rightly considered to be a part of that same movement of the Indian people towards an education which represented their cultural and traditional ideals and heritage. Annie Besant's contribution to this educational movement corresponded with the general spirit of change and the rediscovery of identity which the nation was undergoing – spurred by the voices of the children of India, she channelled all the resources at her disposal towards the accomplishment of this high ideal.

At the time of her idea for the founding of a Hindu university, she was in contact with one Madan Mohan Malviya (1861 - 1946), an Indian educationalist and politician, renowned for his role in the Indian independence movement. [10] Both fostered the idea of establishing a specifically Hindu university, and Annie Besant had already previously established her Central Hindu College in Varanasi in the year 1898, with plans for its expansion. A shortage of funds towards this end led Besant to join hands with Malviya and Kameshwar Singh (1860 - 1929), the Maharaja of Darbhanga, who were jointly responsible for financing much of the endeavour. The latter two had originally formulated the idea of founding a university at a meeting in 1904, shortly after which a prospectus was published and circulated prominent educationalists and representatives from all corners of the Indian nation. They were met with overwhelming support for the scheme, gaining approval from the Congress of Hindu Religion under the presidentship of Jagadguru Sri Sankaracharya (?). This led to the final drafting of the prospectus, which was released to the public and press in 1906 to be met with instant approval and support.

It was around this time that Annie Besant was also laying the foundations for the potential establishment of a university in Varanasi under the proposed name of "The University of India." In April of 1911, she met with Malviya to discuss their visions for such an educational enterprise, and decided to join hands in the founding of a common Hindu University in Varanasi. This shared vision was brought into actuality later that year, with a revised prospectus outlining the need for the university and its objectives being issued to the general public.

A condition set forward by the government necessitated that the Central Hindu College be absorbed by the Hindu University; Annie Besant, Dr. Bhagavan Das (1869 – 1958), and the fellow Trustees of the former agreed to its incorporation as the nucleus of the latter, and thus in November of 1915, the Central Hindu College was relinquished to the Hindu University Society, who were responsible for the campaign for the university's establishment. Other Theosophists from around the world travelled to India to assist with this, among them George Arundale (1878 – 1945) and Francesca Arundale (1847 – 1924).

The seeds having been sown, the university was formally established in Varanasi in the year 1916. It is today the largest residential university in Asia, with over 35,000 students. The success of the endeavour, and its continuing and significant influence and impact on the educational development of the Indian nation, places the founding of the Banaras Hindu University among the forefront of Annie Besant's contributions to Indian society. Her role in its formation, too often overshadowed by the contributions of Madan Mohan Malviya [11] and the other founders, was a decidedly central and vital one, the idea for which emerged out of her passionate service towards the betterment and rejuvenation of India's education system. Indeed, in the perspective of Annie Besant, it is education which lays at the bedrock of a harmonious and just society; the lack of which logically results in conditions of injustice, poverty, oppression, and inequality.

Her fervent advocation of educational reform led her to publish several pamphlets on the subject; among these were Education as a national Duty (Banaras, 1903), The Education of Indian Girls (Banaras, 1903), Principles of Education (Madras, 1915), Education for the new Era (London, 1919), Theosophical Education Report (Madras, 1917), and the Kamala Lectures: Indian Ideals in Education & Philosophy, religion and Art (Calcutta, 1925) [12]. Further, she wrote a variety of books and pamphlets on the topics of sociology, physics, physiology, biology, and the status of women in society.

It is clear that Annie Besant's philosophy of education was rooted firmly in the principles of Theosophy [13]. Indeed, the ideals of unity and universal brotherhood run like a constant thread interwoven throughout the vast variety of her life's activities and work, permeating every aspect of the endeavours she brought into fruition, both during her time in India and elsewhere around the world. She envisioned an all-rounded education for Indian children, wherein the elements of literary, scientific, artistic, and technical branches of study would be taught. Her aim was to provide children with the skills they would need to earn an honest living, by which the conditions of poverty and destitution may be gradually assuaged.

She advocated the development of individual faculties; this being the idea that children should receive an individualised education best suited to his or her particular background, needs, and objectives. The ideal was that in receiving such an all-rounded, individualised education, the child would thus be equipped with the capacities necessary to becoming a healthy and useful citizen in his or her community [14]. As such, the objects of theosophical education as outlined by Annie Besant were to train the body, emotions, and the mind towards the expression and love of all that is beautiful, compassionate, just, and inspiring [15]. She emphasised the importance of developing the child's ability to sympathise with the happiness and suffering of others, and in so doing to foster a spirit of universal brotherhood and kinship with all of life. Further, she stressed the disciplining of the child's mind in the discernment of right thinking, right judgment, and right action [16].

As regards the ethics advocated by Annie Besant and instilled as ideals in the formation of the Banaras Hindu University, she promoted, among other things, the pledge of boys and girls to delay early marriage. It is possible, as suggested by historical researcher Gail Reekie, [17] that she was influenced in this regard by Thomas Robert Malthus (1766 – 1834), believing birth control methods within marriage to be the answer to the problem of over-population. However, it is likely that she discarded this perspective on birth control upon deepening her involvement in the Theosophical Society – birth control being against the philosophy set forward by Madame Blavatsky's Master K. H. [18].

In accordance with Annie Besant's ethical perspectives on early marriage, the Central Hindu College was not open to married pupils. She advocated the Hindu ideal of Brahmacharya, or celibacy, insisting that such was necessary to the intellectual, physical, and emotional growth of students in their adolescent years. Further, religion and social work were considered as joint pillars of a proper education, and thus were such organisations as the "Sons and Daughters of India" and the "Scouts and Guards of Honour" formed, with the intention of training youths for selfless and practical social service. [19]

It was her promotion of these ideals which culminated in the founding of the Banaras Hindu University, and further, in the formation of various theosophical and theosophically-inspired schools, among these the Vasanta College for Women in Rajghat (founded in 1913), the Besant Theosophical College in Andhra Pradesh (founded in 1915), the National High School in Basavanagudi (founded in 1917), the Annie Besant School in Allahabad (founded in 1926), and the Besant Memorial School in Chennai (founded in 1934). [20] In recognition of her efforts for the development of Indian education, the Banaras Hindu University granted her the Degree of Doctor of Letters in 1921 [21].

The educational philosophy set forth by Annie Besant was rooted in a balance of secular and spiritual instruction [22]. The Banaras Hindu University may be considered, in many ways, to be the epitome of her educational idealism. It represented all the principles and ideals of the Theosophical conception of education, and yet far from being a fringe or alternate institute of learning on the wayside of society, succeeded in establishing itself as one of the most prestigious and renowned of India's learning establishments.

Also significant to Annie Besant's contributions to Indian culture and modern national history was the establishment of the Indian Boy Scouts Association, based out of Madras, in 1916 [23]. This emerged out of the aforementioned emphasis set forth by Annie Besant on the necessity of an all-rounded education – on intellectual, emotional, and physical levels alike. Organised along the lines of the international Scout Law, these Indian troops also incorporated aspects of their cultural background into their national expression of the movement, wearing Indian turbans and singing Indian songs at their meetings and events.



The Indian Boys Scouts Association was preceded by various efforts towards the founding of a Scouting movement in India, the first of these emerging out of the Bishop Cotton Boy's School in Bangalore in 1909. Annie Besant's involvement began in 1913, when a group of educationalists and representatives opened Scouting to Indian natives; it had previously been open only to British and foreign Scouts. Assisting her in this endeavour was fellow Theosophist George Arundale, alongside Justice Vivian Bose (1891 – 1983), Madan Mohan Malaviya (1861 – 1946), Hridayanath Kunzru (1887 – 1978), and Girija Shankar Bajpai (1891 – 1954).

In 1916, Annie Besant sent a request to the founder of the international Boy Scouts movement, Lord Robert Baden-Powell (1857 – 1941), to formally recognise the Indian troops as a branch of the international movement. The request, however, was denied – on account of Baden-Powell deeming that Indians were unfit to be Scouts. This came as a surprise to Annie Besant, who was immediately up in arms, interpreting Baden-Powell's declination as an affront on Indian race and the assumption of racial superiority on the part of the British.

Lord Baden-Powell experienced a change in perspective upon his visit to India in 1921, when a perusal of Annie Besant's now 20,000 members and the incontestable success of the movement led him to recognise not only her Association, but further all the Scout organisations in the country, as part of the international Boy Scouts movement. As a result of her efforts, she was made the Honorary Scout Commissioner for India, and in 1932 Lord Baden-Powell conferred upon her the highest Scout distinction: the Badge of the Silver Wolf [24].

Her assiduous and dedicated work to the Indian cause resulted in her election to the presidency of the Indian National Congress in 1917. This was significant for a variety of reasons; among these for the fact of her being the first woman to ever assume such a position. B. Palammal writes:

"In 1917, seeing the services and sacrifices of Annie Besant, the congress elected her as the president of the 32nd session of the Indian National Congress at Calcutta. Being the first woman president of the Congress, She enhanced the prestige of Indian womanhood. Her presidential address was widely applauded as the charter of national liberty. But Annie Besant already had contacts with the congress in the year 1914 when she participated in the 29th congress held at Madras during 28 to 30 December.

She was the first lady to occupy a post on the platform of India's National Assembly. As the president of the Indian National Congress, she got an opportunity in planning out a system of national education in India. It was a graded scheme suiting each type of unit to be educated. Regional universities were established with research facilities in the indigenous knowledge of ancient literature, science, art and crafts, village education was to be developed country wide" [25].

Equally significant to arriving at an understanding of her character and work, was Annie Besant's influence from, and on, Hindu spirituality and religion; an influence which would permeate many aspects of her societal, cultural, educational, and political work both in India and elsewhere. It was, in many ways, this religious, philosophical, and intellectual aspect of her work which laid the foundations for such later initiatives as the Central Hindu College and Banaras Hindu University; these serving as the practical manifestations of her Hindu-inspired spiritual ideals.

Her work towards reform in the areas of Indian education, Hindu social customs and traditions, the place of Indian women in the new India, her ardent support of Indian selfrule and the Swadeshi movement, her attempts at alleviating the suffering of the depressed classes, and the development of the Scout Movement in India may all be considered as being rooted in a spiritual foundation. For Annie Besant, it was spirituality which formed the core of all altruistic service; this latter being the keynote of the theosophic life.

It is important, also, to remember that Annie Besant was largely responsible not only for the rekindling of Hindu spirituality within the continent of India, but further for influencing the awakening of interest in Hindu religion, thought, and culture in other corners of the world, at a time when the sons and daughters of India herself were becoming strangers to the essence of their own culture and thought. It was with the object of the reawakening of the Indian man and woman to the profundity and spiritual quintessence of their own theosophic teachings that she undertook the work of spurring the Indian Renaissance from an ideal into actualisation; only once this was achieved, in her mind, could India become the nucleus of a global shift in thought, in which materialism would give way to the revival of mysticism through the consolidation and uplifting of ancient Hindu ideals.

Her intensive study of Sanskrit and Hindu religious texts culminated in her translation of the *Bhagavad Gita* into simple, comprehensible English, [26], alongside which she also published a variety of short booklets of Aryan legends and tales for children with the objective of the instilling spiritual ideals and principles at an early age. Also published were a number of booklets and pamphlets for general English-speaking readers. It was largely these efforts of Annie Besant, alongside those of Swami Vivekananda, which served to introduce the multifarious gems of India's treasure chest of wisdom to the world of the West.

The influence of Annie Besant's role in the cultural and spiritual Renaissance of India is a continuing one; indeed, she was at the very forefront of the changing tides, the depths from which India would arise renewed and reborn, its people awakened to the dawning of a better day, illuminated by the radiant rays of hope. Her life was one of service and dedication to the ideal of Truth; she was, in every sense, a freethinker; a radical of her time; a world leader equipped with the steady sword of resolute sincerity and the infrangible shield of principle. To the afflicted sons and daughters of India, she was a beacon of light amid the howling winds of oppression, a devoted Steward of the Flame of Truth. Into the bosom of India did she cast her warming light, to impart the breath of life unto the lifeless, and to instil the seed of hope in the broken hearts of the hopeless. Now passed beyond these finite realms, still yet in the depths of the spirit of India may be felt the sublime presence of **Annie Besant – the Pearl of the Indian Renaissance.** 

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## On the Printing of *The Secret Doctrine*

Janet Kerschner, Archivist of the TSA shared with us this very interesting article, first published on *The Messenger* (November, 1926:125), by James Morgan Pryse, shedding light on the printing of the second edition of the *Secret Doctrine*.

#### THE MESSENGER

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## An Important Statement by Mr. J. M. Pryse

In justice to Mr. Mead and Mrs. Besant, whom I count as friends (even though, good-naturedly differing with them, I have a poor opinion of the Gnostics and do not look for the coming of any world-savior) I wish to state, from my personal knowledge, that the oft-repeated charges that they, or either of them, made unwarranted changes in the revised (third) edition of the S. D., tampered with the manuscript of the third volume, and suppressed the fourth volume, are wholly false, with no foundation whatever in fact.

When the T. S. split into irreconcilable factions I resigned from it. I am not a member of the Society, or of any other Society. For that reason, and also because the term Theosophy now connotes many doctrines and doings of which I disapprove, I do not call myself a Theosophist, and do not use the word Theosophy in my writings.

I follow as faithfully as I can the teachings of H. P. B., and am not concerned with the beliefs and activities, the bickerings and animosities, of the theosophical factions, to which, in fact, I have for many years paid very little attention. But among the many fantastic legends and foolish fables that have sprung up since the disruption of the T. S. is this malicious accusation brought against Mrs. Besant and Mr. Mead, which it would be wrong for me to ignore: for, as I was for four years in the London headquarters, had charge of the printing office, and printed the revised S. D., I naturally had every opportunity to know the facts; whereas this absurd accusation is the fabrication of semi-theosophists who hung on the fringe of the Society, and is being circulated by pseudo-theosophists who were never in any way connected with the original T. S., and who quite evidently have not absorbed its philosophy and ethical principles.

The first printing of the S. D. was divided into two "editions," which are therefore identical save for the words "second edition" on the title-page. The printing was done from the type, but stereotype matrices were made in case another should be called for. When that time came, however, we found that the matrices had been accidently destroyed; and I, for one, was decidedly pleased at their loss, since it made opportune a much needed revision of the text, which arduous labor was undertaken by Mr. Mead and Mrs. Besant. Joyfully I placed copies of the S. D. in the papercutter, trimmed off the edges, and had assistants paste the pages on large sheets of writing-paper, to afford wide margins for making corrections. As Mrs. Besant could spare but little time from her other theosophical activities, the work of revision was done mostly by Mr Mead, who was assisted by other members of the staff in verifying quotations and references.

Up to the time of her death H. P. B. regularly passed on to Mr. Mead the articles she wrote for her magazine, for him to correct and revise the manuscripts before sending them to the printer, and therefore he was certainly better qualified than any one else to do the same with her writings that had been published before she had benefited by his painstaking assistance.

In revising the first edition of the S. D. he did precisely the work which he had formerly done on those manuscripts — only that, and nothing more. For it was obvious to anyone familiar with the literary and mechanical details of bookpublishing that the manuscript of the S. D. had not been properly prepared for the printer, and that the proof-reading had been so carelessly done that even glaring grammatical errors, inadvertently made by the author, had been allowed to stand. No changes were made by Mr. Mead or by Mrs. Besant except such as should have been made in the original manuscript before upinting.

For his scholarly and conscientious work in making the revision Mr. Mead deserves the gratitude of all discriminating readers of the S. D., as does Mrs. Besant also for her share in the arduous task.

When I had finished printing vols. I. and II. Mrs. Besant placed the manuscript of vol. III. in my hands. After reading it, I gave it to my brother John to make a typewritten copy, which he did. It was in an unfinished state, and badly arranged. H. P. B. had rewritten some of the pages several times, with erasures and changes, but with nothing to indicate which copy was the final revision; Mrs. Besant had to decide that and best she might.

As it contained far less matter than either of the other volumes, Mrs. Besant told me that she would pad it out by adding the E. S. T. Instructions, since H. P. B. had told her she might do so. These Instructions, it will be noticed, cover the very ground of the proposed vol. IV., of which only a few pages were found, merely enough to mark where H. P. B. had discontinued writing. I am inclined to believe that she intended to incorporate these Instructions in vol. IV., and that she had this in mind when she wrote, too optimistically, that the last two volumes were "almost completed." A big pile of manuscript also was found after H. P. B.'s death, but it proved to be only the old manuscript of vols. I. and II., returned by the printer.

Living as I did for four years in the family group at the London headquarters over which Mrs. Besant presided, and knowing that both she and Mr. Mead, during all those years, were devoted followers of H. P. B., sincere, honorable, truthful and conscientious, I cannot leave uncontradicted the mendacious statements and insinuations that they, my old comrades, mutilated, corrupted, suppressed or made any dishonest use of the writings left by their teacher, H. P. B.

#### Yours fraternally,

James Morgan Pryse. •Reprinted from The Canadian Theosophist.

The Besant portrait reproductions may be had from the Theosophical Press for \$10.00 each.

## Dr Annie Besant A Luminous Star in India's History



by Arni Narendran



Arni Narendran has been associated with the Theosophical Society for over four decades. He was at residency at Adyar Headquarters of the Society while serving as the manager of the International Theosophical Youth centre. He is a Banker by profession and is currently engaged with the microfinance industry.

It was a chance conversation with my friend- Dr. Rajam Pillai , editor of the Gandhian journal – Gandhi Pravah, published by Mani Bhawan Gandhi Trust in Mumbai, that stimulated my interest in having a relook at Dr. Besant's

role in Indian History. Very much in sync with Dr.Rajam Natarajan Pillai as she discovered how underestimated and underplayed was her role in Indian history- I realized the sacred Truth in her statement. Over hot steaming coffee at 'Vanakkam' restaurant downtown, after days of browsing on Dr. Besant biography from borrowed Books at the Blavatsky Lodge library, which incidentally houses the Besant Hall- a sure stop for Heritage walkers in Sobo( an acronym for South Bombay) . How could History be so unkind to this larger than life woman, she fumed. A person who donned multiple Hats- Champion suffragist, Clairvoyant, President of the Theosophical Society. The visionary behind, setting up the Benaras Hindu University, a live wire acrivist and President of the Indian National congress, Founder of the Home Rule movement, author of innumerable Books on Theosophy and esoteric science. Dr.Rajam had earliar asked me to write a few articles for her journal from the Theosophical view point and one such article on Mahatma Gandhi caught her attention. It was a narrative on Gandhi and Theosophy where I had reiterated that Gandhi's turning point in his life was his association with the Theosophical Society, in London, Johannesburg and Mumbai. Gandhians were led to believe that Gandhi was not friendly to Theosophy and the Society and was at loggerheads with Dr. Besant during the days of civil rights movement. It was not politically correct, after all difference of opinion on a few issues does not belittle the larger goals both of them shared. Gandhi and Dr. Besant in their own way had brought in the spiritual and ethical content to politics and the Indian freedom movement. 'Ahimsa' was the weapon Gandhi used to fight the colonial rulers. Nathaniel Altman, a New York based Theosophist and author has vividly described the conceptof Ahimsa in his Book-' The non violent Revolution'- which was later adopted by Martin Luther and Nelson Mandela. One such point of difference was Dr. Besant had cautioned the Mahatma against extreme form of civil disobediance which as a clairvoyant she could see, would become a National bane of the native Indians, thereby breeding callous-

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ness against law and civic rules. On the other end of the scale, Gandhi was critical of Dr. Besant conniving at the opulent Maharjas who displayed their pomp in conclaves which Dr. Besant had convened while the rest of the country was reeling under draught and famine. Except a few points of divergence both the leaders were on the same page when it came to the larger picture of India's Freedom from colonial rule.

Dr. Besant was keen at equipping the Indians to take over the mantle of self governing the country, it was this in mind that she set up iconic institutions of learning. She was also aware that India was a laggard in the field of education in view of caste hangover, which deprived the marginalized and women of educational oppurtunities. This became the biggest game changer to Indian society . Dr. Besants contribution can be dichotomized in two phases of her life-one in England where she championed women empowerment and the other in India as a Theosophist and a catalyst for India's Freedom struggle. The New life of India movement which she spearheaded was designed for the moral rearmament of the Nation 's youth. Indian historians like Roy Chowdary, Neelkant Shastri and Anand Kentish Coomarsamy have in their own way missed out to portray the role played by this Gentle Giant who will remain a luminous star in the annals of Indian History. Theosophist for their part are aware of her gigantic role in diffusing esoteric Theosophy in line with the founders of the society- H P Blavatsky and Col. Olcott. Her contribution to the Theosophical society both in governance and being a repository of Divine wisdom is unmatched. Her role both in England and India in uplifting the National consciousness was in fact a far larger contribution by Dr. Annie Besant. In Madras, now Chennai the taxi driver knows the Headquarters of the Theosophical Society as - Adyar Banyan Tree and to the more educated echelons of the city the Theosophical Society is associated largely with Dr. Besant and for her role in India's Freedom movement .In the star spangled sky of India's History the stars of Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Nehru, Subhaschandra Bose shine for ever and to no less a sparkle- the luminous star of Dr. Annie Besant glitters in the horizon of India's gleaming History.

#### Sources:

Coward, H., 2003. Indian Critiques of Gandhi. Albany: State University of New York Press.

