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H.P.B. MESSENGER OF LIGHT

Ianthe Hoskins

Editorial by the General Secretary, The Theosophical Society in England (Adyar), in the Commemorative issue of *The Theosophical Journal*, London, May/June 1991.

Little can be added to the memorial lectures, biographical accounts and literary tributes that have sought to honor the Centenary of the passing of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, Co-Founder of The Theosophical Society. But if the occasion is not to pass into the stream of theosophical history without effect in the present, we have to release from the review of the past the latent dynamism of its central theme—a life terminated, a work begun.

A work begun—and to be continued one after another the friends and companions of her last years had this thought uppermost in their minds as they penned their personal tributes to the teacher whose physical presence was gone from them.

Our duty is clear. We must continue the work that H.P.B. has so nobly commenced.

The work to which she gave her life is now ours to carry on. It is in deeds not words that her life must blossom and bear fruit in her pupils. She left us the charge to keep the link unbroken, to hand on to others the help she gave so freely to ourselves. Let us be up and be doing, Brothers, for the time is short, the task mighty, and our Teacher's noblest monument will be the growth and spread of the light she brought to the world.

When in 1887 H.P.B. launched her second magazine, she chose for it a name that announced the nature of its message — *Lucifer*, the bearer of Light. To dispel the darkness of ignorance and superstition, the shadow of blind authoritarianism and of even more blind materialism—that was her mission, the work she was sent to undertake.

As we reflect on our responsibility for continuing that work, two considerations at least should be present in our minds. First, we must remember that she taught what she knew — by direct experience, by rigorous training, by the development of powers which, as she repeatedly affirmed, were present in latency in all mankind. The mere acquisition of information is not an adequate qualification for carrying on her teaching; we have to assimilate the eternal verities she enunciated, to accept the discipline necessary for that inner development, so that we also, in due time, may teach from experience the truths presented in the books she left us.

The second consideration is the necessity to be constantly alert to the danger of which she gave explicit warning in the concluding chapter of *The Key to Theosophy*: that every previous attempt to perform a task similar to that of The Theosophical Society has failed because “it has degenerated into a sect, set up hard-and-fast dogmas of its own, and so lost by imperceptible degrees that vitality which living truth alone can impart”.

How can we ensure that the shutters of a dogmatic creed do not close round the light she brought? Perhaps the answer is given in the words of one of her pupils:

“Truth can never die; but on us must ever rest the heaviest of all responsibilities, the effort so to shape our own characters and lives that truth may be thereby commended to others.”

H.P.B. AS I KNEW HER

Annie Besant

Extracts from *Lucifer*, June 1891;

also published in *The Theosophical Movement* (Bombay U.L.T.), February 1991

Looking at her generally, she was much more of a man than a woman. Outspoken, decided, prompt, strong-willed, genial, humorous, free from pettiness and without malignity, she was wholly different from the average female type. She judged always on large lines, with wide tolerance for diversities of character and of thought, indifferent to outward appearances if the inner man were just and true.

Personally, one of the greatest services she rendered me was placing at my service as an aid to self-knowledge her own deep insight into character. I have laughed to myself when I have heard folk say that “Madame Blavatsky must be a very bad judge of character, or she would never have trusted people who afterwards betrayed her.” They did not know that her rule was to give every one his chance, and she never recked if in thus doing she ran risk of injury to herself. It was always herself she gave away to such persons—never the Society, nor any knowledge they could use to the injury of others. I watched the course of one such case, a young Judas who pretended friendship, who was admitted by her to stay in her house, who tried ineffectively to find out secrets, and went away finally to attack her and try to betray. She talked to him freely enough, hindered

him in none of his enquiries, tried to lead him the right way, but once or twice I caught those strange eyes of hers, of which so much has been said, looking him through with a deep pathetic gaze, turning away at last with a half-breathed sigh. But when anyone was really seeking that most difficult of all knowledge, self-knowledge, then she would use her rare power of insight, would warn of hidden dangers, point to concealed characteristics, unravel the tangled threads of half-understood or non-understood qualities and defects, and thus guide the student in his efforts to know himself, and to escape from the web of illusion. Over and over again, in my own case, she has led me straight to hidden motive, to concealed weakness, to covered pitfall, and any of her pupils who could bear her scrutiny and criticism without resentment might be sure of similar aid.