New India, Dec., 13 1923, Besant openly criticised mass satyagraha of MKG.



Anandibai Gopalrao Joshee: the First Woman from India to Obtain a Western Medical Degree

**Erica Georgiades** 



*Erica Georgiades* is a master's degree (Ancient Religions) student at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David. She holds a degree in Philosophy and Psychological Studies (Open), and is the editor of Fota Newsletter.

#### જીઉ

Anandibai Gopalrao Joshee (1865-1887), was an activist of the Indian National Movement, a feminist and the first Hindu woman to obtain a Western degree on Medicine. She was born in 1865 in Poonah, India and got married in 1874, when she was only nine years old (Dall 1888: xiii). Her husband, Gopalrao Vinayak Joshee (?), was an early member of the Theosophical Society in Bombay, India. Olcott mentioned him in the Old Diary Leaves (Olcott 1878-83: 114):

"...H.P.B., a European gentleman friend, and I dined, by invitation, in the Hindu fashion, at the house of Gopalrao Vinayak Joshi, F.T.S., the husband of poor Anandabhai, who went to America for her medical degree, took it with honors, and died soon after her return to India; leaving her self-sacrificing husband a blasted life and a broken heart. The incidents of the dinner – at which several Brahmins ate seated in line opposite us --- have been comically described by H.P.B. with her usual exaggeration, so I need not repeat them."

In 1870, Gopalrao Vinayak Joshee was invited to be the clerk at the Postal Departament of Bombay (Dall 1888: 26). It was around this time he met his wife to be. As per request of Anandibai 's father, Gopalrao taught her Sanskrit for some years. Eventually, Gopalrao was promoted to post-master and needed to move away to another neighbourhood. The little girl, at the time eight years old, apparently begged her father to leave with Gopalrao in order to continue her Sanskrit studies. In 1874, her family suggested Gopalrao to marry the little girl; he did accept the proposal and they got married in the same year (Dall 1888: 28). Their first and only child was born in 1878, but died after ten days (Dall 1888: 32). This tragic incident led Anandibai to consider the possibility to study medicine. Her husband was a supporter of women's education and suggested she resume her studies in Bombay (Dall 1888: 33).

Anandibai Joshee became a member of the Theosophical Society by joining the Ladies' Theosophical Society Lodge in Calcutta, formed in March 1883.

#### T H E L A D I E S 'T H E O S O P H I C A L S O C I E T Y

Sreemutti Swarna Kumari Dkvi Ghosa l,F.T.S., formally applies for a charter for the Ladies' Theosophical Society at Calcutta, as the requisite number of members required to make a Branch, has been made up by fresh accessions of ladies to the cause of Theosophy. Mrs. Ghosal is the daughter of the venerablo and venerated Babu Devendro Nath Tagore, now of Dhera Dun, the successor of Rajah Ram Moliuu Itoy,— and the wife of our esteemed brother. Babu J. N.Ghosal, who inaugurated the new Branch at Karwar, She is a brilliantly well-educated lady, of great intellectual powers, a well-known author, and accomplished in every way. The office of the Secretary of the "Ladies' Theosophical Society," of which Mrs. A. Gordon is President- an office with which she has been entrusted by her co-workers in the field of Theosophic labour— could have fallen on no better person.

The example of female education set by our brothers of Calcutta will, we trust, be followed more generally in India and our hope is strengthened when we consider how much Mrs. Ghosal has added to her accomplishments by means of the education allowed her by her friends and relatives.

Source: *Supplement to The Theosophist*, 1883, v. 04, p. 6 http://www.iapsop. com/archive/materials/theosophist/theosophist\_v4\_n43\_april\_1883.pdf

By the time she joined the Theosophical Society she was an ardent defender of women's education, a feminist and activist of the Indian National Movement. She was also pursuing her dream: to study medicine at the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania.

Both Olcott and HPB seemed to praise and support Anandibai, because they mentioned her a number of times in *The Theosophist*. For instance, one of her lectures was reproduced in a supplement of *The Theosophist*, 1883 v. 04. The introduction was probably written by HPB?

#### A Mahratta Lady's Address

Under this title now appears in nearly every Indian paper the welcome news of another Native lady, besides Pandita Rama Bai, to follow in the steps of that great Sanskrit scholar and orator. Mrs. Anandi Bai Joshi is a Mahratta lady who, like her prototype, and (we are told) near relation, Pandita Rama Bai, has risen so high in intellectual development above her country women as to appear publicly and deliver lectures for the benefit of her sex. Thus, she is very likely to become one of the earliest pioneers in one of the grandest and most needed reforms in India, that of female education, and the enfranchisement of woman; her present comparative slavery in the Zenana being a pure anomaly, something quite foreign to old Aryan usages and forcibly adopted with the conquest of India by the Mussulmans. Mrs. Anandi Bai, we are happy to add, is the wife of Mr. Joshi, one of the earliest Fellows of our Bombay Theosophical Society, and a long trusted friend and brother. We have known her personally and no one wishes her more success and fortune in her bold enterprise than her friends of the Theosophical Society. We reproduce her speech as found in the Indian Mirror:---

> An address was delivered by Mrs. Anandi Bai Joshi, a Mahratta lady, on Saturday last, the 24th instant, at 4:30 P.M. The meeting took place at the spacious hall of the Serapomre College, the Rev. Mr., Summers, the Officiating Principal of the College, in the chair. There was a large gathering present on the occasion.

> The lecturer divided the subject into six parts, and dwelt upon them one by one very elaborately and to the entire satisfaction of her audience. She said: — "I now address the ladies present here, who will be the better judges of importance of female medical assistance in India; the great deficiency of the present day in India is lady-doctors. I never consider this subject without being surprised that none of those Societies so laudably established in India for the promotion of arts, sciences, and female education, have ever thought of sending one of their female members into the most civilised parts of the

world to procure thorough medical knowledge in order to open a college for the instruction of females in medicine. The want of female doctors in India is visible to every naked eye and keenly felt in every guarter. Ladies, both European and Native, are naturally averse to expose themselves in cases of emergency to the treatment by doctors of the other sex. There are some English and American lady-doctors in India who, being foreigners and different in customs, manners, and language, have not all of them been of use to our women as they should be. As it is very possible that Hindu ladies who love their country and her people do not feel at home with the natives of other countries, we, Indian women, absolutely derive no benefit from foreign lady-doctors who become necessarily less useful than they are supposed to be. They, indeed, have the appearances of supplying the need, but appearances are delusive. This subject is frequently discussed, and needs no more remarks from me. In my humble opinion, there is a growing demand for Hindu lady-doctors in India, and I therefore volunteer.

Ladies and gentlemen, I do not say there are no means in India, but the difficulties that have presented themselves during my studies have been numerous indeed. There is one College at Madras and midwifery classes have been opened in all Presidencies, but the education imparted there is defective and not sufficient, as the male doctors who take up the classes are conservative, and to a certain degree jealous. I do not find fault with them, but that is the characteristic of the male sex."

She then said that it is very difficult for Hindu ladies to go to school, or work about at their will in India. For people generally come near them, stare at them, or officiously ask such questions as annoy them.

We are happy to say that since the above was in type Mrs. Anandi Bai has joined our "Ladies' Theosophical Society" in Calcutta.

Source: Supplement to The Theosophist, April 1883, pp.7-8.

In another issue of the *Supplement to The Theosophist,* there is a note about her departure to study in the United States.

"Mrs. Anandbay Joshi, F.T.S., the well-known Mahratta Brahmin lady, sailed vesterday by S.S. City of Calcutta for New York. She goes to America with the object of studying medicine. We hope that profiting by the grand privileges and facilities afforded to women in America, our brave sister may achieve there the greatest success. May she return from that ocean of Freedom an M.D., having meanwhile avoided its two most prominent sand-banks: --- The Women's Right Society and the Young Men's Christian Association both of which classes like the roaring lion in the desert seeking whom he may devour are ever on the watch to entice at their arrival the innocent and unsuspecting. Noticing her departure, our contemporary of Lahore, The Tribune, makes the following extreme just remarks upon our courageous young sister:

> Mrs. Anandabay Joshi, the well-known Mahratta lady, who was the other day lecturing at the Serampore College in Bengal, so eloquently in English, sailed on Friday before last, by one of the City Line Steamers for New York on her intended visit and stay there to study medicine. Besides being well-educated this Native lady is possessed of no ordinary amount of moral courage. She is not a Christian convert, as many of us may suppose, but a married Hindu lady whose husband is still living. But she goes alone beyond the seas on her mission, while her husband remains at home, being the only stay and support of his parents. Such courage is but very rare, considering that her mission is to remove a national want --- that of Hindu lady doctors---and the sacrifices are almost dreadful to think of. Not a whit less, or perhaps a more, than that of Pundita Rama Bai, her earnestness in such a patriotic cause should, it is to be hoped, commend itself strongly to the liberalism and conscientiousness of her fellow countrymen and society that she may not be declared an outcast by them on her return. Backward Punjab, alas, has not got one single member of her sex who is capable of even sympathizing with her object as, we believe, many of her own Presidency will! So, while

we sincerely wish her every success, we venture to think that some of her sister of her own Presidency, Mahratta and Parsee, who are far advanced in education and enlightenment than the most proficient better half of the young Bengal, admittedly foremost in the ranks of educated India, will follow suit --- and that, the sooner the better."

E.D. Note. — It is with a well warranted pride that we say here that this act of courage — which can hardly be appreciated by Western people unacquainted with the merciless caste system of Zenana rules of India — is very much due to the influence of Mrs. Joshi's husband, one of the most library minded and intellectual Brahmins we know of, as one of the best friends and members of our society. We are proud indeed at the thought, that the first Brahmin lady, who thus becomes practically the pioneer of the great national movement now stirring public opinion in favor of the education and certain legitimate right for the women of India, -is a Fellow of our society. We cannot recommend her too warmly to the sympathies and best fraternal feelings of all our American Theosophists, and hope and pray that they should render the poor and brave young exile every service and help her as much as it is within their power.

Supplement to The Theosophist, May, 1883, pp 6,7

http://www.iapsop.com/archive/materials/theosophist/theosophist\_v4\_n44\_may\_1883.pdf

Again, on another *Supplement to The Theosophist* there is the following note about her, probably written by HPB?:

The example of our Mahratta lady-member Ananda BaiJoshi, who left Calcutta the other day for America to study medicine, has been followed immediately by Pundita Romabai who, with a student from the Puna Female Normal School and one male attendant, left for England by the last mail. The Subodh Patrika, of Bombay, says :—" Though her intention to visit England was known, the departure has been rather sudden, and, it is feared, she is not sufficiently well equipped for the hazardous travel." And yet adds the Indian Mirror the Indian ladies are twitted with want of education and progress. Our ladies obtain the B. A. degree of the Calcutta University, and proceed to England to prosecute their studies. Still their European sisters look down upon them.

Source: http://www.iapsop.com/archive/materials/theosophist/ theosophist\_v4\_n45\_june\_1883.pdf

In the introduction to Anandibai Joshee's lecture HPB (?) wrote, with quite enthusiasm about the importance of her lectures for the benefit of women in India, as well as about the possibility of Anandibai to become one of the *earliest pioneers of the grandest and most needed reforms in India, that of female education.* These written words were quite prophetic, as indeed Anandibai became the first woman, from India, to obtain a medical degree from a Western university, opening the way for other women from India to do the same.

Also, in another *Supplement of The Theosophist* there is an entry about Joshee's arrival in USA:

Says the Indian Mirror —

Mrs. Anandirai Joshi, F, T. S., the Mahratta lady, arrived in America on the 4th June last. She writes to one of her friends as follows :—

On the 16th I left London for Liverpool, and sailed for America the following day at 3 P. m., by the S. S. City of Berlin. We reached Queen's Town on the 18th at about 10 A.m. We were to go further the same day, but the engine got into disorder.' We were, therefore, detained there for more than a week. We arrived in America on the 4th June 1883 at noon. Mrs. Carpenter having come on board the steamer to receive me... I saw all the letters waiting for me, and burst into tears. My heart was heavy, and my eyes swollen. I passed a few minutes in this state when I at once started. I blushed at the display of my own weakness at a time and place like this. I blamed myself; and said- " Is my courage so small that I should sit weeping ? No- never." . . . I got up, and took the letters, and stepped down where Mrs. Carpenter was sitting. It was now five o'clock. I was rather tired. My head was warm. The day very hot. Then I wrote my letters to you. Now visitors began to pour in. Now I was told "here comes Mrs. A. with her daughter;" "here comes Mrs. B," who is followed by the minister. So, in the space of a few hours, (lie visitors who called were many. It was past ten, and still they were coming. At last Mrs. Carpenter was obliged to shut the windows, so that no ono could see me in; and so I escaped visitors. It was a happy day. They called it a holiday. They said the sun was so bright that day that they never saw anything like it. I was seated in a rocking chair with flowers in my hands. Lady friends came, embraced, and kissed me, and gave me flowers. Since I left you I have had nothing but kindness. Every body is kind to me. We have hot weather, green grass, loving trees, pleasant breeze and flowers, cool wind, kind friends, and comfortable rooms. Helena is a sweet little girl, and Eighmie a clever, studious companion. I am so happy. Do not be discouraged. Remember the good old maxim "Let patience have her perfect work." I will write about my voyage as soon as I can. Anadi Bai Joshi - extract from a letter to a friend] (rprnt Indian Mirror) - anon. http://www.iapsop.com/archive/materials/theosophist/theosophist\_v4\_n47\_august\_1883.pdf

Anandibai Joshee graduated from the Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania (WMC) in 11th March, 1886. In 1st of June, 1886, she was appointed to the position of of *Physician-in-charge of the Female Wards of the Albert Edward Hospital, Kolhapur, India* (Dall 1888: I). Unfortunately her medical career was very short as she passed away in Poonah, India on 26th February, 1887 (Ibid).

She can be seen in this picture with Kei Okami, Japan (center); Islambooly, Damascus, Syria (right). Each one of them was the first woman to obtain a degree in Western medicine in their respective countries.

Regarding Anandibai and the Thesophical Society, Dall (1888:23) mentioned the following:

Anandabai was neither a spiritualist nor a theosophist; but from her earliest childhood she dwelt apart, believed in a spiritual world which was even nearer to her than the world she touched, and held herself always ready to listen to "occult" voices and accept "occult "experiences.

Dr Anandabai Joshee (India); Dr Kei Okami, Tokio, Japan, Dr Tabat M. Islambooly, Damascus, Syria, 10 October 1885. Photograph from the Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania (WMCP), found in the archives of Drexel University. Based on Dall's comment we could assume she wasn't a Theosophist, however, as previously mentioned she became a member of the Ladies' Theosophical Society of Calcutta in 1883.

The Ladies' Theosophical Society, originally called "Native Ladies Theosophical Society" was a movement within the Theosophical Society which started in, Indian in 1881. The first note about it is found in *The Theosophist*, vol. III, n. III, Bombay, December, 1881, p.1

Considering her interest in the occult, as well as on women's education, it may be possible she was indeed interested in Theosophy and most likely joined the Theosophical Society, not only because her husband was an active Theosophist but, because she may have considered the "Native Ladies Theosophical Society," as an organization which could help her interest on furthering the cause of women's education in India.

The rules for the formation of the Ladies TS were partially printed in *The Theosophist* vol. 3, January 1882, p. 108 in an article entitled: *Few Words to Ladies Desiring to Join the Ladies' Theosophical Society.* Based on the few articles and works I have read about her, it is not possible to know if she joined the TS because she saw it as a way to promote women's education in India, or because she was interested in Theosophy, or because her husband may have suggested her to do so. Either way she was a member of the TS and interested in the occcult.

In a letter to her husband, Gopalrao Vinayak Joshee, she mentioned the following:

"It is not at all my intention to distresss your dear heart or to cause a rift in our love by ranking up old memories....It is very difficult to decide whether your treatment of me was good or bad. If you ask me, I would answer that it was both. It seems to have been right in view of its ultimate goal; but, in all fairness, one is compelled to admit that it was wrong considering its possible effects on a child's mind. Hitting me with broken pieces of wood at the tender age of 10, flinging chairs and books at me and threatening to leave me when I was 12, and inflicting other strange punishments on me when I was 14 -- all these were too severe for the age, body, and mind at each respective stage..." (Joshee cited in Kosambi 1996: 3193).

This short excerpt shows a very kind woman, haunted by childhood memories of her husband mistreating and beating her up. This suggests he had a strong influence over her, perhaps control, and this makes even more difficult to know whether Anandibai was or not interested on the TS.

Furthermore, her husband was a close acquaintance of HPB and Olcott, in fact one of the earliest members of the Theosophical Society in India:

> Mr. Gopal Vinayek Joshi F. T. S, Post Master of Serampore, now on leave, paid us a visit a short time ago. He is the husband of Mrs. Anandibai Joshi, the Mahratta lady who recently went to America to study medicine, a fact referred to, with pleasure and satisfaction, in these columns. Mr. Joshi is one of our oldest members, having joined the Society within two or three months of the arrival of the Founders in India, and a loyal Theosophist. He now travels on leave in the Madras Presidency, having a great taste for seeing new sights and coming in contact with various sorts of people. On his way back to his station, we expect to have the pleasure of his company once more. Being one of the very few who have put the theoretical problem of female education into practice, Mr. Joshi deserves the respect of every true lover of India.

Gopal Vinayek Joshi - visited the Theosophical Head-



William Q. Judge

quaters – Anon ttp://www.iapsop.com/archive/materials/theosophist/theosophist\_v4\_n45\_june\_1883.pdf

William Q. Judge also knew her husband and wrote a long letter in his deffence to the Editor of the Religio-Philosophical Journal.

#### To the Editor of the Religio-Philosophical Journal:

Will you permit me to say a few words in regard to some correspondence I notice in your valuable paper? It is that regarding Bro. Gopal Vinayak Joshee, of Bombay, about whom Prof. Elliott Coues and Dr. Shufeldt appear not to agree. Having been present at the founding of the Theosophical Society, in 1875, as its Secretary, and ever since then a hard worker in its ranks, I presume to say a few words with your permission, upon my own views.

The remarks of Dr. Shufeldt and Prof. Coues' reply, in yours of February 20th, are likely to arouse misleading ideas. Dr. Shufeldt asked what good Mr. Joshee was doing us, and what knowledge he possessed; and Prof. Coues leaves the impression that, perhaps, Mr. Joshee is in some occult way connected with the official, or with the esoteric work of the Theosophical Society.

Bro. Joshee I know very well. All ridiculous impressions should at once cease about him. He is a Brahman and a patriotic Hindu. His wife has been studying medicine here, and he came over to this country, moved by his wife's presence and a desire to see this country. As for his being a traveling adept who performs wonders, or who reads thoughts, astral light or what not, it is all bosh, and he himself is the last man to make such claims. He is merely a mild Hindu who has no hesitation, now that he is here, in undermining the foundation of intrenched Christianity, just as the missionaries tried to do for his own religion in India.

But by Dr. Shufeldt and Prof. Coues a sort of mixture of Joshee with Theosophy has been made; and, indeed, I know several who just through such things as these letters, get the idea that Joshee is, perhaps, one of an advance guard of adepts -- a most ridiculous position to take. He is not. He has been heard by me and others to say that he knew nothing of the existence of Mahatmas, so much talked of in connection with the Theosophical Society. But in Prof. Coues' letter I find the most fruitful cause for misapprehension. He says he does not know what Theosophy is. There is a great difference between knowing what a thing is, and the actual knowledge of it. If Prof. Coues means the occult laws of nature, then, of course, we can understand him. But he ought, in that case, to say what he means, and leave no room for misunderstanding. Then, again, from the context it must follow that the Theosophy talked of, is that so widely known as promulgated in and by the Theosophical Society.

There cannot be much doubt on that head, for enough has been printed upon it. Theosophy, broadly stated, is Universal Brotherhood; and that more particularly analyzed -- yet still very broadly -- is the effort to convert our lower nature into higher nature, and thus to aid in the great process of evolution going on throughout the macrocosm. Prof. Coues says he wishes he knew what Theosophy is. This, coming from a man who is at the head of the Administrative Board of Theosophical work in this country, leads to false views in others, for they say, when the subject is broached: "Theosophy -- oh! that is something no one knows anything about, and its chief official in the United States says it will be many years before even he can discover it." Now, while the professor's letter is excellent and contains many hints of the mixed terminology now bandied about, consisting often of a misunderstanding of Sanskrit terms, such as chitta, ananda, manas, mixed up with soul, spirit, God, and like words, all undigested, but of which terms he, no doubt, has a good understanding, I only wish to direct myself to the misunderstandings referred to. Our work, our final goal, is clear. Many members feel daily that they get inspiration, help, knowledge from their discussions and meditations on the laws laid down. They admit that the complete knowledge of all of Theosophy is difficult to obtain, but material science stands just there, too, in respect to the visible universe. In Brooklyn and New York are private, inner groups of Theosophists who occupy themselves with constant inquiring and analysis into and of Theosophical teaching, meanwhile trying to practice its rules; but they are not engaged in raising shades nor in trying to get out of their bodies, nor in seeking for psychic development. That, they think, is likely to lead to error if pursued for itself. It comes in time, in its proper place, if each one strives to convert his lower nature into higher. These sorts of groups also exist in other cities, and from my correspondence coming from every part of this country, I know that some devoted Theosophists are able to say that they have gained more real knowledge and more mental stability from Theosophy than they ever did from anything else. They do not amuse themselves with either Masonry or the Lodge of Mizraim, well knowing that no 33 [degree] "Scot Rite Mason" -- I quote -- has anything for them, nor has the Lodge of Mizraim either. Both are mere wills o' the wisp: Vox et preterea nihil, sound and fury signifying nothing.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE.

New York.

[Religio-Philosophical Journal, May 1, 1886.]

http://www.theosophy-nw.org/theosnw/books/wqj-all/j-matters.htm

In his letter, Judge defends Gopalrao Vinayak Joshee of some criticism or commentary linking him to the inner work - esoteric circle - of the Theosophical Society. This demonstrates that the founders of the TS not only knew him, but also supported him when needed. Also the founders of the Theosophical Society supported ardently the efforts, and followed closely, Anandibai's journey into becoming the first woman from India to obtain a Western degree in medicine.

In depth research about Anandibai Gopalrao Joshee and her husband Gopalrao Vinayak Joshee is certainly needed, and perhaps will be able to bring into light new and unexpected information on the early history of the Theosophical Society in India.

Anandibai Gopalrao Joshee lived a short but great life, which opened new paths for other women in India of the 19th century to pursue education. Additionally, the founders of the Theosophical Society, from its very early period, supported causes such as the education of women in India and did not abstain from praising Anandibai and others for their pioneer steps toward a more freer life for the Hindu women. In this vein, it is quite evident that the founders of the Thesophical Society, supported feminist, causes prior to the arrival of Annie Besant, in India. In closing I recall Allan W. Watts words "It's better to have a short life that is full of what you like doing, than a long life spent in a miserable way." Hopefully, Anandibai lived a short but a life full of what she liked doing.

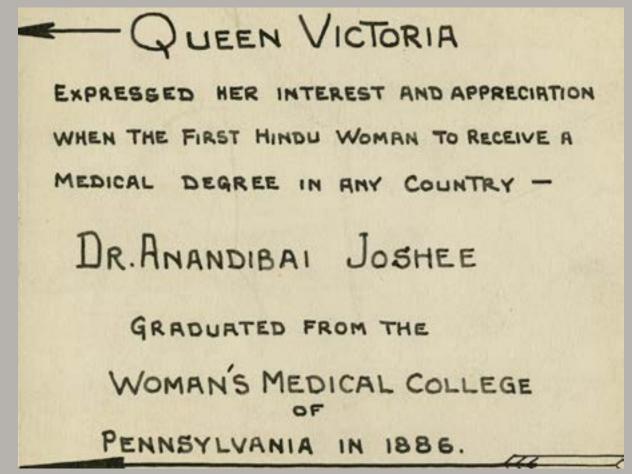
# Dall, H., C., 1888. *The Life of Dr Anandabai Joshee*, Boston: Roberts Brothers.

Kosambi, M., 1996. "Anandibai Joshee: Retrieving a Fragmented Feminist Image," in *Economic and Political Weekly*, 31(49), 3189-3197. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/4404856



A portrait photo of Dr. Anandibai Joshee, M.D., Class of 1886. Source: goo.gl/rM8ZAs





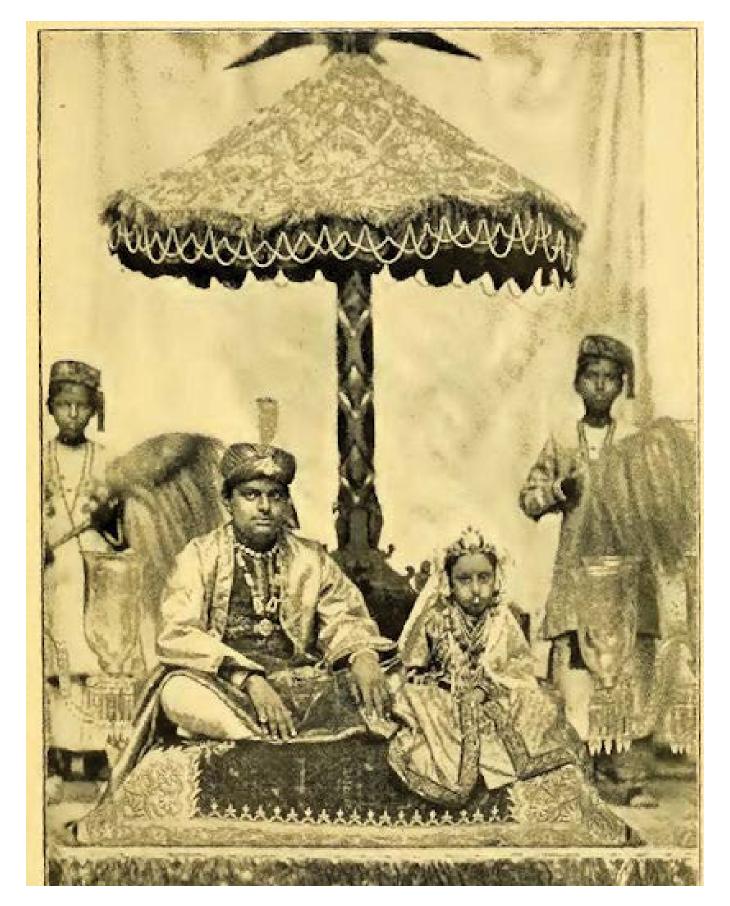
Source: South Asian American Digital Archives https://www.saada.org/item/20140716-3626

Thesis. Obstetrics. Among the Kingan Mindeed SUBMITTED TO THE PAGULTY -OR WHE-Homan's Hedical College of Hennsylvania FOR THE DECRES. -10-Dector of Medicine, Ananditai Joshu GLASS OF 1886\_

Source: https://goo.gl/wwzkGS

# Helena Petrovna Blavatsky on Hindu marriage and Sati

Erica Georgiades



Hindu Groom and his Bride Child. Image source: https://goo.gl/MLRqPz

Considering the fact that Anandibai Gopalrao Joshee got married when she was only nine years old, and her husband was not only an active member of the Theosophical Society in India, but was also praised by both Judge and Olcott, one may wonder what was the position of the early founders of the TS on children marriage. Here I will look into it by focusing on Helena Petrovna Blavatsky on children marriage and the Sati tradition.

In the *Modern Panarion* (1895: 245, 246) there is an letter written by HPB to Dewan Bahadur Ragunath Row (1831-1912), the "first President of the Madras (Chennai) Theosophical Society," addressing this matter.

MY DEAR SIR, --- I have not made a study of Hindu law, but I do know something of the principles of Hindu religions, or rather ethics, and of those of its glorious Founders. I regard the former as almost the embodiment of justice, and the latter as ideals of spiritual perfectibility. When then anyone points out to me in the existing canon any text, line or word that violates one's sense of perfect justice, I instinctively know it must be a later perversion of the original Smriti. In my judgment, the Hindus are now patiently enduring many outrageous wrongs that were cunningly introduced into the canon, as opportunity offered, by selfish and unscrupulous priests for their personal benefit, as occurred in the case of Suttee, the burning of windows. The marriage laws are another example. To marry a child, without her knowledge or consent to enter the married state, and then to doom her to the awful, because unnatural, fate of enforced celibacy if the boy-child to whom she was betrothed should die (and one half of the human race do die before coming age), is something actually brutal, devilish. It is the quintessence of injustice and cruelty, and I would sooner doubt the stars of heaven than believe that any of those star-bright human souls called Rishis had ever consented to such a base and idiotic cruelty. If a female has entered the marital relation, she should, in my opinion, remain a chaste widow if her husband should die. But if a betrothed boy-husband of a non-consenting and irresponsible child-wife should die, or if, upon coming to age, either of them should be averse from matrimony, and prefer to take up the religious life, to devote themselves to charitable occupations, to study, or for other good reasons wish to

remain celibate, then they ought to be allowed to do so. We personally know of several cases where the males or females are so bent upon becoming Chelas that they prefer death rather to enter or continue in ---- as the cases severally may be – the married state. My woman's instinct always told me that for such there was comfort and protection in the Hindu law of the Rishis, which was based upon their spiritual perceptions, hence upon the perfect law of harmony and justice which pervades all nature. And now, upon reading your excellent pamphlet, I perceive that my instincts had not deceived me. Wishing every possible success to your noble and highly philanthropic enterprise, believe me, dear sir, with respect,

Yours fraternally,

H.P. Blavatsky

Mylapore, June 3rd, 1882.

At the time HPB was living in India, the Child Marriage Restraint Act, approved in 1929, was inexistent. This Act established the age of marriage to fourteen years old for girls and 18 years old for boys (Gulati 1976). So, children of any age would marry at the will of their family. HPB considered child marriage without the child's knowledge and consent - something outrageous. This statement suggests that she would agree with child marriage, as long as the child would have the cognitive capability to know what marriage meant, and in this manner to be conscious of its duties and responsabilities.

One of the greatest proponent of children marriage restriction in India was the reformer Behramji Merwanji Malabari (1853-1912). He actually met both HPB and Olcott and described the former almost as a caticature. In the appendix of this brief article, I reproduce in toto his comments about her. The founders of the TS invited him to join the organisation, but he declined to become a member, or echoing his words "to become a chela." In lieu of one of the greatest reformists of children marriage and his acquaintance with the founders of the TS, I could not locate any source indicating he ever discussed this matter with HPB and Olcott. I also do not have access to the pamphlet written by Dewan Bahadur Ragunath Row, which HPB comments on. Nonetheless, HPB's position on this matter suggests she was against child marriage.

In addition to child marriage, HPB spoke out against

the Sati practice. This practice, seemingly dating back to the 1st century BCE (Eray 2011: 370), demands that widows could not remain alive without their husbands. So, they were either buried or burned alive in the pyre alongside their husband's corpses.

HPB also criticized the fate of widows who would not go through Sati, but could never re-marry again and were enforced to live in celibacy. She refers to such a practice as "the quintessence of injustice and cruelty." Nevertheless she supports the right to choose a life of celibacy. Celibacy, in HPB's teachings plays a crucial role into the notion of spiritual progress and enlightment, but there is no space to elaborate more on it here.

HPB may have lived only for a few years in India, but she certainly did not hesitate to express her opinion on serious social matters such as child marriage; Sati practice and enforced celibacy. Also, during the period she was the co-editor of the magazine *The Theosophist*, there are many entries supporting the liberation of women from the chains of cruelty imposed on them, during many centuries, by Smritis sustaining notions that women are merely subservient of men, with no right to education and freedom.

Anandibai Gopalrao Joshee, for instance, was one of the victims of a socio-cultural system in which unequal power relations led her to an early marriage in which she was abused by her husband during her childhood; went through a difficult pregnancy resulting on the loss of her baby when she was only 14 years old. As an independent and outspoken woman, HPB, most certainly may have been terrified by the limitations and cruelties imposed on women in India and perhaps also by the case of Anandibai Gopalrao Joshee, which she had the opportunity to meet.

Regarding Dewan Bahadur Ragunath Row, HPB says the following about him:

What do we Theosophists have to do with Brahmanism, except to combat its abuses, since The Theosophical Society was established in India nine years ago. Ragunath Rao, a Brahmana of the highest caste, who has presided for three years over The Theosophical Society of Madras, and who is at present Prime Minister (Dewan) of the Holkar, is the most fervent reformer in India. He is fighting, as so many other Theosophists, the law of widowhood, on the strength of texts from Manu and the Vedas. He has already freed several hundred young widows, destined to celibacy because of the loss of their husbands in their childhood, and he has made possible their remarriage in spite of the hue and cry of protest on the part of orthodox Brahmanas. He laughs at castes; and the one hundred odd Theosophical Branches in India help him in this all-out war against superstition and ecclesiastical cruelty (source: https://goo.gl/mMmi6C)

Based on HPB's comments, it is clear that the Theosophical Society in India, since its very early years, was an organization which did not turned its back to ongoing social cruelties. Yet, there are many questions which would be interesting to explore: what was written in the pamplhet HPB comments on? In which way her open criticism to Sati practices, enforced celibacy and children marriage was interpreted in India during her time? What was the influence of the early Theosophical Society on such matters? How HPB's writings were received in India, especially when she was openly criticising Brahmanism; the caste system and deemed the laws of Manu as one of the main source of cruelties and abuses of Brahmanism (Ibid)?

There have been a number of researches on the social impact of the TS in India after the arrival of Annie Besant; but what about its earlier years? A research on the early years of the TS in India and its social impact would probably demonstrate that much of Besant's social work stemmed not only from the fact she was a social activist in England, but also because the early founders set out "one hundred odd Theosophical Branches in India"(Ibid) to aid in the war against superstition and ecclesiastical cruelty.

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#### Appendix

#### **Fatuous Flap-Doodle**

The great vogue which theosophy and occultism obtained in India a few years ago, prompted him to write his own reminiscence of Madame Blavatsky, which I transcribe in full, as it shows how Malabari touched the sore point without causing pain, and also his tolerance, charity, and good humour.

"The first time I heard this mellifluous and classical expression 'Fatuous Flap-Doodle,' was from Madame Blavatsky's lips. 'H.P.B.,' high priestess of Occultism, author of 'Isis Unveiled,' and custodian of the combined wisdom of East and West, had recently installed herself in a by-lane of Girgaum Back Road, and had drawn to her many Hindu and a few Parsi Chelas. Among these were personal friends, who pressed me to join, opening out vistas of vast usefulness and a high status in society. But I pleaded inability to follow the drift of transcendentalism, though generally sympathizing with theosophy as a scheme of eclecticism. When Blavatsky and Olcott were attacked by some of our Orthodox Parsi Papers, I asked for tolerant and patient hearing. This made the founders of the Theosophic cult seek me, and thus we came to be friends. I read the literature they gave me, and enjoyed Olcott's droll Yankee humour, no less than 'H.P.B.'s' immense learning. They favoured me with quiet talks in the evening, and tried to capture me as a regular Chela. Failing therein, they attacked me in the only vulnerable point in my armour, my love of the little 'Spectator.' Madame especially lauded its paragraphs to the skies, and offered to contribute. I accepted the offer gratefully, but on condition that I was free to use her writings or not to use them. We thus became very chummy, though I never attendt e seances nor shared the privileges of the elect.

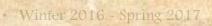
"Madame Blavatsky was a mighty personality, large of limb, loud of voice, reckless in manner, with profound, if somewhat ill-digested knowledge, and with a pair of eyes blazing like electric batteries. She was short-tempered, but I learnt to manage her like a child as we sat in her sanctum, she smoking and talking and scolding and swearing, and I listening and usually laughing. One afternoon she wanted to take me by storm and came out with a particularly learned yarn about the ancient cult of the Magi, the fire burning eternally at Baku, her personal first-hand experi-ence of the great ones in those regions and elsewhere. In her enthusiasm Madame talked and talked till I felt sore under the astral rides she gave me, scouring the heaven above and earth below

for the nuggets of the Zoroastrian wisdom, and promising me wondrous powers of illumination, if I could only accept divine guidance unquestioningly. She took me by turn at my weakest and my strongest, and lay back in her chair apparently exhausted by the strain of her own emotions. Was I captured? Alas, no. On the contrary, taking a malicious pleasure in mimicking her, I gave Madame a yarn about my own spiritualistic experiences, winding up with the exploits of a cock that had belonged to my great-grandfather. 'That cock,' I concluded in an awed whisper, 'used to pray in the Bactrian dialect, and it is believed that its feathery frame was inhabited by the soul of a Magian.' As I doled out the linguistic and magic virtues of that wonderful chanticleer, I thought I had made an impression on Madame. But she was contemplating murder all the while. Before I could realize her intention, she jumped out of her chair, and with the words 'Take this, you wretch,' she delivered a ringing box on my ear. Rubbing the injured orifice with one hand, I saluted the tigress with the other. 'Let me kiss the hand that had smitten the sceptic, now is Isis truly unveiled.'

We both laughed at that — the situation was ludicrous in the extreme. Had I not luckily laughed, Madame would have cried tears of shame, she was so sensitive in spite of her strength. As it was she never again talked to me of the occult and the invisible. Never more for me the wisdom of the East imparted in weird jaw-breaking words, the extolling of our ancestral virtues, the calling back to the glorious days when man communed visibly and tangibly with his Maker, through agencies which the vulgar West could hardly ever conceive. But the loss was nominal whilst the gain was real. In a moment of expansion, inevitable under the action, she was thrown off her guard

for the moment, and confessed to her contempt of the ' Fatuous Flap-doodle ' which Indians, as a rule, love to take in from foreigners. After this we understood each other thoroughly, and we did not meet often. I stood by ' to the last. Even when the cup and saucer crash came at Simla, shattering the faith of ever loyal Mr. Allen Hume, I tried to belittle the consequences. Madame should not be judged by the ordinary standards. A giant in intellect, she could be at times even worse than a child, presuming to treat mankind as a collection of imbeciles and babes. She was a creature of strange impulses, and her love of sensation drove her to the performance of a "miracle" which the catch-penny street juggler would be ashamed to practise. But all the same Madame Blavatsky was one of the most remarkable women of her age. It irks a generous mind to see the eagle hooted by an owlet. But that is the way of the world. With Olcott I was in greater sympathy; he knew how to efface him-self, how to laugh at himself. He felt intensely for the poor and the despised, and did his best to uplift them. And he never thrust his spiritualistic attentions on me, having seen that I was a bad subjec "But whether it comes from a Blavatsky or an Olcott, or anybody else, one must be careful not to succumb to 'Fatuous Flap-doodle.' When a foreigner tells an Indian that he loves India more than the loves his own country, it is ten to one case of softening of the brain, or worse still some moral obliquity. Our Indian ancestors were decent enough persons in their way, and acted decently enough according to their own dim light.

But it sickens one to hear perpetually of their glorious deeds, the more so when the foreign mentor talks in the same breath of his own forbears as naked savages destitute of all merit. That is 'Fatuous Flap-doodle,' and one must always be on guard against it. Personally I had rather my European friend slapped me in the face for my faults, which are many and serious, than that he should feed me on this cheap pabulum, conjuring up pictures of national greatness that offend violently my common sense. He may be sincere, but he does me great harm nevertheless. Patriotism, like other virtues, should be healthy, not morbid. As the Persian saying goes, a wise foe- man is more serviceable to one than a foolish friend. And no foolish friend does more harm than he who treats us habitually to 'Fatuous Flap-doodle' coddling our 'beautiful' social customs and our ' noble ' moral deeds, discerning wisdom in rank and patent folly, beauty in loathsome ugliness. It is not friendship, but fatuity that usually dictates this line of conduct towards one's fellow- beings. No race can claim a monopoly of wisdom and virtue, least of all a race that lives in the past, trides with the present, and throws away the future." (Jogendra 1914: 65-69).





Dara Eklund at 66 Studio City

# In Loving Memory of Dara Eklund (1933-2016)

Biographical sketch written by Janet Kerschner

Dara Eklund was born Beverly Ann Rittenhouse near Los Angeles California in 1933. As a teenager she changed her first name to Dara. After marrying her first husband she became known as Dara Eklund.

Raised in the United Lodge of Theosophists, Dara was active in the Point Loma Theosophical tradition, and also was a member of the Adyar TS in America. She worked first as a school teacher. Later, after attaining her Librarian degree from the University of California at Los Angeles, she worked for over 40 years as a public librarian for the city of Los Angeles. As a writer and editor Dara spent over sixty years applying her considerable talents in support of Theosophy. She worked with Theosophical University Press, Point Loma Publications, Theosophy Company, Blavatskyhouse, Wizards Bookshelf, and Theosophical Publishing House to facilitate many important publishing projects in any way she could help – researching, transcribing, proofreading, editing, indexing, and advising.

Boris de Zirkoff found her skills as a researcher to be of great assistance during his years of editing H. P. Blavatsky's *Collected Writings*. When she was only 23 he already regarded her as a friend and associate: "She is worth knowing; very quiet and very deep." At the end of his life, he entrusted her to complete his great work, so that she brought Volumes 13 and 14 into publication, along with the marvelous Index, Volume 15. In accordance with his wishes, she transferred his papers to the Theosophical Society in America in Wheaton, Illinois, where workers in the Archives have been continually grateful for the incisive notations that Dara wrote to illuminate the collection. She gave great thought to the needs of future researchers, and to how Mr. de Zirkoff's legacy might best be used.

Dara devoted years to another great labor – compiling and editing *Echoes of the Orient*, the articles, tracts, pamphlets, and lectures of Madame Blavatsky's friend and Theosophical Society co-founder, William Quan Judge. The literary output presented in these three volumes (plus index volume) provides a rich heritage about Theosophy and the early Theosophical Movement. Dara overcame considerable challenges in locating the old journals that first printed Mr. Judge's articles and lectures, and in identifying his works published under several pseudonyms.

Somehow, during all these years of devoted effort, Dara also found time to write at least 140 articles in 13 different Theosophical journals. She lectured and participated in numerous study groups, conferences, and symposia, including in 1984 "The Theosophical Movement: Networking for Unity," the Secret Doctrine Symposium in 1990, and the International Theosophical Conferences. She served on the editorial board for publication of the Blavatsky Letters. For many years Dara attended and then conducted a monthly study group in *The Secret Doctrine*, drawing serious students from all over southern California.

Her love for the Point Loma theosophical tradition of her mentor Boris de Zirkoff inspired her to host Winter Solstice gatherings at her home for many years.

After over a year of heart and lung afflictions, in 2016 she passed on quietly in her home.