As teacher H. P. B. was inspiring and suggestive, not didactic. She could only teach effectively when the student was thoroughly in touch with her, and could fill with quick intuition the gaps she left in her outline. In such cases she would throw out thought after thought, with wonderful wealth of illustrations from the most widely separated sources, the thoughts often unrelated on the surface, but always found, on careful re-study afterwards, to be links thrown, as it were, into light of some unbroken chain. The intervening links had been left in shadow, and if the student could throw them also into light, by the use of his own intuition, it was well. But where the student's mind gave no response to hers, where her quick blows startled no spark to leap forth in answer from the rock, to such H.P.B. remained always enigmatic, obscure, involved, lost in maze of metaphysics, and she proved as unsatisfactory to them as they were hopeless to her.

Of late, H.P.B. led a very secluded life; she would close her doors for days, sometimes for weeks, against those who were nearest to her, and we understand now how she was preparing all for the approaching change. And to us who lived with her the change is less than many, perhaps, may suppose. Our nearness to her was not that of the bodily presence, it was that far closer tie which ever binds together teacher and pupil in the venerable philosophy which it was her mission to impart. To us, the mere fact that she has flung off the worn-out garment of her personality in no wise alters the relation between her and us; those of us who were with her in past lives have been separated physically before through "the change that men call death", and found each other again on return to "life" on earth. What has been shall be, and in the true life no separation is possible. For many a year past, her life has been one long torture; she stood at the center of a whirl of forces spiritual and psychic, exposed at the same time to the pressure of the material plane. Alone, with none who could wholly understand her,

misunderstood, wronged, insulted, and even when loved mostly loved in a mistaken way, none except her peers can tell what a hell upon earth her life has been. That she is out of it, is matter for rejoicing, not for sorrowing for those who really loved *her*, not themselves in her. The work to which she gave her life is now ours to carry on; the forces behind it are not weakened because H.P. Blavatsky has departed. It is the work of the Brotherhood, not of any one individual, and while the Brotherhood lives and works neither doubt nor despair can touch their disciples. We have but to do our duty: success, as the world counts it, is a thing of no account.

WHERE DO WE STAND NOW

Boris de Zirkoff

The following was originally published in de Zirkoff's *Theosophia*, Fall 1970, and in 1983 included in the volume *The Dream That Never Dies: Boris de Zirkoff Speaks Out on Theosophy*. Though written those decades ago readers will find that basic questions presented here are still sensitive to the welfare of the Theosophical Movement and cannot lightly be dismissed.— Ed.

The future of the Theosophical Movement, especially in the last quarter of this century, depends upon the degree to which the most active workers within its ranks remain faithful to the original message of the Founders. That original message is sufficiently definite in its outline and specific in its pronouncements to serve as a touchstone or a frame of reference against which various temporary deviations can be easily compared, and thrown out if found wanting.

That message consists, to use H.P.B.'s own words, of "the direct teachings of the Secret Doctrine which are now being given out to the world . . . for the first time in the history of the subject." (*Collected Writings, IV, 404.*) It is "the Great Doctrine — which the Theosophical Society, faithful to the promise of its triple program, is engaged in bringing to light." (*ibid., 378.*)

Its most specific outline may be found in *The Secret Doctrine* (Vol. 1, pages 272 *et seq.*, original edition, to the end of the Chapter) wherein H.P.B., speaking with the authority of her occult status, gives a masterly outline of those basic propositions of the Esoteric Philosophy which is incumbent on all Theosophists to promulgate.