# The Child: Eternal Messiah' by Montessori

The Theosophist; vol. LXI, no. 6 (March 1940), P. 495-502.



# We are grateful for Marja Artamaa, the International Secretary of the Theosophical Society, to have scanned this material and made it availeable to us.

This speech was delivered by Dr Montessori under the beautiful banyan tree at the International Headquarters of the Theosophical Society, Adyar, Madras (Chennai). It was a quiet hour of a December morning. The small but stately figure of the revered lady stood calmly and serenely before her audience, lisping in mellifluous Italian with an occasional, simple smile betraying the purity and childlike simplicity of her heart. The speech was translated into English by her adopted son. Despite the medium of a different language her saintly stream of thought found its way to the hearts of the listeners. It was divine music flowing from a beautiful image of self-effacement and utter dedication. The readers will feel as they read and contemplate on the exalting thoughts that they are reading her Italian with its Italian idiom rather than English.

#### $\infty \alpha$

I feel as I stand facing you that this is one of the greatest moments in my life.

For many decades of years the Child has helped, and revealed to me something which lay in the depths of its soul. And my work has been the work of a follower, a follower who has discovered something and followed that lead, followed that something which has been discovered in the soul of the Child.

But how much lack of comprehension, how much misunderstanding, have I not met in so many countries, because the people thought I was talking about a method of education, while I was speaking of a revelation given to me by the Soul. But here among you all I feel that there is a very deep and clear understanding, because the awakened spirit and soul is necessary in order to be able to enter into the spirit, the soul. That is why I say it was a great event in my life to have been called here and to have had the privilege to be able to teach a great group of citizens. It will be my greatest wish to be able to remain here among you and have your collaboration.

I say very frankly and honestly that I do not work for India but that I work with the Indians. I wish to work with the Indians, so that a great centre may be founded here which may have influence upon the rest of the world.

"India first!" (said Madame Montessori in English).

It would be difficult in a few minutes to illustrate the work of my life, and even if I did, I would not be developing the theme that I have given, because I said that I would speak of the Child Messiah. The Messiah is a teacher. Therefore, I will not talk about a method of educating children, but about something which has been revealed by children, which has come forth from the Child's Soul. In order to give a clear idea of what I think, I shall make a short reflection.

#### Inspiration from Nature

When we are in the midst of nature, when we are on the seashore under the moonlight, or among the trees in the forest, or among the flowers in the garden, we feel deeply inspired. We feel that it is beautiful to isolate ourselves in the midst of nature away from humanity, in order to meditate. On the contrary, a big city in all its movement seems so opposed to the idea of inspiration and meditation.

We might ask ourselves why that is so. Why is it that men who are like us human beings endowed with intelligence do not inspire us, while the trees, the birds, and the waters of the ocean do? Perhaps it is because we feel that men are selfish, they are violent, they are evil, they kill one another, and they do not know how to cleanse their souls of this selfishness or egoism. And yet---in one part of the world there is an earthquake which has killed thousands of people. In Italy there is a volcano which is pouring out lave and forcing five or six thousands of her inhabitants out of their homes. It I look into the ocean, I find it is full of fishes who eat one another, and in the forest animals fight among each other to such an extent that biologists say that evolution is founded upon struggle. And when I go into the forest, am I not likely to tread upon a snake which has elaborated in its fangs a substance which serves to kill? It is not because nature is good and humanity is bad that we have sentiments.

# Why not from Man

We might say that we have two different sentiments in our heart: one that we feel when we are in the midst of nature, and the other when we are in the midst of our fellows, or brother men. We feel nature, we feel something when we are in it, something which answers to a need of our souls and forms part of the harmony of that feeling. Let us say that we feel the Divine Sentiment when we are in the midst of nature, but we do not feel it when we are in the midst of humanity.

We have God presented to us as Love, because human beings had so great a need for that Love. They have even given us some technical rules in order to experience, to feel that love. They have said: "Renounce material possessions, renounce selfishness in order to feel Love. Give your life for others. Work and work hard only for others."

But every morning I see near to my home the fishermen leaving their villages very early in the morning and struggling to push a little boat --- a few pieces of wood tied together with rope---into water. Every morning even when the weather is dangerous and stormy, and there is the possible peril of slipping into the ocean and being devoured by the ever-present sharks, still they go out in their flimsy boats. Why do they go into the sea? Do they go into the ocean to catch the fish in order to eat it themselves? No. as soon as they arrive with their catch, their wives are ready and they fill their baskets and take the fish out to feed somebody else. And they do that every day and for the whole of their lives, they work do hard and yet live in utter poverty. Are they perhaps those people who are sacrificing themselves, their whole life, in order to give everything that they catch to others?

But perhaps some will say: "They kill all those poor fishes." But them why is it, when we look at the birds with such admiring eyes and feel such a wonderful inspiration from their beauty, why do we not say of those birds that "they kill all those insects."? Then I think of the miners who spend their lives in the depths of the earth, literally buried alive to the constant danger of their lives. And they dig out coal which serves to warm people who are far away from them and whom they do not even know. Or they give this substance to feed great machines that function far away from them and that they will never see. Are they not also people who sacrifice their lives for others?

And then I think of she shepherds in our country who lead a solitary life on top of the mountains never seeing another human being for a moment's distraction, and who dedicate their lives to sheep who will be the producers of that wool that will keep warm so many women and children in countries where the cold is great; do these shepherds not sacrifice themselves, their whole lives, for the good of others?

If one looks upon all the other activities, one may observe the same thing. What can we say about those hundreds of millions of people who pass their lives bent upon the land, working hard, so that this land may produce fruits which are more substantial as nourishment to the citizens of the world? Do they not sacrifice their lives for others?

# Are not all these Serving?

So I think and feel and teach to all the children of schools that we must feek grateful to humanity, this humanity which obeys, unconsciously it is true, but nevertheless obeys a voice which had told them: "You are born to serve and sacrifice your lives to work for others."

You may say, perhaps, but these men are serving because they consciously work to make money and to live by this money. If I look upon the trees and upon all the countless growing things of earth, I may have two lines of thought:

I may think that these green leaves, this green vegetation, have an enormous task in the life of the world that they purify the air of its poisons, and they pour into it the life giving oxygen. Or I may have another trend of thought: The tree is a poisonous and vampire thing which takes and takes from the air, from the earth, only that it may itself grow greater and larger. It throws off oxygen only as an unwanted substance. Its whole like is an apotheosis of selfishness which attempts to suck from other life it needs. The tree is the same, but we are looking at the tree from two entirely different points of view. One view from the divine, or rather within the divine, point of view, the other from the point of view or our reasons.

We may ask ourselves why do we admire the trees in their great task which brings welfare to all living beings, and why do we not admire humanity in its great work and task which also brings welfare to all the rest of humanity? Why do we feel this gratitude when we are midst of nature, and why, instead, when we are among human beings do we become as severe judges and look upon everything that they do with suspicion and condemnation? No matter what we thing, does not nature remain always the same? But since there are the two points of views when we look at the trees, is it not also possible that our point of view in looking at humanity may change? If the orientation of the human soul were changed, then one might begin to feel how much goodness there is in humanity and how much sacrifice for others there is among the humans, a goodness so great that it is immeasurable, as great as the ocean is great, and one may feel moved by this goodness and feel such a great emotion and gratitude as almost to swell one's hear to its bursting point.

#### A Change of Heart Needed

Why is it that we suffer when we are among human beings, and we try to send them away from us when we are in need of an inspiration? There is something mysterious about this. There is something lingering attachment to some lower part of our soul. There is, we might say, the lack of a certain sentiment in us. Man looks within himself and he does not look outside.

Perhaps these Messiahs, these Prophets, will help us to detach ourselves from the lower in our own nature so that we may look outside upon this eminent goodness that is widespread amongst humanity. But how difficult this Messianic task is. It is necessary to change the heart. And this change of heart, how difficult it is for us to accomplish. It is difficult to detach man, the human being, from his possessions, to detach humanity from its selfishness and to give it the eyes to see the good which is ever present in others.

#### The Child stirs us up.

And here I come to the topic of my talk this morn-

ing. We have amongst us human beings who have the immense power of changing the hearts of man. These are children. When the child is born, what do the mother and father feel? First of all, they feel that everything they possess is no longer of interest to them, they want to give it to this new being who has come to them. They feel that their interest from now on is to make this new being happy. They feel so full of love, love for this new being. What is this but a change of heart from selfishness to love?

But not only is there this effect. The heart which has been touched in this fashion begins to feel its contact with other human beings in a more alive manner. I have in front of my eyes a picture which I have recently seen---a mother and father and small brother looking upon a cradle wherein a newborn sister is lying. The little being acts as a magnet, a point of attraction. What is it that attracts? Surely it is not beauty, because a newborn baby is not beautiful. It is not intelligence, because there is no intelligence. It is something like a nebula which is around each one, a nebula full of light, full of brilliant light wherein each one feels uplifted to a higher level. Love has entered the heart, a love which is pure, which has no self-interest, whose only aim is for the good of the other. It is something like what we feel in nature. We feel happy, full of peace. Why? I do not know. But here there is something stronger than one feels among the flowers or the trees, here there is something much more powerful, it is the sentiment of love which works among human beings. It is a Divine Comfort.

And I have in front of my eyes another picture, a picture of a small child, a few weeks old, who looks at his mother. What a mysterious things it is. That look is not merely a look, it is as a voice that calls something within the mother, something which must appeal to the higher levels within her. The mother is as in an ecstasy, serious, in an act of meditation. It is not a mere joy, a smile, it is a deep act of meditation. She feels that greatness which the eyes of her child are calling forth from her soul. And all fell this around the child.

#### A Potentiality to be developed.

But why is it then that this supernal thing is lost? Why it that it is not is made use of? Why do not human beings think that something has happened, the orientation of the hearts which is changed? Can we not continue it, why do we lose it? Something has been accomplished, something similar to the work done by the peasant when he breaks up the earth by ploughing it. Something similar has been accomplished in the human soul. It is true of all human characteristics that what man receives is not given as a gift, but as a potentiality. If man wishes to develop his gift, he must do it through affinity, through self-exercise. All is possible in the evolution of man. But is necessary that man possess the beginning, the nucleus. Why do we not make use of that physical fact which is near every man that forms part of humanity?

If I were to express what is the substance of what is called my method of education, I should say this: It is to treasure that which the child brings to us adults, and to keep the Divine Contact that exists between the soul of the child and the soul of the Lord, to keep it for ever.

# **Dedication, My Method of Education**

So here is this child that comes to school with a burning flame within him, and we observe the older child who is three, even those who are five, ten, fifteen, they all contain this flame. Only we adults who do not recognize it put it our step by step inexorably, because we start from a point of view which makes us conscious of our pride and our authority. If we, as teachers, could be filled with the light of that Divine Contact, that contact of the soul with that which is divine, then we no longer would have any service whether to the child or to ourselves but only to keep alight this Flame.

And we find that the technique is always the same. We must forget our pride, we must become humble, and serve the soul of the child. Then, in the manifestation of this freedom, the child will show us that he has powers that are much greater than we could have supposed. What a joyous surprise when we come to the practice of this viewpoint! It all becomes easy. By themselves the children solve all the problems that educationists have put themselves. The teacher becomes new, he lives in contemplation of this marvelous picture, and the adult of necessity must undergo a transformation.

But we must understand certain realities about this spirit of man that is undergoing a development, of its laws and of its needs, and it is a whole world that we are able to explore. To keep this contact means on our part a great work, a great task, because it means to prepare everything for the service of this new soul, and the development in us of a great sensitivity.

## The Little Messiahs

That is what I mean when I said that we may consider the child as a Messiah, inasmuch as it changes the hearts of human beings and keeps during its youth the Divine Contact. If you say: "This is not the Messiah, because the Messiah gives the great ideals," I will answer, that is why I have called the child the "piccolo Messia," the small Messiah. That small being, who is near to every man in the world, has his task of the preparation of the soul of man for the greater spiritual influx. The child makes the man feel what love is, what it means to be detached from possessions, what it means to be in an atmosphere of understanding. It is a universal preparation. The Great Messiah prepares us with seeds sown among humanity. You will remember what is said about those seeds in the Christian Gospel:

Behold, a sower went forth to sow. And when he sowed, some (seeds) fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured them up: some fell upon stony places where they had not much earth: and forthwith they spring up, because they had no deepness of earth: And then the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: But others fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some of hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. Who hath heart to hear, let him hear.

The Child is the Peasant Messiah who stirs the soil of the soul of man, so that it becomes ready to receive the Divine Seeds which may be sown in it. The Child is the Tiller of the Seeds of the Spirit.

It is necessary to have near us one who lives of us as we live of him. If our lives can be so transformed that we may feel the Divine Contact, are we not today especially in need of working the spiritual field of mankind, do we not need today this love and this understanding of the human soul? Is there not here a Supreme Treasure of which we still stand in need? We need to go forth rapidly to till, to work the spiritual field which is the field of the human soul. Let us look upon the child as our collaborator. He has one part of the task, we another. His task is to furnish us with the first detachment, the first light of pure love. Human society cannot be changed unless both adult and child collaborate.

It is necessary to take this treasure and to cultivate it. To cultivate it is not easy, and that is the task of education. But in true education, in real education, not only is there the child who is educated but also the adult undergoes a transmutation.

May I finish by quoting a poet, who shows us this sentiment, this ancient truth:

The Child is the Eternal Messiah

Who is sent continually among fallen men.

In order to help to uplift themselves,

Their Nation, the World, and the Heaves.

#### 80CS

#### Mme. Montessori on Educational Weakness

Mme. Montessori in an interview with the United Press of India indicts the fatal weaknesses in modern education:

In many countries the small child at its most formative age is neglected.

The laws of physic growth are ignored, even when training is given in hygiene.

Education is compartmentalized into elementary, high school and university courses, the professors and teachers in each of which consider themselves as a separate caste. AS a result the school system is divided into three very definite "kingdoms," each hostile, despised, impenetrable to the other.

Education prepares the individual for an egotistical regard for his own personal welfare, rather than service for the sake of humanity, for the school itself begins with competitions and examinations which make these future men ambitious and envious even of their own best friends.

# 8003



Banyan Tree, Adyar Theosophical Society, Chennai, India.

# Cabinet of Curiosities

by Leslie Price



8003

Compilation of Leslie Price's posts on the Facebook pages of FOTA and the Theosophical in London.

# POSTS ON THE FACEBOOK PAGE OF FOTA

## Lost Archives (11) 13 June 2016

One of the founders of the Theosophical Society in New York in 1875 was "J. Hyslop". Was this the young James Hyslop who later became leader of the American Society



for Psychical Research? The archive of the ASPR might contain the answer.

Richard Hodgson, who investigated Theosophical phenomena in India for the SPR, was later secretary of the ASPR. While living in the States, did he have contact with any Theosophists? Again, the ASPR archive in New York might tell us.

(James Hervey Hyslop 1854–1920)

The ASPR, however, is a problem in psychical research which is seldom publicly discussed. Some years ago it ceased to be active in psychical research, and funds were diverted from actual research.

#### EOCS

## Lost Archives (12) 20 June 2016

Dion Fortune (1890-1946) was a leading female magician. In the 1920s, she was active in the Theosophical Society in England, in the turbulent years when the coming of the World Teacher was believed to be imminent. Alan Richardson has written a moving biography of her called " Priestess", Gareth Knight has expanded this portrait with much material from the archives of the body she founded, the Inner Light, and Geraldine Beskin is to reveal at the Theosophical History conference (September 17-18) at the London T.S. some new discoveries about her early life.



But there's some material we will never have, including some letters she wrote, because after she died, it was burnt. Of course deciding what to do with the papers of a magician is not always straightforward, but supposing it was just a matter of some aspect of her work not appealing to her successors?

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# Letchworth Lodge 26 July 2016

One can learn a lot from old Lodge programmes. Take for example this card from the Luton Lodge in England.

The Lodge secretary was young Wallace Slater, later a leader of the Theosophical Research Centre, and later still a Corresponding Secretary of the ES. Note also the appearance of Theodore Besterman, who soon moved from being an admirer of Annie Besant to SPR researcher and then became an expert on the works of Voltaire.

This card was actually preserved by Letchworth Lodge. At that time Lodges in the area exchanged cards, and this Luton programme was put in a box at Letchworth to be found nearly a century later. Is someone saving your Lodge programmes. I hope so!

#### EOCS

# General Doubleday is a neglected figure 27 July 2016

Documents are important in archives and in history, and when they are assembled, they can help give a truer picture. An article in the quarterly journal "Theosophical History" for April 1991 by Henk Spierenburg and Daniel van Egmond set out "The Succession of H.P. Blavatsky: a documentary history" and recalled some points we might have forgotten.

When the TS was formed in New York in 1875, the Recording Secretary was John Storer Cobb, an Englishman, but in July 1878 W.Q. Judge (previously Counsel to the Society) became Recording Secretary. The departure for to India led to Olcott appointing General Doubleday "president ad interim" and David A. Curtis "corresponding secretary ad interim." So HPB, nominally at least, ceased to be corresponding secretary, but in May 1879, she signed a letter to "The Madras Times" as corresponding secretary, so the interim was brief!

General Doubleday is a neglected figure. http://www. theosociety.org/pas.../sunrise/40-90-1/th-tsgom.htm

The same documentary list shows some uncertainty in how to define Olcott's role in the Esoteric Section created in 1888, and HPB in July 1889 changing its name to the Arcane Section, because, she said, " the term "Esoteric" and "Esotericism having been so desecrated".

The authors of this paper pulled together their material from a variety of sources, such as HPB's "Collected Writings", Olcott's " Old Diary Leaves" and Josephine Ransom's " Short History of the T.S.". There is a need for a full edition of early organisational material about the T. S.



# Exhibition: Encounters with the Spirit World 14th ~ 20th August 2016 11 August 2016

This Sunday an exhibition opens for one week at the College of Psychic Studies in London, which includes a number of archives of Theosophical interest.

https://www.collegeofpsychicstudies.co.uk/events/view/ id/554

Notable are two unique postcard photos Madame Blavatsky sent to her friend Stainton Moses in London from New York, which she signed with nicknames.

#### 80CB

Crippen, Layton W. (1872-1916) 24 August 2016

Work is underway to digitise the membership records of

58

the Theosophical Society in England. Noting the name of Crippen, who applied on 15 July 1891- I wondered if this could this be the notorious murderer Dr Crippen? Happily it was another Crippen, Layton Crippen a journalist, who later called attention to racial discrimination in Canada.

#### http://komagatamarujourney.ca/node/4402

In 1891, his address was c/o the Croydon Guardian office, and his sponsors were Sidney Coryn and Frances Coryn. Crippen joined the Croydon Lodge, but there is a note that in April 1893, he had gone to America.

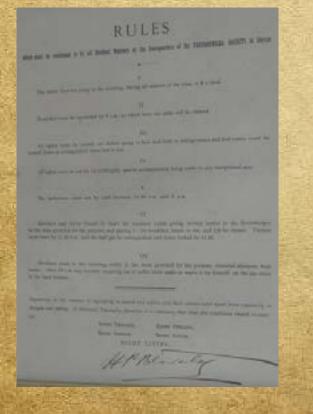
#### 80CB

## Sharing a House with HPB 13 September 2016

What would it have been like to be a Theosophical student and share a house with Madame Blavatsky? At the Theosophical History conference this weekend at 50 Gloucester Place in London, the exacting rules for Avenue Road, London, signed by HPB herself, will be included in an archival display.

We hope to publish the rules in full in a later issue of FOTA Newsletter, but here is rule One.

"The latest time for rising in the morning, during all seasons of the year, is 8 o'clock."



#### 80CB

# The Mahatma Letters

#### 14 September 2016

The Mahatma Letters, preserved in the British Library, have some claim to be the most important Theosophical records. It is well known that in 1986, Dr Vernon Harrison, a senior SPR member and forgery expert, published his analysis of over 1000 images of the letters, and concluded that there were 3 main hands - those of M., K.H. and Madame Blavatsky, and no trace of HPB pretending to be the other two.

But what would analysis by the latest computer programs indicate?

Boyko Zlatev is coming from Canada to the Theosophical History conference this weekend at 50 Gloucester Place, London, to present the results of latent semantic analysis of the Mahatma Letters.

This is not the first visit from his family. His Bulgarian grandfather, who had been active in the T.S. there, first visited around 1948.

#### BOCS

# Hard to Believe

#### 21 September 2016

It's hard believe that despite this epoch- making book, there are still secret archives about the Judge case which are not accessible after over a century. *Troubled Emissaries. How H.P. Blavatsky's Successors Transformed the Theosophical Society from 1891 to 1896.* https://www.amazon.com/Emissaries-Blavatskys-Successors-Transformed-Theosophical/dp/0692703691

#### EOCS

#### Boyko Zlatev 29 September 2016

When he was at the Theosophical History conference in London recently, Boyko Zlatev brought with him from Canada several books in Bulgarian. This translation of "Thought Forms" by Annie Besant and C.W. Leadbeater was made by his mother.

Boyko also brought an old Bulgarian edition of W.J.

Colville's "The Human Aura". This reminds us that there is an extensive literature in East European languages on esoteric subjects, whose history deserves to be explored.

Colville himself, who wrote several books with Theosophy in the title, was rather a mystery, but Marc Demarest has been pursuing him in his blog "Chasing Down Emma," Emma being Emma Hardinge Britten, a founder member of the T.S. http://ehbritten.blogspot.gr/2013/02/ stories-within-stories-childhoods-of-w.html



BOCS

# Theosophical Appropriations

#### 30 September 2016

Scholarly books are often expensive, but perhaps the best value recent symposium is the conference proceedings "Theosophical Appropriations" just published in English in Israel, and available direct from the publisher.

One of the editors, Boaz Huss introduced the book at the recent Theosophical conference in London .

Several papers extend our understanding of the role of Kabbalah in the early Theosophical Society, using rare archival material.

Perhaps the most controversial paper in the book is by Pat Deveney. In "The Two Theosophical Societies" he takes further the recent research suggesting a discontinuity between the early teaching of the founders (1875-1878) and the doctrines expounded after arrival in India in 1879. You can watch him presenting this on youtube, but you really need the published version to follow up the archival references.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6BKVCI882gQ

#### 8003

# Ralston Skinner 3 October 2016

You may not have thought much about Ralston Skinner, but a good place to start is Theosophy Wiki.

http://theosophy.wiki/w-en/index.php...

Skinner and his work "The Source of Measures" are mentioned in Madame Blavatsky's "The Secret Doctrine" more often than any other author except Plato. And in the latest issue of "Theosophical History" (double issue vol. XVIII issue 1-2 January-April 2016) there is the text of a very long 1887 letter of HPB to Skinner. The editing of this takes over 100 pages by James Santucci, Jerry Hejka-Ekins and Jeff Lavoie. It is a remarkable feat of scholarship, though the team admit that there is more to be clarified.

"The Source of Measures" was reprinted in the "Secret Doctrine Reference Series" in 1982, by Richard Robb, an unsung hero of Theosophical research. But could it be that earlier students have generally neglected Skinner, who was clearly in tune with HPB on certain esoteric matters?

#### 80CB

# Letters to the Sage

#### 7 October 2016

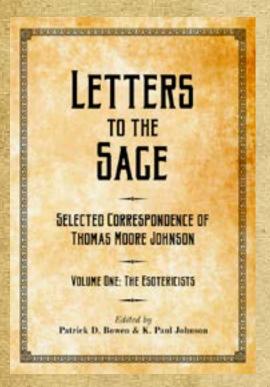
It is well known that even before two of the founders left for India in 1878, the Theosophical Society founded in New York in 1875 had become torpid. Yet in the next decade, it revived dramatically. Was this because of the mature labours of NY leader William Q. Judge? Or the impact of new teaching received from the Mahatmas in India?

How about the emergence of a new centre of esoteric work in Mid-West USA? The appearance this year of the first volume of "Letters to the Sage", that is Thomas Moore Johnson, editor of "The Platonist" in Missouri, has revealed a lively esoteric scene in the region. Edited by Patrick D. Bowen and K. Paul Johnson, the archive of incoming letters reveals the T.S. competing among other occult options, especially the Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor.

http://ehbritten.blogspot.co.uk/.../new-typhon-pressrelease-...

OfspecialinterestisthatJohnson'scorrespondentsincluded several in Britain, including G.R. S. Mead. John Yarker,

William Oxley. Edward Maitland and Dr Anna Kingsford.



## Janet Kershner 6 November 2016

Everyday is an adventure in Theosophical archives! That sentiment was expressed by Janet Kershner, the archivist of the TS in America, and it's worth re-reading the article in Questmagazinewhich described the excitement of herwork.

https://www.theosophical.org/publicatio.../questmagazine/2565

# The Secret Doctrine

The second edition of the S.D. is not often found. Does your Section have one? https://goo.gl/GguBy3

#### 80CB

# Kurt Leland & Membership Register 25 November 2016

Membership registers are vital archival resources. They enable us to identify exactly when someone joined a society, and often when they left or transferred. The TS in England registers, here being examined in November 2016 by Kurt Leland from Boston USA, typically also reveal which Lodge the member joined, and the two sponsors, who are sometimes more significant than the actual member. Home addresses are also found.

Kurt came across a cluster of new members who later became noted workers in another society – basic data which will inform discussion by historians of why they joined the T.S. - and why they left.



80CB

8003

# Western Sufism

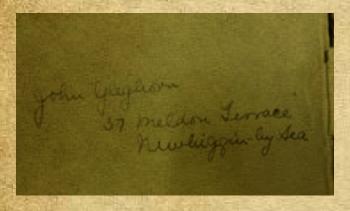
26 November 2016

This new volume on Western Sufism, using archival resources, is clearly going to change our perspective on several movements which adjoin Theosophy. *Western Sufism: From the Abbasids to the New Age* http://www.historyoftheadepts.com/historyoftheadepts/?p=1976

#### 80CB

#### When a Lodge Closes 30 December 2016

When a lodge closes...a sad time which Theosophists will often experience. But when the archives are preserved, and the library, what treasures can emerge. So it has been with Letchworth Lodge, England, a town noted in the history of Theosophical education. Their library included an 1888 first edition of "The Secret Doctrine". How it came to the lodge is unclear. Was the signature inside that of the original owner? Only subscribers got copies of the first edition of the book. Perhaps the old minute book, now at the TSE, will provide an answer.



#### 8003

## The Fake Photo 8 January 2017

Leeds Lodge in England, in association with Firewheel Books, has published a new introduction to Theosophy. "Cycles of Eternity;an overview of the Ageless Wisdom".

It includes a picture which it says was reputedly taken at Adyar in the 1880s.(p.32).

#### However the photo is not genuine.

https://blavatskytheosophy.com/the-fake-photo/



Madame Blavatsky with Masters Kuthumi, El Morya & St. Germaine Origins (and credentials) of photograph unknown

#### BOCS

#### Psypioneer 14 January 2017

You may be aware of the free on line journal called *Psypioneer*, which I founded in 2004, and which Paul Gaunt has so ably edited for a decade. Paul has retired from the editorship from December 2016, to concentrate on his work based at the Britten Museum and Library in Stansted, England, and the editorship has reverted to Leslie. Psypioneer has always carried some reprinted material about Theosophy, whose Third Object work overlaps with psychic studies, and this will continue to be the case. Several Theosophical libraries receive it, print it out, and display it; others scan the contents of each issue for relevant items. It helps greatly that the Woodland Way Sanctuary in Melbourne has always displayed all back issues on line. www.woodlandway.org

Other archival material about Theosophy appears in the indispensable journal "Theosophical History," or is being scanned by the remarkable team at The International Association for the Preservation of Spiritualist Occult Periodicals (I.A.P.S.O.Psee their web site) . FOTA itself hopes to play a growing part in republishing Theosophical archives.

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8003
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#### Stainton Moses 23 January 2017

The leading English Spiritualist, Stainton Moses, a friend of Madame Blavatsky, was a significant person in her life. But where can you find a balanced view of him?.

Not from Wikipedia. All Wikipedia entries in the leading languages are edited to deny any powers latent in man. So mediums are portrayed as frauds, and any scientists who give support for the paranormal have their reputations traduced. Rupert Sheldrake is the best known British example. http://www. sheldrake.org/about-rup.../.../wikipedia-under-threat

So for Stainton Moses, I would recommend that you go to Theosophy Wiki, where there is an entry on Moses and on many other relevant persons. The TS in America is constructing this invaluable wiki.

There's also an entry for Moses in the new multiauthored on- line SPR encyclopedia, which is being created to get round the Wikipedia censorship. There's nothing bland about it- the entry on one SPR president no less, says he (Dr Soal) was a fraudulent experimenter! Anyone interested in the Third Object of the T.S. will learn much from the SPR encylopedia.

#### EOCS

## Special Issue FOTA Newsletter 23 January 2017

The student of Theosophy will sometimes be surprised how a hostile but grossly inaccurate treatment of the subject can enjoy wide currency. This the case with Rene Guénon's 1921 book "Le Théosophisme: Histoire d'une pseudo-religion" which went through several editions - and eventually an English translation, which did not attempt to evaluate or update the contents. It makes an especially painful read for those who value archival evidence, which it handled in a cavalier way.

Appropriately, one of the first critical responses to Guénon was in French by Paul Bertrand a pseudonym of Georges Méautis, and was published as a booklet in 1922 by the French TS. But how valid was this reply? Muriel Pécastaing-Boissière obtained a copy which she sent to Joscelyn Godwin who has kindly translated this into English with editorial comments. He has permitted the Friends of Theosophical Archives to publish this as an especial issue of the Newsletter edited by Erica Georgiades.

This is available on line for free.

http://hypatia.gr/.../Fota\_Newsletter\_Special\_Ed\_ Autumn2016.p...

There was some discussion of Guénon's critique in the journal "Theosophical History" October 2011, and in a paper by Richard Smoley in "Quest" Winter 2010. Hopefully the new translation of Bertrand will encourage informed discussion of Guenon.

#### 8003

# Destruction of Historical Material 27 January 2017

When I worked in a county record office in Lancashire, I discovered that just as vets terminate many animals, so archivists dispose of lots of papers. But is it ever right to destroy a letter written by a Mahatma?

C. Jinarajadasa, TS Adyar president, admitted to a case of this in his invaluable collection "Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom" (Fifth edition, TPH Adyar, 1964). On p.127 commenting on Letter 24, he revealed that it had been sent to a chela who was planning a horrible betrayal. After printing extracts from it he "destroyed the letter which was given to me by the chela's trustee in strictest confidence." CJ was worried about the adverse impact on descendants.

#### 80CB

#### C.C. Massey March 18, 2016

Dr Lavoie is the author of a biography of C.C. Massey which used unpublished letters, and was one of the team who recovered a major letter by H.P.B. which appeared in the latest issue of "Theosophical History"

http://www.theohistory.org/cumulativecontents/cumcontXVIII.html

EOCS

# Obscuring HPB's Cigar

#### 3 February 2017

There are not that many photos of Madame Blavatsky, considering her eminence. Several taken in Bayswater, London 1889 show her smoking. She was still rolling her own cigarettes (for herself and her guests) in the last days of her life.

Photos in this series were often reproduced, and still hang on lodge walls (such as Blavatsky Lodge, London). At some point some Theosophists became uncomfortable with the cigarette, and began to choose other images or even perhaps obscured the cigarette.

What do you have in your archives?



BOCS

# G.R.S. Mead Date of Birth 8 February 2017

Could Christmas cards be significant archival items? Before the civil registration of English births from 1837, church records may help. Thus John Clarke, formerly manager of TPH Adyar, kindly visited for me Tower Hamlets records office, and found there the baptismal entry of Emma Hardinge Britten at St. Matthew's Church Bethnal Green in 1823. Sometimes, however, a birth was registered in one place but a baptism, perhaps for family reasons, might be distant.

Many writers, including me, have written that Madame Blavatsky's private secretary, G.R.S. Mead was born in Nuneaton in the English Midlands, but his birth certificate says 2 Montague Cottages, Albert Grove, Peckham, London. Dr Robert Gilbert tells me that he was however baptised at Nuneaton, on 30 May, and adds " The 1871 census shows G.R.S. Mead, plus brother Reginald, at Nuneaton with their grandmother."

See full image in this link: http://bit.do/ddF8Z

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80CB

# POSTINGS ON THE FACEBOOK PAGE OF THE TSE

## The Search for Spock 7 June 2016

In the TS in England we fondly remember librarian Lilian Storey (1925-2008), in whose honour the refurbished headquarters library is named. But in 1979, she was asked to help the international president John Coats after a surprising discovery. The Australian anthropologist Gregory Tillett, who was writing the biography of C. W. Leadbeater, had obtained his birth certificate, and it was not compatible with his own account of his early life. Lilian was a qualified genealogist, and she checked the findings.

In his recently launched Leadbeater blog, Dr Tillett pays tribute. "I will forever remain impressed by the scholarly integrity of Mr Coats and Miss Storey." https://cwleadbeater.wordpress.com/2016/06/07/lilian-story/

John Coats passed away not long afterwards on 26 December 1979. When the Theosophical History Centre was formed in

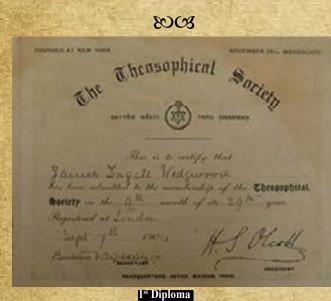
the English Section, Lilian was the natural person to serve as hon. President of THC, and she delivered her address "The Search for Leadbeater" at the First International Conference on Theosophical History at 50 Gloucester Place in 1986. The title was a humorous allusion to the 1984 Star Trek film "The Search for Spock". The search for Leadbeater continues!

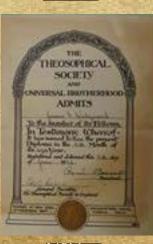
#### 80CB

## James Wedgwood 13 June 2016

When a person joins the Theosophical Society, a diploma is issued. There are however a number of persons who receive a second diploma, having perhaps left the T.S. for a time.

An example in the archives of the English T.S. is James Wedgwood. He joined first in 1904. In 1922, however, he resigned, and then in 1924, he rejoined. The second certificate is signed as general secretary in England by E. L. Gardner.





2<sup>nd</sup> Diploma

8003

#### JamesWedgwood 4 July 2016

Who was the general secretary of the English Section of the T.S. honoured - with a book mark? It would appear that only Edward L. Gardner had this distinction. That is not of course the kind of immortality that Theosophists seek. In ELG's case, it is for his studies in "The Secret Doctrine" that he is especially remembered. This book mark is in the archives at 50 Gloucester Place. If you have similar Theosophical "ephemera" in your lodge or personal library, do not discard them. They remind us that we are part of a long history. Mr Gardner, who lived to be a hundred years old in 1969, sent a birthday greeting to his fellows students in Blavatsky Lodge, London.



8003

# Solomon Key Magic Texts 13 July 2016

Gal Sofer, who is writing his PhD on the Solomon Key magical texts, visited London recently for an ESSWE workshop, and called in at the TS London. http://www.esswe.org/News/3985435

One of our members. Samuel Liddell MacGregor Mathers, had edited the Latin manuscripts of the Key of Solomon (preserved in what is now the British Library) in 1889. More recently Theosophical historian Robert Gilbert wrote a new introduction to this edition.

Madame Blavatsky once noted "The possibility of "raising spirits," according to the Key of Solomon, is the height of superstition and ignorance." She established her own esoteric school which took a different approach than the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn.

Archivist Leslie Price and librarian Barry Thompson welcomed Gal to Madame Blavatsky's private collection, preserved in the reference library at 50 Gloucester Place.



8003

## Ianthe Hoskins 26 July 2016

In the English section we have fond memories of Ianthe Hoskins, who was welcomed as a lecturer across Europe and distant oceans. When young, she had spoken at a national convention and someone had exclaimed "There goes a future general secretary" [ as our national president was then called ]. This came to pass, after many years of travel. She was the main attraction at a NW England gathering sixty years ago.

There is avaluable biographical note at Theosophy Forward.

http://www.theosophyforward.com/th.../849-ianthe-helen-hoskins.

80CB

#### Jeremy Ensor 30 August 2016

Jeremy Ensor, grandson of Robert and Beatrice Ensor, visited 50 Gloucester Place on 26 August. Robert, originally from Northern Ireland, was a police officer in Canada, before serving as business manager for the American Section of the T.S.

The Great War (1914-18) brought him back as a soldier to the U.K. where he also organised publicity for the T.S. and met Beatrice De Normann, who was already active in education. After their marriage, they were associated with the first English Theosophical schools.

Jeremy brought with him family records of their Theosophical work, which we compared with our own. Later Janet Kershner, archivist at T.S. Wheaton, provided more details of Robert Ensor's work for the TSA. Beatrice continued to review books for our house magazine Theosophical Journal, into the 1960s.

Photo shows Janet Lee, Jeremy Ensor and Leslie Price examining records in the Members Room.



80CB

# Gene Wilder 2 September 2016

This week the world mourned the passing of comic genius Gene Wilder. Barry Thompson, TSE librarian noticed an account of his youthful exposure to Theosophy in the London "Daily Mail." https://goo.gl/S0QJEU

This article was unfortunately quite offensive about the T.S. Israeli scholar Boaz Huss recalled that Wilder was born Jerome Silberman, in Milwuakee, USA and that the secretary of the American section of the Association of Hebrew Theosophists was Mr. E (Ephraim). F. Silberman, also from Milwaukee. Janet Kershner, archivist at TS Wheaton, confirmed that

Ephraim (Gene's uncle?) joined the TS in 1922, and that two of Gene's aunts, Gertrud and Dorothy, were also T.S. members.

There will be more about the Jewish contribution to Theosophy at the International Conference on Theosophical History on 17-18 September; see programme on the TSE web site.

#### 80CB

# Man: Fragments of a Forgotten History 19 September 2016

The book Dr Santucci is holding is "Man: fragments of a forgotten history" by Two Chelas. This copy was given to Stainton Moses by the Western Chela, i.e. Mrs Laura Langford-Holloway, who was in London receiving both psychic and Mahatmic messages. More to research about their links.



8003

# Would the Old Lady Have Approved? 27 September 2016

Here is Jenny Baker, president of the Theosophical Society in England, with some of the speakers at the end of the first day of the recent Theosophical History Conference at 50 Gloucester Place. To Jenny's right as seen is Janet Lee, EC lead member for archives, and to her left is Christine Ferguson, newly appointed professor in English Literature at Stirling University, Scotland. Half a dozen other countries are represented.

Would the "Old Lady" on the wall behind have approved? Since the first history conference thirty years ago, when Dr Hugh Gray was general secretary (now called national president), it has been the custom for the president to open the conference, and thereby underline the importance the Section gives to historical study, and indeed, HPB's first book "Isis Unveiled" contained much history.



80CB

#### Distinguised Guests 28 September 2016

At the recent Theosophical History conference at 50 Gloucester Place, distinguished guests with the national president, Jenny Baker included Marjatta Van Boeschoten,(left) general secretary of the Anthroposophical Society in Great Britain who gave an invited lecture "Rudolf Steiner's Visits to London" and Stephen Chapman (right), president of the College of the Psychic Studies. Under its original name, the London Spiritualist Alliance, CPS was founded by Stainton Moses, a friend of Madame Blavatsky who features in Col.Olcott's memoirs "Old Diary Leaves." Dr Rudolf Steiner was general secretary of the German Section of the T.S. before founding the A.S.



EOCS

## Dara Tatray 3 October 2016

In Australia, Dara Tatray recently launched a blog to promote the restoration of Theosophy.

https://theosophyrestorationproject.wordpress.com/

#### 8003

#### 1888 24 October 2016

Why was 1888 an important year for British Theosophists? They shared of course in the general excitement at the publication of "The Secret Doctrine," Madame Blavatsky's great work. But of more local interest, as Josephine Ransom reports in her book "A Short History of the Theosophical Society" (1938) for 1888:

"On 8 October the representatives of the British Branches met to consider the formation of a British Section. An adjourned meeting was held on the 19th and called a " Convention of the Lodges." when the Constitution which the President had prepared was passed, with only Sinnett voting against.

"The Lodges forming the Section were : Blavatsky, Scottish Theosophical Society, Dublin, and those newly formed in Cambridge and Glasgow. Sinnett refused to belong to the British Section . He obtained formal consent from Col. Olcott "as president of the whole Society, recognising the right of the London Lodge to continue an integral part of the Theosophical Society though remaining outside the organisation of the British Section."

It appears that Archibald Keightley was the first gen. sec. of the British Section (Ransom, p.253).

#### EOCS

# FOTA MEETING

2 November 2016

Jenny Baker, National President of the TS in England, looked in on one of the business meetings of the Friends of Theosophical Archives (England) at headquarters this week. Pictured are Jenny, Leslie Price, Janet Lee (lead EC member for archives), Kevin Tingay (chair FOTA England), Lynda Harris, who prepared the first contents list of our archival boxes, Robert Gilbert, and Susan Snell, archivist at Freemasons Hall London, who told the meeting of their Golden Dawn collection.



#### EOCS

#### Benjamin Crème 14 November

London's most famous Theosophist has passed away. Thousands heard him speak over the years. http://www. telegraph.co.uk/.../benjamin-creme-artist-and-eso.../

But wait you may say, Benjamin Crème was not someone authorised by any Theosophical body, nor even by the Lucis Trust. So he was not one of us?

And yet when we turn the pages of our journals a century ago, we find that many people were getting ready for a manifestation of Maitreya. So he was indeed part of a tradition, which we find from time to time inside the T.S.

#### 80CB

#### Kevin Tingay 16 November 2016

Last week a senior TSE member Kevin Tingay noticed a copy of the new Penguin/Tarcher edition of "The Secret Doctrine" on the shelves of Blackwell's shop in Oxford. They probably have the most comprehensive stock of guidance to study philosophy, theology, and religious studies books in the UK.

http://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/.../thesecr.../9780143110156/

TSE librarian Barry Thompson noted. " It seems to be a faithful reprint of the 1st, with an expanded index, but it has been reset to allow for a 1 vol paperback, plus the pagination is continuous between volumes 1 / 2, so the pages do not match facsimile or CW eds. due to both factors. If the edition takes off this may well cause a headache for future students coming into the TS."

So while we welcome the wider availability of Madame Blavatsky's magnum opus, the already wide variation in editions used by students in Theosophical classes will grow.