These propositions are of a universal nature; hence they are the very antithesis of dogmas. They are not the narrow statement of a *belief*, and their understanding depends upon a state of mind which is devoid of structural moulds, preconceived ideas, superstitions and blind faith. They challenge creative, independent thought, and can be ac-

cepted only upon mature and many-sided consideration. They are the formulation in present-day English of postulates of truth which, in languages now dead and gone, were formulated in distant days by other branches of the same

It should be clearly understood that the present-day Theosophical Movement is not just another fraternal organization whose main objective is to cull from here and there and everywhere particles of truth, except, perhaps, as a side project. Their chief aim is to become thoroughly familiar with the basic propositions of the Esoteric Philosophy in their original and specific outline, and to find ways and means to disseminate them—often in much simpler language—through every open channel available. But in order to do so effectively, it is of paramount importance to be able to distinguish between the original teachings and the many psychic imaginings and visionary divagations which the Theosophical Movement has become victim of during the stormy years of its existence. This calls for spiritual discrimination, careful reasoning, and a refusal to accept anything on unsupported evidence or emotionalism.

If the Theosophical Movement is to have a future at all, at least as a constructive spiritual force in this world of chaotic unrest, it has to free itself from the dead weight of psychic barnacles which cling to it today. Its published literature should be purged of texts which not only confuse the main issues at stake, but in some cases obscure altogether the spiritual foundations of the Movement and substitute for them unsupported psychic revelations wholly at variance with the original teachings. Either the Movement is to be the source of true spirituality, and the repository of the unadulterated ancient *Gnosis*, as intended by its original Founders, or it is to become in the years ahead a chaotic maelstrom of various and sundry ideas, theories and vagaries which will command neither the interest nor the respect of the thinking portion of the human race.

The original impulse as initiated by the Teachers who sponsored the outward form or the Movement was intended—as can be easily shown by their own words—to promulgate an ancient doctrine well-nigh forgotten in our present age of materialism. The propositions of that doctrine were broadly outlined both in their own writings and in those of their direct agent, H.P.B. It is our bounden duty to become imbued with the nature, spirit and contents of these essential propositions, and to refuse to accept any theories—however well meant—which obscure them and confuse the issues involved. Unless this is done, and done consistently, the future of the Movement as a spearhead of the truth will be in jeopardy....

FOR THIS REASON IS IT SECRET

What, in fact, is the Secret doctrine, seemingly connected with the *Stanzas of Dzyan* through the title of H.P.B.'s book? It is the Eternal Wisdom underlying the teachings of all religions, the actual facts, of which we can never have more than interpretations unless we ourselves gain experience of them. For this reason it is secret. Every religion claims the Wisdom for its own; each tries to encompass it within the framework of a systematized expression; and each then claims for its interpretation a divine infallibility that can belong, not to any systematized interpretation, but only to the eternal and ineffable truth beyond all frameworks. Into these regions the mystics of all religions have adventured and have seen the one great light, but those who are concerned with the framework see only the differentiations of that light, the stained-glass windows of their particular sects. If we wish to see that unitary light, the standard religious teachings can only take us to a certain point on our journey, the limits of the exoteric frameworks. Beyond that point the road enters a wild and dangerous country where we can get no support from those organizations and precautions that society devises for its greater safety.

—Krishna Prem and Madhava Ashish: *Man, the Measure of all Things* (In the *Stanzas of Dzyan*), pp.23-4

H.P. Blavatsky to the Second American Convention

This convention was held in Chicago, April 22-23, 1888, and H.P.B. addressed her message: To William Q. Judge, General Secretary of the American Section of the Theosophical Society. It begins: "My dearest Brother And Co-Founder of the Theosophical Society:". We give here only a few extracts. — Ed.