EOCS

#### Guidance to Study 21 November 2016

Which famous composer visited the London headquarters

Madame Blavatsky's great work was "The Secret Doctrine" (1888). But would our members benefit from guidance on the different editions? Illustrated for example is the title page of the third edition, in a copy recently drawn to my attention by a member.

This edition, still found in many libraries, caused controversy. As Charles Ryan of the Point Loma tradition wrote.

"In 1893 George R. S. Mead, well known as a classical scholar and a former secretary of H. P. B., and Mrs. Annie Besant edited and brought out a really new edition in two volumes. It was called the "Third and Revised Edition" though strictly speaking it was the second edition. The original text was considerably revised by the editors, and much criticism was aroused in certain guarters by many changes considered unnecessary and in some cases unjustifiable. However this may be, this edition cannot be called a verbatim or entirely faithful reproduction of the original as written and published by H. P. Blavatsky. In defence of the numerous alterations in the 1893 edition it has been said that H. P. B. was so anxious for accuracy that she corrected and added to the paged proofs of the original edition to the last minute even though it cost hundreds of pounds. These changes were, however, made by the author herself and were authoritative. It is guite a different matter when the author is dead. This widely circulated Third Edition was published by The Theosophical Publishing Society, London; The Path Office, New York; and The Theosophist Office, Adyar, and printed by the H. P. B. Press, London."

But criticisms could be made of other editions. So where can the best guidance be found to help the student?

#### EOCS

#### A Visit to the Zoo 23 November 2016

You may know the late photo of Madame Blavatsky with James Pryse her printer and G.R. S. Mead her private secretary. She is in a bath chair. We wondered if the chair survived, or had we lost it?

Then Janet Kershner, the archivist of the T.S. in America noticed Francesca Arundale's account of a visit to the zoo with little George Arundale [later the international president] :

"weallwentthereincarriagesandthechildwithus. Thena Bathchair

was procured for H. P. B. and we proceeded to visit the animals ... "

This was in the September, 1917 issue of The Theosophist in an article called "Some Reminiscences."



BOCS

#### Kurt Leland 25 November 2016

Kurt Leland, a national lecturer with the Theosophical Society in America, spent a week at the TS in London recently, and was welcomed by the National President, Jenny Baker. Kurt's new book on the history of the chakras in the West has just been published in English, and he brought with him the German language edition. The book " Rainbow Body" reveals for the first time the full story of how Madame Blavatsky began to teach about the chakras for the first time in London to selected students.



#### 80CB

## New Article on Hodgson Report 28 November 2016

The Society for Psychical Research has published in its new on line Psi Encyclopedia an article I have written about the Hodgson Report.

http://psi-encyclopedia.spr.ac.uk/.../hodgson-reporttheosophy

The great advantage of this, is that the wording can be improved by the author and by the editor, Robert McLuhan, but it cannot be interfered with by dogmatic groups like the guerilla sceptics. So do have a look and consider - what would you have said, what would you have omitted, bearing in mind that the audience ranges from those for whom the people involved are just names, to well-informed psychical researchers, Theosophical students, historians etc.

#### 80CB

#### Forgotten Mystic 2 December 2016

James North, a member of the TSE, recently gave a lecture at Treadwells Bookshop London about George Russell entitled "AE and the Irish Occult Renaissance".

His wife Sally this week lectured at the same place about "

"The Celtic Revival's forgotten Mystic." This was the artist Art O'Murnaghan (1875-1953). Deeply visionary, he was a Theosophist who was also involved in the new Irish theatre as an actor/manager/ musician. His private papers reveal his fascination with Irish druids, fairies and secret mystery schools.

occultist Dion Fortune Famed English admired O'Murnaghan much invited him SO she Society Light's to join in the of the Inner rituals. She called him the 'Hibernian adept'.

This week James and Sally, who live in Glastonbury, came into the TS to discuss the wide variety of figures who impinge on the story of Irish Theosophy, and who sometimes appear in the papers of Art Murnaghan. Their forthcoming book should be a valuable contribution to theosophical history.



#### 80CB

#### Karolina Maria Hess 2 December 2016

Last week Karolina Maria Hess and Małgorzata Alicja Dulska, researchers in the field of Western Esotericism from Poland, arrived at the T.S. in London. Their interests include Theosophical and Spiritualistic milieus in Eastern and Central Europe, Esotericism and the Arts, and related topics. They are working on Ph.D. projects at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow; Karolina - on the history and ideas of the Theosophical milieus in Poland (1905-1939); Małgorzata - on the specificity of the soteriological concept in the Wisla esoteric milieu (1918-1939).

Jenny Baker TSE national president welcomed Karolina (Malgorzata's stay was unfortunately shorter). Annelene Hursthouse, who has been updating our records management, located the 1947 charter for Wawel Lodge, a Polish speaking lodge in London, and also the decision



BOCS

# Theosophy in the British Isles 30 December 2016

If you want to know about the early history of Theosophy in the British Isles, you should obtain the 2000 Blavatsky Lecture by Michael Gomes" Creating the New Age", which make use of the archives of Blavatsky Lodge founded in 1887. A few copies remain for sale- details from books@ theosoc.org.uk.

Some members of the TS (and others) may like to test their knowledge with twelve questions I'll be posting on this page in the next few days. The answers are all in the publication mentioned, though I will also include them here with the questions.

Here is the first question. What was the first Theosophical meeting attended by Madame Blavatsky in Britain?

You, like me, might suggest the famous occasion in 1884, when she arrived from India at a London Lodge meeting, to the great excitement of the nearly 80 people present.

But Michael reveals (p. 16) that had she attended a meeting of the British Theosophical Society (the original name for the Lodge) on January 5 1879. when she and Col. Olcott were briefly in England on their way from New York to India.

#### EOCS

# Michael Gomes

#### 3 January 2017

Madame Blavatsky famously arrived at a London Lodge meeting on April 7 1884, where Anna Kingsford was replaced as lodge president; often seen as part of the struggle between eastern and western theosophy. But something more momentous was in train that day, as Michael Gomes reveals in his 2000 Blavatsky lecture " Creating the New Age: Theosophy's Origin in the British Isles".

The psychical research leader F. W. H. Myers, (in photo) who had joined the T.S., was in the audience, and he asked whether documentary evidence could be obtained from India about the reported apparitions of the Mahatmas, The reply was so encouraging that on May 2, the recently

formed Society for Psychical Research set up a committee to take evidence about Theosophical phenomena.

This did not end well for the Theosophical Society, and not until Dr Vernon Harrison's research a century later was HPB cleared of deliberately fabricating the "Mahatma Letters" from K.H. and M. See Dr Harrison's book "H.P. Blavatsky and the S.P.R" (1997), available free on line.

#### 8003

# Sinnett and the London Lodge 4 January 2017

Madame Blavatsky moved to London in 1887, and soon after, Blavatsky Lodge was formed. But as Michael Gomes reveals in his 2000 Blavatsky lecture "Creating the New Age", this was not good news for the London Lodge, led by A.P. Sinnett.

"H.P.B.'s settling in London would prove a serious drain on the Lodge and the group became even more insular, till by the 1890s it was almost an autonomous society." (p.23).

Sinnett and the London Lodge published a many booklets, sometimes based on material received by Sinnett from sensitives. The division of effort between him and the national T.S. was a significant factor in the fortunes of Theosophy for several decades.

EOCS



# Dr Muriel Pecastaing-Boissiere

#### 14 January 2017

Dr Muriel Pecastaing-Boissiere of the Sorbonne, whom we were delighted to welcome to speak at last September's Theosophical History conference at 50 Gloucester Place, and whose biography of Annie Besant has appeared in French, has had her proposal for the 6<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the European Society for the Study of Western Esotericism accepted. The theme of the conference is "Western Esotericism and Deviance".

Muriel will give a paper entitled "I would not have left your platform had I not been compelled...": Annie Besant's exclusion from the National Secular Society (1891)"

The conference takes place on June 1-3 at the University of Erfurt, which, (she notes) " is serendipitous, since the German translation of my biography of AB would be published by then."

#### http://www.esswe.org/event-2135867

An English translation has also been made, and will hopefully be published by TPH Adyar.

Among the treasures of the TSE archives is a large collection of photos of Annie. Your lodge may have some too?

#### EOCS

#### Blavatsky Lodge 16 January 2017

On Thursday January 19th 2017 at 7pm Blavatsky Lodge, London begins a new series of study meetings on "The Key to Theosophy" by H.P. Blavatsky.

At intervals, the Lodge has been studying this book since its 1889 publication. Indeed the first study session was November 21<sup>st</sup> 1889. It was led by a new member of the Lodge, Mrs Annie Besant.

In his 2000 Blavatsky lecture "Creating the New Age", Michael Gomes notes that Mrs Besant was elected Blavatsky Lodge president in January 1890. Study of "The Key" also continued in 1890, sometimes with HPB participating.

#### EUCS

# Dr Hugh Shearman

#### 17 January 2017

The Northern Ireland historian Dr Hugh Shearman was one of the significant Theosophical scholars of the last generation, and his thoughtful essays and books, though often found today on the back shelves of Theosophical libraries, still repay study.

His perspective on C.W. Leadbeater was different from that Dr Gregory Tillett, but it is good to see a post devoted to Dr Shearman in the new Leadbeater blog, with many references to follow up.

https://cwleadbeater.wordpress.com/2017/01/11/4493/

#### EOCS

# Sir William Crookes - The Chemist 20 January 2017

In the U.K. we are proud of our Theosophical Science tradition, which after early pioneers like Sir William Crookes FRS (and FTS), was expressed through the Science Group in the 1920s, and then the Theosophical Research Centre until 1983. Of course we salute colleagues in Australia, America, India and elsewhere in the 20th century. But it is difficult to deny that another region than Europe is now doing outstanding work. One need only consider the programme of a recent Indo-Pacific conference on this theme.

http://theosophy.nz/events/theosophy-science-seminar

#### EOCS

# Sir William Crookes & HPB 31 January 2017

The British Theosophical Society was formed in 1878, and The chemist Sir William Crookes was a member of the London Lodge for many years. From 1900-1912, he was also secretary of the Royal Institution, an important centre of research and science education in London, founded in 1799.

Crookes was friendly with Madame Blavatsky when she was writing " The Secret Doctrine", where she wrote of the ether.

http://www.blavatsky.net/.../47-scie.../physics/65-etheris-back

### FOTA NEWSLETTER n°7 • Winter-Spring 2016-2017

Crookes's younger colleague in psychical research, Sir Oliver Lodge, though not a Theosophist, remained sympathetic to the ether even when it had become rejected by some scientists.

On February 1st at the Royal Institution in London there is a meeting to reconsider Lodge's work.

http://www.rigb.org/.../../february/public-spirits-in-theether

Will HPB be mentioned?

8003

### TS Non-Political Body

10 February 2017

The Theosophical Society is a non-political body, but there have been times when politics intruded even at local level. In the Great War, a century ago, when the T.S. president Annie Besant and two colleagues were interned for a time in India, the lodge in Letchworth, England passed a strongly worded motion of condemnation.

Gaugeral Mai checcal meeting wis Irolan platest april madein in tomai the state of the the is it such at Time Munule, The Lec of State and them of it. Pre. Price AF andre E Merideil ton the There was a 5 menter Minule of The law ac und and confriend. made by Man Ellin 14 the contine of Bula This mitter to be discussed ch a 43 Briddels also doved the Subject thich the meeting was called. Mod Myre Source and But Mary the following relation

"That this meeting of the Garden Gity Lodge of the Thesesphickl Boelety in England and Value enters its suphatic protect against the action of the Endrace Government. In restricting the liberty of Wrs. Amile Besaut by prohibiting her from publishing and from speaking in public, and by the system of internment that has been imposed upon her. Occult Chemestry 12 February 2017

The clairvoyant investigations of Annie Besant and C.W. Leadbeater are not much studied today. But research into them is continued by Professor Gwyn Hocking, who is the secretary of the TSE.

#### http://www.4-d.org.uk/

Their findings in both occult chemistry and history are explained with reference to the recent use of remote viewing. The student will find however that Professor Hocking's interpretation of occult chemistry differs from that of Dr Lester Smith.

### 80CB



80CB

## The European School of Theosophy

### 12TH - 17TH OCTOBER NAARDEN~ HOLLAND The Spiritual Path

The European School of Theosophy was launched in England in October 1982 by Geoffrey Farthing, lanthe Hoskins and Adam Warcup and it was under the direction of Ingrid Eberhard-Evans for many years. Its activities are characterised by a five day programme of intensive, guided study with study material readily available.

The School is autonomous and is not part of any organization, Theosophical or otherwise. The main focus of the School is the research and investigation of the early literature giving rise to the contemporary Theosophical Movement such as HPB's writings, the Mahatma Letters and more, as well as current developments within the field of humanities and science. Subjects related to Western Esotericism, religions as well as Eastern and Western philosophies are also often blended into the programme.

The Courses are designed as an incentive for students to discuss and reach their own conclusions by promoting questioning and a broad mind approach. Opportunity for research projects may be given to bona fide fellows presenting a comprehensive proposal and justification of their aims. The language of the School is necessarily English, but its location varies each year in places that facilitate opportunities to commune with nature, physical activities as well as contemplation and meditation.

### Some of the Speakers are

#### Jon Knebel

What were the original Aims of the Theosophical Society? When did they become our Objects? How have they changed over the years? How did do they define a path? What should our Aims and Objects be today?

#### **Dr Pablo and Michele Sender**

According to Theosophical teachings there are two evolutionary roads open before us. One is the slow and steady path of progress through moral effort and gradual improvement, which is furthered by all religions in their exoteric teachings. This presentation outlines the process of spiritual transformation and the associated challenges which confront one as one embarks upon what Socrates referred to as the 'Jewelled Way'. In utilising the content of the classical teachings, allied to a consideration of related mythological symbolism, the necessary practices and disciplines of the spiritual path shall be outlined together with the effects exerted by these upon the dynamics of the human psyche.

#### Gary Kidgell

His presentation will outline the process of spiritual transformation and the associated challenges which confront one as one embarks upon what Socrates referred to as the 'Jewelled Way'. In utilising the content of the classical teachings, allied to a consideration of related mythological symbolism, the necessary practices and disciplines of the spiritual path shall be outlined together with the effects exerted by these upon the dynamics of the human psyche.

#### Noeline Hart

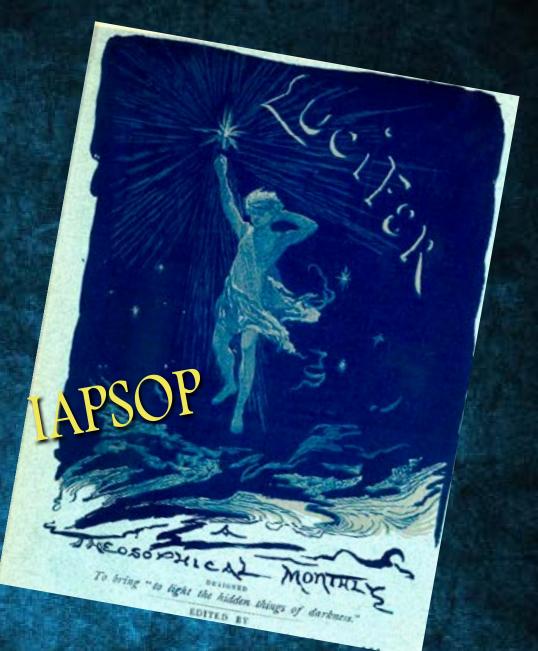
The Spiritual Path presents the aspirant with the necessary stages of development, which must be undergone during many lifetimes for the highest spiritual goal of union with the Divine to be achieved. Treading the Spiritual Path takes the aspirant through the many changes in consciousness which occur at each step leading to enlightenment and liberation from the limitations of dense matter.

To see the full programme click here http://europeanschooloftheosophy.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/brochure-eust-r.pdf

The Venue



International Theosophical Centre, Naarde, Holland http://www.itc-naarden.org/blog/



The IAPSOP is a US-based private organization focused on the digital preservation of Spiritualist and occult periodicals published between the Congress of Vienna and the start of the Second World War.

Our all-volunteer staff digitizes, indexes and makes available free-of-charge these periodicals, in our archive, for use by students and researchers.

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### PROBABLY SPURIOUS BLAVATSKY WATERCOLOR FOR SALE

by Kurt Leland



On 29 March 2017 an email exchange among Theosophical scholars and members of FOTA developed in connection with a suspicious listing on eBay of a watercolor purported to be by Madame H. P. Blavatsky. The picture showed what appeared to be a European harbor with boats in twilight and was signed with a monogram that the seller took to be HPB, with a date of 1884. The size was given as ten inches by fourteen inches. The piece was beautifully executed, HPB was known to be in Europe in 1884 and was considered to be a fine painter.

Speculation abounded as to the painting's provenance, whether it was genuine, stolen, faked, misidentified, and what to do about the listing, whose starting bid was 300 American dollars. However, after close scrutiny, it appeared that the monogram was not HPB but HPH (and an Internet search for an autograph of HPB's signature made clear that there should be no resemblance between H and B). An Internet search on this monogram indicated that the painting had previously appeared in a 2006 auction by Mallams of Cheltenham, UK, with the following listing (item 262 at <a href="http://www.catalogue-host.co.uk/mallams/cheltenham/2006-12-07/page\_5">http://www.catalogue-host.co.uk/mallams/cheltenham/2006-12-07/page\_5</a>):

VICTORIAN SCHOOL Beach and Harbour at sunset, monogrammed H.P.H., watercolour, 9 3/4" x 13 3/4" Sold for £50

A query to the American seller containing this information was not answered. Complaints filed with eBay by two investigators of the situation did not result in the listing being modified or taken down. The auction ended on 2 April without a sale, but the listing went up again on 6 April for a second five-day round of bidding.

It was assumed that the seller had misread the monogram and made an honest mistake in attribution. An Internet search on the initials HPB yields an enormous number of entries, as well as indications of her having been a painter. However, the seller did not accept returns (though there was a money-back guarantee by eBay) and the possibility of making comments on the listing was disabled. Furthermore, the listing stated, in faulty English, "This artist work is a solid investment. VERY RARE." It continued as follows:

I do not authenticate nor claim to be experts in the field of items listed; I use my best ability to determine the item and characteristics of the items attributes and functions. Please contact us prior to bidding to clarify any questions or concerns. If the item is not determine with any authentication it means it was sold as a manner or attributed from the artist.

I understand from Leslie Price that one aspect of FOTA's mission is "to be aware of spurious Theosophical heritage." In the absence of any means of discouraging the seller of the painting from making false or unverifiable claims and in the interests of any prospective or actual buyer who may have been misled, I have submitted this note.

### The 11th World Congress of the Theosophical Society will be held in Singapore 4 - 9 August 2018

From morning of 4th to late evening of 8th (6 nights from 3 to 9 Aug 2018)

followed by the International Conference of the

Theosophical Order of Service

(TOS International)

9 -11 August 2018

(2 nights from 9th to noon of 11Aug 2018)

For more detailed information please visit this link http://www.ts-adyar.org/event/11th-world-congress

### Subscribe to the Adyar Newsletter

To keep updated about this and other International events related to the Theosophical Society, please subscribe to the Newsletter of the Theosophical Society, Adyar by visiting this link:

http://us12.campaign-archive2.com/home/?u=0ab-21c8f927dce0a46c923124&id=1dfe6809b5

80CB

Time and circumstances can change at any time, don't hurt of evaluate anyone in life.

Lord Buddha

# must read...

# Blavatsky The Case for Her Detense Walter A. Carrithers, Jr.

Madame

# MADAME BLAVATSKY: The Case for Her Defense Against the Hodgson-Coulomb Attack

By Walter A. Carrithers, Jr. Edited and abridged by Daniel H. Caldwell The Blavatsky Foundation: http://blavatskyfoundation.org P.O. Box 3757 Fresno, California 93650 2017 452 pp.

### From the Introduction by Walter A. Carrithers, Jr.

The case of Madame Blavatsky is the most celebrated in the annals of Psychical Research. It is also unique in the history of Occultism, for it is the only recorded instance of an initiated thaumaturgist or self-professed "practical occultist" exhibiting psychic wonders before members of a committee of recognized parapsychologists.

H.P. Blavatsky, born Helena de Hahn in 1831, daughter of a Germanic cavalry officer and granddaughter of a Russian princess, began life as a child medium (automatist). After years spent in world travel, pursuing the mysteries of Asiatic Magic and the secrets of practical Occultism, she helped found the Theosophical Society in 1875 at New York City. From her pen afterwards came The Secret Doctrine: The Synthesis of Science, Religion and Philosophy (fountainhead of modern Occultism and inspiration of the worldwide Theosophical Movement) and other writings. Before her death in 1891, she had come to be recognized as one of the most dynamic women and controversial figures of her time. Despite the numerous biographies, scores of books, and hundreds of articles "explaining" Madame Blavatsky, her life remains a baffling enigma for the public.

Previously regarded in Europe and Russia as a "medium" for mental and physical supernormal (psychic) phenomena, Madame Blavatsky, both in America and later in India, was surrounded by mysterious wonders. Strange voices and apparitions attended her coming and going; at her command objects were "duplicated" or "materialized," appearing or disappearing inexplicably.

At Theosophical Society Headquarters, established at Adyar, Madras, India, a Shrine or cabinet was set up as a point for exchange of communications with her mysterious "Teachers" or "Brothers" (said to be Mahatmas residing in the distant Himalayas and elsewhere), and letters of inquiry locked in the cabinet vanished instantaneously, or were replaced by notes of reply, or were taken out inscribed in a Mahatmic hand. Unlike the séance phenomena of spirit mediums, the feats acknowledged by Madame Blavatsky—when not attributed to her unseen "Masters"—were performed in full light, without cabinet or "circle" or usual spiritualistic paraphernalia, and came in direct response to her purpose and will.

In April, 1884, leaders of the recently formed Society for Psychical Research (S.P.R.) in London became interested in the claims of Madame Blavatsky. A Committee to investigate these claims was appointed by the S.P.R. Council.

In November 1884, the Committee's provisional and preliminary (unpublished) Report noted, with some reservation, that there did indeed exist a *prima facie* case for the truth of at least some of the claims made for these psychic phenomena. But, the following year, in its final verdict, the Committee branded Madame Blavatsky "one of the most accomplished, ingenious and interesting impostors in history."

This was the first notable "expose" in modern parapsychology, and its effect upon the subsequent course of psychical research can hardly be exaggerated.

But did it prove that Madame Blavatsky was a fraud? Was the Committee's verdict justified by the evidence and the facts of the case?

In this book, my detailed re-examination of the historical record furnishes the reader with a new look at the matter and, by meticulous recital of evidence, book and page, shows that, quite obviously, it was *not* justified. In arriving at this conclusion, helped by evidence hitherto overlooked or grossly ignored, I draw mainly upon the testimony of witnesses hostile to Madame Blavatsky, especially the reports of Dr. Richard Hodgson, the Committee's chief investigator and agent, whose accounts of inquiries in India were adopted into their final Report.

My analysis shows that, oddly enough, both Dr. Hodgson and the Committee based their charges and conclusions on testimony and evidence provided by a certain Monsieur and Madame Coulomb (general handyman and housekeeper for Madame Blavatsky) who, defecting, professed to be H.P.B.'s former confederates in the manufacture of spurious psychic wonders.

In drawing up its enumerated "conclusions"—"unanimously arrived at"—the S.P.R. Committee accepted as proven *only two* positive accusations against Mme. Blavatsky. Essential to both of these decisions were claims and evidence brought forward by Mons. and Mme. Coulomb. *At the center of the problem stand the "informers," the Coulombs*.

It is safe to calculate that for every ten thousand persons who have heard and believe that Richard Hodgson "exposed" H.P. Blavatsky as a fraud and impostor, not more than one has read his 1885 "expose"; and that for every thousand of his readers, hardly one has ever seen Emma Coulomb's 1884 pamphlet. And yet, by logic and every rule of commonsense, the latter document takes precedence over all others in standing at the very heart of the controversy raised by the Coulombs, comprising as it does the firsthand unadulterated testimony of Madame Blavatsky's chief accusers, together with documentary "proofs" adduced for their claims.

Particularly noteworthy is the fact that Dr. Hodgson himself seems to have had very great reluctance to make, by quotation, any use of Mme. Coulomb's printed (*prior*) explanations. The reason for this odd behavior on his part, with respect to the testimony of his chief witness, becomes readily apparent once we examine the major charges brought against Madame Blavatsky by Dr. Hodgson and *compare* his allegations detail-by-detail against original, *earlier published* claims of Madame Coulomb herself.

This comparison proves to be devastating. The Coulombs' testimony, upon which Dr. Hodgson relied so heavily, amounts to nothing except a farrago of nonsense, self-contradictory and contradicted. And, when finding instance after instance in which Hodgson had to suppress great portions of this damning testimony or else see his own inferences and charges collapse, one is forced to the momentous conclusion that Dr. Hodgson suppressed and omitted vital facts from his consideration and report on theosophical phenomena as if he were not a scientific investigator making an impartial inquiry *but only a common prosecutor obligated to "building a case" at all costs.* 

In my 1963 book *Obituary: The "Hodgson Report" on Madame Blavatsky*, *1885-1960: Re-Examination Discredits the Major Charges Against H.P. Blavatsky* (Adyar, Madras, India: The Theosophical Publishing House), written under my pen name Adlai E. Waterman, I examined *in great detail* the Shrine and its placement and surroundings in the Occult Room. I documented Hodgson's chicanery concerning his examination of the rear (inner face) of the Shrine wall. Although I briefly examined and summarized some of my findings concerning Hodgson's treatment of the Blavatsky-Coulomb letters, as well as the Mahatma letters, etc., my overview on these matters did not provide all the *crucial* detailed evidence, etc.

The present book gives the reader such a detailed and comprehensive analysis of both the Blavatsky-Coulomb and Mahatma letters as well as of other issues. I draw the reader's attention especially to the first four chapters in Part Three on "Testimony of Handwriting Experts" and also to Chapter 19, "The Results of My Investigations." These chapters constitute the most important dynamite ever racked up against Richard Hodgson and his case against H.P. Blavatsky. In fact, these specific chapters tell a coherent, self-contained story and cut out all ground from beneath Hodgson not previously eliminated by my Obituary book! My chapter on "The Results of My Investigations" constitutes the definitive discovery and analysis of the most damning block of evidence against Hodgson (discovered by me upon getting a copy of H.P.B.'s annotations in Hodgson's copy of the 1884 Coulomb pamphlet). I show how Hodgson deliberately tricked and lied with the result that the Adyar Defence Committee of 1885 withdrew its official report in H.P.B.'s defence. This discovery of new evidence proved to me for the first time that Hodgson was not just a bungler, but a deliberately and thoroughly dishonest deceiver.

My treatment of these various letters, related controversies and the implications drawn concerning Dr. Hodgson should make the present study of great importance to Parapsychology, and one which should be of interest to all those who follow Psychical Research, Spiritualism, Theosophy, Occultism, or the psychology of fraud and controversy. The present book is also a substantial contribution to the Blavatsky defence literature. The paperback edition is now out and available at Amazon (https://www.amazon.com/Madame-Blavatsky-Defense-Against-Hodgson-Coulomb/dp/1365969851). Readers of FOTA can order a paperback copy at a 40% discount off the retail price at this special link: http://www.lulu.com/shop/product-23237820.html. Our readers may also order the hardbound version at a 40% discount in this link: http://www.lulu.com/shop/product-23185808.html

Walter A. Carrithers, Jr. (1924-1994), Theosophical historian, writer & commercial artist, was a life long resident of Fresno, California. He was a member of the Society for Psychical Research (London) & the American Federation of Astrologers. Over the years he wrote articles & reviews for various occult, psychic, theosophical & astrological journals. A deep student of astrology, Mr. Carrithers penned an award winning essay titled REAPPRAISING ASTROLOGICAL CONCEPTS, OLD AND NEW (1959).

From an early age he became interested in the life & claims of H.P. Blavatsky. Studying the controversies surrounding HPB, Mr. Carrithers authored two books in defense of her: THE TRUTH ABOUT MADAME BLAVATSKY (1947) & OBITUARY: THE "HODGSON REPORT" ON MADAME BLAVATSKY (1963). In 1968 he founded The Blavatsky Foundation to perpetuate public knowledge of the life & works of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky.

A RESUME OF OPINION on Mr. Carrithers' work:

"If Madame Blavatsky...was the most influential occultist of the nineteenth century, Walter Carrithers was her sustained twentieth century champion against the charges of fraud."—Leslie Price, former editor of THEOSOPHICAL HISTORY.

"I admire your enormous industry....I congratulate you on your splendid discoveries...in the work that you are doing... I...welcome this well-documented destruction of the infamous attack made against Mme. Blavatsky...the now discredited 'Hodgson Report'...." —Christmas Humphreys, former President, The Buddhist Society (London).

"You have my hearty support for the steps you are taking for the defence of Madame Blavatsky and her works... I highly appreciate the exhausting manner in which you are proceeding with your research. It is wonderful to think that the material you are unearthing might present H.P.B. to the world in a completely different light...."-N. Sri Ram, former President, The Theosophical Society (Adyar, India).

### STATEMENT

of the International Centre of the Roerichs

concerning the armed seizure of the Lopoukhins estate

carried out by the State Museum of Oriental Art on 28 - 29 April 2017

with the support from law enforcement agencies

aimed at the annihilation of the non-governmental Museum named after Nicholas Roerich

and the seizure of the Roerichs heritage, belonging to the International Centre of the Roerichs

### A short chronicle of events

Around 9 p.m. on 28 April 2017 [Friday] the Director General of the State Museum of Oriental Art (SMOA), Alexander Sedov and his colleagues, accompanied by a specialized unit with no insignia that would allow their identification, made an attempt to seize the non-governmental Museum named after Nicholas Roerich of the International Centre of the Roerichs and other buildings of the Lopoukhins estate, in which the ICR has been lawfully based since the beginning of the 1990's, as well as to seize the preserved in the Museum Roerichs heritage. The above said specialized unit with no insignia neutralized and dismissed the Museum security guarding the Lopukhins estate territory, while the Director of SMOA Sedov could present no final court decision that has entered into force since he had decided not to wait for an appellate decision of the Arbitration court on the case of termination of the agreement for free use by the ICR of the Lopukhins estate and the eviction of the ICR therefrom. At that time the concert of the famous Bulgarian musician, Mr. Atanas Kurtey, had just ended and he found himself a witness of the attempted seizure of the non-governmental Museum.

Thanks to the intervention of the local Moscow police and a called by the International Centre of the Roerichs unit of security we managed to prevent the seizure. The SMOA personnel were made to leave the Museum premises, together with the accompanying them persons with no insignia that would indicate their belonging to one of the units of the special law enforcement agencies. The museum was placed under seal and was given to the responsibility of safeguards.

Nevertheless the mentioned above persons without insignia that acted in the interests of SMOA, had already blocked the entrances and exits to all buildings belonging to the Lopukhins estate, as they had placed there their own guards even before the Museum premises were emptied and the buildings placed under safeguarding. By doing so they deprived the ICR personnel access to their working places.

The Director General of the SMOA motivated his actions by saying that he is trying to execute a court decision (that has allegedly entered into force and is final) and to compel the ICR to leave the Lopukhins estate, which has been given to the SMOA in operative management. The ICR management presented documents, which prove our organization's right to a free use of the estate buildings. Also the ICR management reminded that the court decision, which obliges us to leave the premises and the full text of which is dated 7 April 2017, is not yet final, since the ICR is going to appeal it in the Court of Appeal in accordance with the procedure established by law. The ICR and the SMOA filed reports with the local police on what had happened including motivations for their actions and a request to conduct an inspection.

Representatives of the police convinced us that until completion of the review of the filed reports and in order to ensure the safety of the pos-

session, it would be necessary to place under seal all entrance doors to all buildings belonging to the estate, and that it would be necessary for all people to leave the territory on which would stay only four guards from both ICR and SMOA and an armed unit of the local police, which would ensure that public order is maintained.

Mr. Ivan Zasurskiy, member of the Russian Federation Presidential Council for Civil Society and Human Rights found himself an involuntary witness of the raiding of the non-governmental museum by the State Museum of Oriental Arts, because he had not yet left the building after the Bulgarian Atanas Kurtev's concert. The events in the ICR aiming at the seizure of the Lopukhins estate and the Roerich heritage also drew the attention of Mr. Mikhail Fedotov, Adviser to the President of the Russian Federation for Human Rights. On 29 April Mr. Fedotov together with Mr. Andrei Babushkin, member of the Russian Federation Presidential Council for Civil Society and Human Rights, came to the ICR, but the SMOA security let them enter the estate territory only after one hour. After having listened to the representatives of the ICR, the SMOA and Mr. Kirill Rybak, the Advisor of the Minister of Culture, Mr. Fedotov left the territory of the Lopukhins estate.

Apparently that kind of turn of events was not included in the SMOA plan, and it relied again on the investigation team taking part in the inquest of the Master Bank case. Around 7 p.m. on 29 April, cars with representatives of the said investigation team, riot police (OMON) and SMOA entered the estate territory. They commenced a search, the necessity of which was motivated with untenable circumstances that do not correspond to facts. This in turn indicates that the action was planned in haste and was formal by nature. The Vice President of International centre of the Roerichs, Mr. Alexander Stetsenko, was not permitted to be present at the search. Seizure of the accounting documentation and drawings of the Roerichs was carried out in the absence of the representatives of the ICR accounting department and responsible curators of the heritage. The investigation team took away from the ICR the keys to the Museum depositary and the Museum halls and handed them over to the SMOA. In the protocol they noted that the Lopukhins estate is being placed under the custody of the Director General of SMOA, Mr. Sedov, together with all property of the ICR and the personal belongings of the ICR personnel. Neither Act of transfer, nor any specification of the transferred property was made. All these facts attest to the real goal of the "investigation" - namely to remove all obstacles, hindering the SMOA from accessing the heritage belonging to ICR. After all, these obstacles were so unexpectedly imposed by the local police and that was not included in the plans of those who organized the seizure. So, the seizure of the Lopukhins estate and the Roerich heritage which belongs to the International Centre of the Roerichs and which is located in the estate was carried out under cover of criminal investigations on the bankruptcy of the Master Bank.

In conclusion of this short chronicle of events it should be mentioned that in the night of 1 May, around 3 a.m. on the territory of the estate the representatives of the SMOA took down the Banner of Peace – the distinctive flag of the Roerich Pact, which is the first international treaty on the protection of cultural property in both peaceful times and at war. It is obvious that for the raiders, who under the cover of darkness broke in to the non-governmental Museum named after Nicholas Roerich of the ICR, the Banner became a direful reminder of their unlawful acts against the Museum, which bears the name of our great compatriot, who showed to the world the way out of the endless string of wars and armed conflicts – the way of Peace through Culture.

Thus the seizure of the Roerichs heritage by way of raid was accomplished, and let us remind that it started with the letter of the Minister of Culture, Mr. Vladimir Medinskiy to the President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Vladimir Putin in 2013 (in the letter the minister deceived the President as regards the true will of Svetoslav Roerich concerning the heritage that he donated to Russia); thus was also completed the seizure of the Lopukhins estate, which started in 2015 when the estate was transferred to the SMOA operative management. The Roerich heritage, which was transferred to Russia by Svetoslav Roerich, a citizen of India, for the purpose of creating in Moscow in the Lopukhins estate the non-governmental Museum named after Nicholas Roerich, is now illegally seized by the SMOA, which according to the will of the owner of the heritage had no right whatsoever to it. The guarantee, which the state gave to Svetoslav Roerich about the safe development of the non-governmental Museum in the Lopukhins estate, was violated. All these attest to a forced termination of the functioning of the International non-governmental organization the International Centre of the Roerichs and its non-governmental Museum, established by Svetoslav Roerich, without fair trial and without the right of defence. The further activity of the ICR to promote Nicholas Roerich's peacemaking ideas that have won the acknowledgement of the leadership of the country and of the UN and UNESCO are under threat.

Thus the Russian Federation, represented by the Minister of Culture and with the support of the law enforcement agencies, in grave violation of Russian and international law, de facto liquidated the non-governmental Museum denying us the right to defence. In an attempt to excuse the elimination of the NGO, the management of the Ministry of Culture, of the State Museum of Oriental Arts and of the investigative body of the Russian Federation claim, that thereby they are protecting the Roerich heritage against a possible injury caused to it by the International Centre of the Roerichs. With full responsibility the ICR declares that suchlike statements are untrue and have no foundation whatsoever. We assume that they pursue but one goal – to excuse the Russian civil servants' long-term crimes against the Roerich heritage, which was transferred to Russia by Svetoslav Roerich, as well as against the non-governmental organization created for its safekeeping and promotion on the initiative of Svetoslav Roerich, a great figure in the world culture and citizen of India.

The Roerichs gave the world the Roerich Pact, which laid the foundation of the modern legal system for the protection of the world cultural heritage and the functioning of UNESCO. The ICR appeals to the Russian and international public, to the UN, UNESCO and everyone, who is not indifferent to the destiny of the great cultural heritage of the Roerichs, to establish an international public commission in order to investigate this crime, to revive the violated guarantees of the state to Svetoslav Roerich as well as to restore the rights of the International Centre of the Roerichs to the heritage, donated to it by Svetoslav Roerich.

Source: https://goo.gl/t5qd6w - For more information visit the website: https://save.icr.su/en/



# Theosophical and Mystical Publications - Review

Lucifer v. I, n.I, 1887.

To bring "to light the hidden things of darkness."

THEOSOPHICA

MOY

THI

H. P. Blavatsky and Mabel Collins

### FOTA NEWSLETTER n°7 • Winter 2016 - Spring 2017

In the first issue of the magazine *Lucifer*, September 1887, HPB included a section entitled *Theosophical* and *Mystical Publications*. In this section she comments on the following publications: *The Theosophist*; *The Path*; *Le Lotus*; *L'aurore*; *The Occult World*; *The Occultist*; *The Sphinx*; *Transactions of the "London Lodge" of the TS*.; *The Esoteric*. I've compiled her comments here and included links to the magazines availeable online. Most of them can be found on IAPSOP. I could not find online the magazines The Occultist; L'Aurore and very few issues of The Theosophist are availeable online.

The Morning Star

### The Theosophist

The Theosophist, a magazine of Oriental Philosophy, Art, Literature, and Occultism. Conducted by H. P. Blavatsky, and H. S. Olcott, Permanent President of the T.S., Vol. VIII, Nos. 94 and 95, July and August, 1887. Madras, India. In London, George Redway, 15, York Street, Covent Garden.

This journal is the oldest of the periodicals of The Theosophical Society, and has a distinct feature of its own: a number of Hindu, Buddhist, and Parsi contributors among the most learned of British India. No journal is thus more reliable in the occasional information given in it upon the sacred tenets and scriptures of the East, since it is derived first hand, and comes from native scholars, well versed in their respective cults. From time to time *The Theosophist* has respectfully corrected mistakes — by Western Orientalists, and will continue to perform its proposed task by issuing admirable articles.

As a marked instance of this, the four "Lectures on the Bhagavad-Gîtâ", by a native scholar, Mr. T. Subba Row, may be cited. Begun in the February number, they are now concluded in the July issue. No better, abler, or more complete exposition on that most philosophical, as the least understood, of the sacred books of the East, has ever been given in any work, past or present. In the June and July numbers, the "Ha-Khoshecah: a " Vision of the Infinite ", by Dr. Henry Pratt, an erudite Kabalist in England, is published.

Some very interesting articles on the "Norse Mythology", by the learned Swedish scholar, Mr. C. H. A. Bjerregaard (the AstorLibrary, NewYork), may also be found in the last number.

The Theosophist is the journal of The Theosophical Society *par excellence*; the Minutes and records of the Society's work being given monthly in its "Supplements".

No evil wisher of the said Society, rushing into publicity with denunciations, and occasionally libellous attacks upon that body, ought — if he is a fair-minded and honest opponent, of course — to publish anything without first making himself well acquainted with the contents of *The Theosophist*, and

especially with the Supplements attached to that journal.

This advice is given in all kindness to our traducers - the learned as the ignorant — for their direct benefit, though at an evident disadvantage to theosophy. For, as so many of our critics have been lately making fools of themselves, in their alleged exposés of our doctrines, it is to the advantage of our Society to let them go on undisturbed, and thus turn the laugh on the enemy. Two graphic instances may be cited. In "Buddhism in Christendom: or, Jesus the Essene, by an impolite dabbler in Orientalism, the septenary doctrine of the Occultists is disfigured out of recognition, and is met by the unanimous hearty laugh of those who know something of the subject. Its unlucky author has evidently never opened a serious theosophical work, unless, indeed, the doctrine is too much above his head. As a refreshing contrast one finds, in "Earth's Earliest Ages", by G. H. Pember, an author, who has most conscientiously studied and understood the fundamental doctrines of Theosophy.

Thus, notwithstanding his attempt to connect it with the coming Antichrist, and show its numerous writers pledged to the work of Satan, "the Prince of the Powers of the Air",<sup>1</sup> the volume published by that learned and fair-minded gentleman is a true pearl in the anti-Theosophical literature. The correct enunciation [Page 78] of knowledge of the tenets he disapproves, as a sincere orthodox Christian, is remarkable; and his language, dignified, polite, and entirely free from any personality can but call forth as courteous a reply from those he arraigns. He has evidently read, and, what is more, understood, what he found in "The Theosophist", and other mystic volumes. It shall, therefore, be the pleasure and duty of Lucifer, who bears no malice for the personal attack, to review this interesting volume in its October issue, hoping to see as kind a notice of Earth's Earliest Ages in The Theosophist of Madras.

<sup>1)</sup> Spiritualists, mystics, and metaphysical Orientalists need not feel jealous, as they are made to share the same fate, and are raised to the same dignity with the Theosophists. The writers of "The Perfect Way", Dr. Anna B. Kingsford and Edward Maitland, stand arm-in-arm with the humble writer of "Isis Unveiled" before the throne of Satan. Mr. Edwin Arnold, of "The Light of Asia", and the late Mr. E. V. Kenealy, of the "Book of God", are seen radiating

in the same lethal light of brimstone and sulphur. Mr. C. C. Massey is shown stuck deep in Antichristian Metaphysics; our kind Lady Caithness is pointed out in the coils of the "Great Beast" of Romanism, and charged with "Goddess worship"; and even — ye Powers of mystical Perception! — Mr. Arthur Lillie's

Buddhist Monotheism is taken au grand sérieux!

### The Path

*The Path* "a magazine devoted to the Brotherhood of Humanity, Theosophy in America, and the study of Occult Science, Philosophy, and Aryan Literature." Edited by William Q. Judge. Price ten shillings per annum. New York, U.S.A. P.O. Box 2659, etc. George Redway, 15, York Street, Covent Garden, London.

A most excellent and Theosophical monthly, full of philosophical literature by several well-known mystics and writers. The best publication of its kind in the United States, and one that ever fulfils what it promises, giving more food for thought than many of the larger periodicals. Its August number is very interesting and fully up to its usual mark.

Jasper Niemand continues his excellent reflections in "Letters on the True." Mr. E. D. Walker, in an article upon "The Poetry of Reincarnation in Western Literature," cites the verses of Wordsworth, Tennyson, Dean Alford, Addison, H. Vaughan, Browning, etc., in proof of the fact that these poets were tinctured, if not imbued, with the philosophy of reincarnation. B. N. Acle continues *Notes on the Astral Light*, from Eliphas Lévi. He cites the startling and lurid enunciation of that epigrammatical occultist, who says that "he who dies without forgiving his enemy, hurls himself into Eternity armed with a dagger, and devotes himself to the horror of eternal murder". "*The Symbolism of the Equilateral Triangle*", by Miss Lydia Bell, shows how much wisdom can be extracted from a little symbol when you know how to look for it there.

S. B. makes some very pertinent remarks upon Theosophical Fiction, the growth of which is one sign of the times. "A true picture of life, either real or potential, which is found in a work of fiction, makes such reading one of the best sources of learning". Thanks to the education which it is receiving from the more solid literature of theosophy, the public is becoming more critical, and has already formed a "standard of probability" for marvellous phenomena, which acts as a healthy check upon outside writers of fiction, who are therefore no longer able to trust entirely "to their imagination for their acts, and to their memory for their fancies ". Novel readers now like their supernatural not to be unnaturally supernatural, even if they do have to take it in minute doses, disguised in their favourite draught of love, murder and small talk. The Higher Carelessness (No. 7 of Thoughts in Solitude), by "Pilgrim" [Wm. Scott Elliott ]

is full of deep and beautiful reflections. This writer, like "American Mystic" whose article on the puzzling question, *Am I my Brother's Keeper*? comes next, has advanced some way upon the path of knowledge, and the thoughts of both of them have a special interest for contemplative and self-examining readers. "American Mystic," by-thebye, gives a new and striking turn to a phrase too often misunderstood. "Resist not evil" he quotes and explains that resistance, fierce and personal, to evil befalling oneself, is what is meant. *Christianity* — *Theosophy*, by Mr. Wm. H. Kimbal, seeks to show that the fundamental aim of both, namely the Brotherhood of Humanity, is the same, and that they can and ought to unite their forces.

*Julius*, in *Tea Table Talk*, is as crisp, weird, and slyly-sentimental as ever.

[You may download issues of *The Path,* in IAPSOP, by visiting this link http://www.iapsop.com/archive/materials/the\_path/]

### Le Lotus

"Revue des Hautes Études Théosophiques. Tendant à favorisés le rapprochement entre l'Orient et l'Occident." Sous l'inspiration de H. P. Blavatsky (nominally; but edited, in reality, by our able brother, F. K. Gaboriau, F.T.S.). Georges Carré, 112 Boulevard St. Germain, Paris. Subscription 15 fr. per annum.

An excellent monthly, presenting yet another aspect of theosophy; inspired by the desire to benefit the struggling masses of humanity, and to diffuse the true spirit of solidarity among men. The August number, besides translations of selected articles from the *Theosophist*, of special interest to its French readers, contains a capital article on "Freemasons and Theosophists", the continuation of a series of studies on "Initiation", and a discussion of the much-vexed question whether the "Will to Live" spoken of in the "Elixir of Life" is selfish or not. In the last few pages [Page 79], the serious character of the journal is relieved by those brilliant sparkles of French wit to which that language lends itself so admirably.

Brief notes on books, articles in the press, pamphlets, etc., give ample scope for caustic raillery, as well as appreciative comment, and the editor ought to be specially congratulated on this department of his review.

[In the website of the Theosophical Society in Australia, you can find an index of Le Lotus: http://www.austheos.org.au/indices/LOTUS\_.HTM]

### L'AURORE

L'AURORE: Revue mensuelle sous la direction de Lady Caithness, Duchesse de Pomar. George Carre, 112 Boulevard St. Germain, Paris. Subscription, 15 francs per annum.

The Mystic and Catholic Journal of Aristocratic France, somewhat tinged with humanitarianism, and showing the influence of the higher phases of modern spiritualism. The subject of reincarnation is its principal feature, and a mystical romance, *Amour Immortel*, gives its various phases. *L'Aurore* is admirably conducted. Its articles are always in good taste, and perfectly adapted to the special public it appeals to.

### The Occult Word

THE OCCULT WORD: A monthly journal in the interest of Theosophy. Mrs. J. W. Cables, 40, Ambrose Street, Rochester, N. Y., U.S.A.. Subscription, I dollar per annum.

Brought out more in the style a newspaper, this journal is another proof of the vitality of the Theosophic movement. It is more Christian in its tone and phraseology, and shows less traces of the influence of Eastern thought, than the publications already mentioned. Some thoughts in it are remarkably good, and its tendency most excellent. A most worthy little periodical.

[To read about *The Occult Word*, visit IAPSOP in this link http:// www.iapsop.com/archive/materials/occult\_word/ There you will find a summary about this publication, written by John Patrick Deveney, as well as eight issues to download.]

### The Occultist

THE OCCULTIST: A monthly journal of Psychological and Mystical Research. Edited by Mr. J. Thomas, F.T.S. London agent, E. W. Allen, 4 Ave Maria Lane, E.C. Subscription,1 shilling per annum.

As its price indicates, a tiny and unambitious publication of four pages, but one that contains, from time to time, thoughtful and suggestive articles. Its existence testifies to the devotion of its proprietor and editor to the cause of truth.

### The Sphinx

THE SPHINX: "A monthly journal, devoted to the historical and experimental proof of the supersensuous conception of the world on a monistic basis." Edited by Hiibbe Schleiden, Dr. J. U. Th.Griebens Verlag, Leipzig; and George Redway, London. Subscription, 12 s.. 6d. per annum.

As its title page implies, a learned and philosophical

journal, doing its work with true German thoroughness and permeated with a real spirit of earnest investigation. It appeals, mainly, to thinkers and students — a numerous class in Germany, but somewhat sparsely represented in England. Dr. Carl Du Prel, the leader of the new school of transcendental philosophy in that country, is its leading contributor. But it contains from time to time articles of great interest to students of occultism.

[To access the issues of *The Sphinx*, visit the website of IAPSOP in this link: http://www.iapsop.com/archive/materials/ sphinx\_leipzig/]

### *Transactions of the London Lodge of the TS*

TRANSACTIONS OF THE "LONDON LODGE" OF THE T. S., NOS. 12 AND 13. — Two able and interesting papers by Mr. A. P. Sinnett; the first on "Buddha's Teaching". the second on "The Relations of the Lower and Higher Self". Dealing with Buddhism, Mr. Sinnett exposes several of the current misconceptions regarding Buddhist doctrines. Notably among these stand the utterly false ideas, current in the West, that Buddha recognised no conscious existence for the individual after death, and that Nervana is synonymous with annihilation. Mr. Sinnett draws a happy comparison between these misconceptions and the strange blindness shown by European scholars in accepting the allegorical legend that Buddha's death was occasioned by eating roast *boar*, as a literal fact.

In his second paper, Mr. Sinnett follows up a line of thought originated by him in an earlier number of the "Transactions". He explains his views with clearness, and adds considerably to the details of the outline sketched in his previous paper. But, as LUFICER hopes shortly to deal with this subject at length, it is unnecessary to enter into a detailed examination of Mr. Sinnett's views at present.

### The Esoteric

THE ESOTERIC: "A Magazine of Advance and Practical Esoteric Thought." Boston, U.S.A. Subscription 6s. per annum. Principal feature — the identification of each issue with one of the signs of the Zodiac, which are held to be "important and real divisions of time or states of man's life".

Contents — eighteen short articles, occupying 62 pages, the substance of which has been mainly gleaned from various mystic authors, and harmonizes well with some Theosophical teachings. [To read *The Esoteric* visit IAPSOP, in this link: http://www.iapsop.com/archive/ materials/esoteric/]

### Catalogue of Book Reviews, Published on Lucifer Magazine (1889-1890)

Compiled by Erica Georgiades



*Errata: FOTA Newsletter Spring/Summer 2016, The Book of Life* by Siddartha Vonisa was not reviewed by William Wynn Westcott, but The Adversary which most probably was HPB. *Lucifer* v1 n1 September 1887 p. 74. Link:http://www.iapsop.com/ssoc/1884\_sidartha\_book\_of\_life.pdf

### Lucifer V3 N18 February 1889

### *Qabbalah, the Philosophical Writings of Solomon ben Yehudah ibn Gebirol* (or Avicebron)

Author: Isaac Myer Published by the author, Philadelphia, 1888 Reviewed by Anon ? *Lucifer* v3 n18 February 1889 pp 505-512 https://archive.org/details/qabbalahphiloso00myergoog

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### Marriage and Divorce - Religious, Practical and Political Aspects of the Question

Author: Ap RIchard Publisher Trübner, 1888 Reviewed by Anon ? *Lucifer* v3 n18 February 1889 pp. 513-517 https://books.google.gr/books/about/Marriage\_and\_Divorce.html?id=84rAtgAACAAJ&hl=en&output=html\_ text&redir\_esc=y

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### Lucifer V3 N18 February 1889

### Solar Biology

Author: Hiram Butler Publisher Boston: Esoteric Publishing Company Reviewed by Sepharial *Lucifer* v3 n18 February 1889 pp 517-519 http://www.sacred-texts.com/astro/sb/index.htm

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### Imperial Germany

Author: Sydney Whitman Publisher Trubner and Co., 1889, London. Reviewed by Anon? *Lucifer* v3 n18 February 1889 pp 519-520 http://www.sacred-texts.com/astro/sb/index.htm

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### Abelardius. La Religione Come Scienza

Author: Henry Drummond Publisher Saggio — Cremona, Tipografia Sociale, 1888 Reviewed by Anon? *Lucifer* v3 n18 February 1889 pp 520-521

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### The Temple of the Rosy Cross

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Author: Freeman Benjamin Publisher San Francisco, Cal., Rosy cross publishing co., 1999 Reviewed by Anon? *Lucifer* v3 n18 February 1889 pp 522-523 https://archive.org/details/templeofrosycr00dowd

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### Lucifer V4 N19 March 1889

### The Wanderings of Oisin and other Poems

Author: William Butler Yeats Publisher Reviewed by Anon? *Lucifer* v4 n19 March 1889 pp 84-86

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### Light through the crannies : parables and teachings from the other side

Author: Emily E Reader Publisher London : Hy. A. Copley ; Berlin Heights, Ohio : Hudson Tuttle ; Melbourne, Vic. : W.H. Terry, 1896 Reviewed by Anon? *Lucifer* v4 n19 March 1889 p 86

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### Lucifer V4 N20 April 1889

### A study of man and the way to health

Author: Buck, J. D. (Jirah Dewey) Publisher Cincinnati, R. Clarke & co. Reviewed by Anon? *Lucifer* v4 n20 April 1889 pp/ 169-171 https://archive.org/details/studyofmanwaytoh01buck

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# Signs of the Times : From the Standpoint of a Scientist : an address delivered at the First Methodist Church, April 26, 1888, under the auspices of the Western Society for Psychical Research

Author: Elliott Coues Publisher Chicago : Religio-Philosophical Publishing House, 1889. Reviewed by Anon? *Lucifer* v4 n20 April 1889 pp 171-173

### Lucifer V4 N20 April 1889

### The principles of astrological geomancy : the art of divining by punctuation

Author: Franz Hartmann Publisher London : Theosophical Publishing Company Reviewed by Anon? *Lucifer* v4 n20 April 1889 pp 173 - 174 https://archive.org/details/b24884145

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Author: Richard Stephen Charnock Publisher Trubner & Co Reviewed by Anon? *Lucifer* v4 n20 April 1889 pp 174 - 175 https://archive.org/details/b24884145

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### Lucifer V4 N21 May 1889

### Problems of the hidden life, being essays on the ethics of spiritual evolution

Author: Pilgrim Publisher London: George Redway 1889. Reviewed by Anon? *Lucifer* v4 n21 May 1889 p 262

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### Patanjali's Yoga Aphorisms

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Author: William Q Judge Publisher : San Francisco, Calif. : Richardson Bro's., [1889] Reviewed by Anon? *Lucifer* v4 n21 May 1889 p 262 http://www.theosociety.org/pasadena/patanjal/patan-hp.htm

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### Esoteric Studies. Under, In, and Above the World

Author: Viscount de Figanière Publisher : San Francisco, Calif. : Richardson Bro's., [1889] Reviewed by Anon? *Lucifer* v4 n21 May 1889 pp 262-263 http://www.theosociety.org/pasadena/patanjal/patan-hp.htm

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### The Old New World

Author: Sylvester Baxter Publisher: Salem, Massachusetts, 1888 Reviewed by Anon? *Lucifer* v4 n21 May 1889 p 263

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### The Bijou of Asia

Author: Viscount de Figanière Publisher : From the Buddhist Rayt of California, republished in the Bijou of Asia, Kioto, Japan Reviewed by Anon? *Lucifer* v4 n21 May 1889 p 24

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### Lucifer V4 N23 July 1889

### Texts The Banquet (IL Convito) of Dante Alighieri

Author: Katharine Hillard Publisher : Kegan K. Paul, Trench & co. 1889 Reviewed by Anon? *Lucifer* v4 n23 July 1889 pp. 437-439 https://archive.org/details/banquetilconvit00hillgoog

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### Hertha, or the Spiritual Side of the Woman Question

Author: Elizabeth Hughes Publisher: ? Los Angeles, California 1889 Reviewed by Anon? *Lucifer* v4 n23 July 1889 pp 439-440

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### The Nationalist

Publisher: May 1889, Vol. I., No. 1. Natioalist Publishing CO. 9. Hamilton Place, Boston. Reviewed by Anon? *Lucifer* v4 n23 July 1889 p 440

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### Clothed with the sun

Author: Anna (Bonus) Kingsford Publisher: New York, F.J. Lovell & Company Reviewed by Anon? *Lucifer* v4 n24 August 1889 pp. 519-522 https://archive.org/details/clothedwithsunbe00king

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### The Light of Egypt

Author: Emma Hardinge Britten or TH Burgoyne Publisher: Reviewed by Anon? *Lucifer* v4 n24 August 1889 pp. 522-523

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### Addresses Delivered Before the London Spiritualist Alliance, During the Years 1884 to 1889

Publisher: London: Th e Psychological Press Association, 2, Duke Street, Adelphi, Charing Cross, W.C. Reviewed by Anon? *Lucifer* v4 n24 August 1889 pp. 523-524

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Publisher: London: Th e Psychological Press Association, 2, Duke Street, Adelphi, Charing Cross, W.C. Reviewed by Anon? *Lucifer* v4 n24 August 1889 pp. 523-524

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### Mystical Lays: Poems

Author: C. AF Tindall Publisher: A. Mus. T . C. 4 Reviewed by Anon? *Lucifer* v4 n24 August 1889 pp. 524-525

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### Geonomy - Creation of Continents by Ocean Currents

Author: Grimes, J. Stanley (James Stanley)

Publisher: Philadelphia, J.B. Lippincott & co. 1885 Reviewed by Anon? *Lucifer* v4 n24 August 1889 pp. 525-526 https://archive.org/details/geonomycreationo00grim

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The Lingualumina or Language of Light A Philosophical Language for International Communication

Author: FW Dyer Publisher: ? 8vo. L ondon, 1889 Reviewed by Anon? *Lucifer* v4 n24 August 1889 p 526

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#### The Power of the Will

Author: Tom Robinson Publisher: Gilbert & Rivington, 1889. Reviewed by Anon? *Lucifer* v4 n24 August 1889 p 527

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### The Light of Egypt: or, The Science of the Soul and the Stars

Author: Burgoyne, Thomas H. Publisher: Gilbert & Rivington, 1889. Reviewed by J. Dewey *Lucifer* v5 n25 September 1889 pp 77-79 http://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/webbin/book/lookupid?key=olbp45051

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Author: Sidney Rosenfeld Publisher: ? Washington and New York Reviewed by Anon? *Lucifer* v5 n25 September 1889 p79

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### Lucifer V5 N26 October 1889

### Posthumous Humanity, A Study of Phantoms

Author: A. D'Assier Trans. and Annotated by Henry S. Olcott Publisher: London, G. Redway. Reviewed Dr. Hubbe Schleiden *Lucifer* v5 n26 October 1889 p171 http://www.iapsop.com/ssoc/1887\_dassier\_\_\_posthumous\_humanity.pdf

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#### Glimpses of Irish industries

Author: Daly, J. Bowles (John Bowles) Publisher: London : Ward and Downey, 1889 Reviewed Anon? *Lucifer* v5 n26 October 1889 p172 https://archive.org/details/glimpsesofirishi00dalyiala

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### Sea Signs, Notes to Nature and Miscellaneous Poems

Author: Josiah Mallett

Publisher: The English Publishing CO (year?) Reviewed Anon? *Lucifer* v5 n26 October 1889 p172

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### Lucifer V5 N27 November 1889

### The Text Book of Astrology

Author: Alfred J Pearce

Publisher: Cousins & Co. 6 Helmet Court (338) Strand. Reviewed Anon? *Lucifer* v5 n27 November 1889 p 259

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### An Introduction to Theosophy

Author: Gilbert Elliott Publisher: London, G Redway , 1889 Reviewed Anon? *Lucifer* v5 n27 November 1889 pp 259-260

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### Can it be Love?

Author: William C Eldon Serjeant Publisher: The Theosophical Publishing Company Limited Reviewed Anon? *Lucifer* v5 n27 November 1889 p 260

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### Baleni

Author: Alfred Pioda Publisher: ? Reviewed Anon? *Lucifer* v5 n27 November 1889 p 260

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### The Astral Light

Author: Nizida Publisher: . Theosophical Publishing Co., 7, Duke Street, Adelphi, W . Reviewed Anon? *Lucifer* v5 n28 December 1889 pp 351-352 http://www.iapsop.com/ssoc/1892\_nizida\_\_the\_astral\_light.pdf

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### The Spirit of the Matterhorn

Author: Lord Queensberry Publisher: London : Watts & Co. 1876? Reviewed Anon? *Lucifer* v5 n28 December 1889 pp 352-353 https://archive.org/details/spiritofmatterho00londiala

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### Persephone and other Poems

Author: Lizzie May Little Publisher: . Dublin, Willia m Magee (year?). Reviewed Anon? *Lucifer* v5 n28 December 1889 pp 354-356

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### Lucifer V5 N29 January 1890

### Great Thoughts (a weekly journal)

Publisher: AW Hall Reviewed Anon *Lucifer* v5 n29 January 1890 p 425

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### Lucifer V5 N29 January 1890

### The Vegetarian

Publisher: Reviewed Anon *Lucifer* v5 n29 January 1890 p 425

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### Logic Taught by Love

Author: Mary Boole Publisher: London : Francis Edwards , High Street, Marylebone. Reviewed Anon *Lucifer* v5 n29 January 1890 p 426 https://archive.org/details/logictaughtbylov00bool

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### A Chaplet of Amaranth

From the writings of the Author of "From Over the Tomb." Publisher: London: James Burns. Reviewed Anon *Lucifer* v5 n29 January 1890 p 426-427

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### Peau de Chagrin, Louis Lambert & Seraphita by Balzac

Translated by Katherine Prescott Wormeley, with an Introduction by George Frederic Parsons Publisher: Rober ts Bros. Boston, 1889 Reviewed Anon *Lucifer* v5 n30 February 1890 p 525-530

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### Indian Religions

Author: Hargrave Jennings Publisher: London, George Redway, 1890 Reviewed Anon *Lucifer* v5 n30 February 1890 pp 530-531

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### **Three Sevens**

Author: Phelons Publisher: : The Hermetic Publishing Co. Chicago, III. 1889 Reviewed Anon *Lucifer* v5 n30 February 1890 pp 531-532

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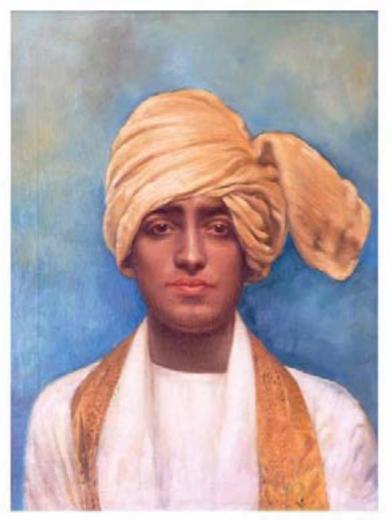
### Facing the Sphinx

Author: Marie L Farrington Publisher: San Francisco, Cal. : Published by the author, 1889. Reviewed Anon *Lucifer* v5 n30 February 1890 p 532 https://archive.org/details/facingsphinx00farrgoog

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The latest issue of the Journal *Theosophical History* has been published. For more information please visit this link: http://www.theohistory.org/contents/Contents\_18-3-4.pdf





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