...But let no man set up a popery instead of Theosophy, as this would be suicidal and has ever ended most fatally. We are all fellow-students, more or less advanced; but no one belonging to the Theosophical Society ought to count himself more than, at best, a pupil-teacher—one who has no right to dogmatize. Since the Society was founded, a distinct change has come over the spirit of the age. Those who gave us commission to found the Society foresaw this, now rapidly growing, wave of transcendental influence following that other wave of mere phenomenalism. Even

the Journals of Spiritualism are gradually eliminating the phenomena and wonders, to replace them with philosophy. The Theosophical Society led the van of this movement; but, although Theosophical ideas have entered into every development or form which awakening spirituality has assumed, yet Theosophy pure and simple has still a severe battle to fight for recognition. The days of old are gone to return no more, and many are the Theosophists who, taught by bitter experience, have pledged themselves to make of the Society a "miracle club" no longer. The faint-hearted have asked in all ages for signs and wonders, and when these failed to be granted, they refused to believe. Such are not those who will ever comprehend Theosophy pure and simple. But there are others among us who realize intuitively that the recognition of pure Theosophy—the philosophy of the rational explanation of things and not the tenets—is of the most vital importance in the Society, inasmuch as it alone can furnish the beacon-light needed to guide humanity on its true path.

This should never be forgotten, nor should the following fact be overlooked. On the day when Theosophy will have accomplished its most holy and most important mission—namely, to unite firmly a body of men of all nations in brotherly love and bent on a pure altruistic work, not on a labour with selfish motives—on that day only will Theosophy become higher than any nominal brotherhood of man. This will be — a wonder and a miracle truly, for the realization of which humanity is vainly waiting for the last 18 centuries, and which every association has hitherto failed to accomplish.

Orthodoxy in Theosophy is a thing neither possible nor desirable. It is diversity of opinion, within certain limits, that keeps the Theosophical Society a living and a healthy body, its many other ugly features notwithstanding. Were it not, also, for the existence of a large amount of uncertainty in the minds of students of Theosophy such healthy divergencies would be impossible and the Society would degenerate into a sect, in which a narrow and stereotyped creed would take the place of the living and breathing spirit of Truth and an ever growing Knowledge.

According as people are prepared to receive it so will new Theosophical teachings be given. But no more will be given than the world, on its present level of spirituality, can profit by. It depends on the spread of Theosophy—the assimilation of what has been already given — how much more will be revealed, and how soon.

It must be remembered that the Society was not founded as a nursery for forcing a supply of Occultists — as a factory for the manufactures of Adepts. It was intended to stem the current of materialism, and also that of spiritualistic phenomenalism and the worship of the Dead. It had to guide the spiritual awakening that has now begun, and

not to pander to psychic cravings which are but another form of materialism. For by "materialism is meant not only an anti-philosophical negation of pure spirit, and, even more, materialism in conduct and action — brutality, hypocrisy, and, above all selfishness, — but also the fruits of a disbelief in all but material things, a disbelief which has increased enormously during the last century, and which has led many, after a denial of all existence other than in matter, into a blind belief in the *materialization of spirit*.

The tendency of modern civilization is a reaction towards animalism, towards a development of those qualities which conduce to the success in life of man as an animal in the struggle for animal existence. Theosophy seeks to develop the human nature in man in addition to the animal, and at the sacrifice of the superfluous animality which modern life and materialistic teachings have developed to a degree which is abnormal for the human being at this stage of his progress.

Men cannot all be Occultists, but they can all be Theosophists. Many who never heard of the Society are Theosophists without knowing it themselves; for the essence of Theosophy is the perfect harmonizing of the divine with the human in man, the adjustment of his godlike qualities and aspirations, and their sway over the terrestrial or animal passions in him. Kindness, absence of every ill feeling of selfishness, charity, good-will to all beings, and perfect justice to others as to one's self, are its chief features. He who teaches Theosophy preaches the gospel of good-will; and the converse of this is true also — he who preaches the gospel of good-will, teaches Theosophy...

The Great Sacrifice

G. de Purucker

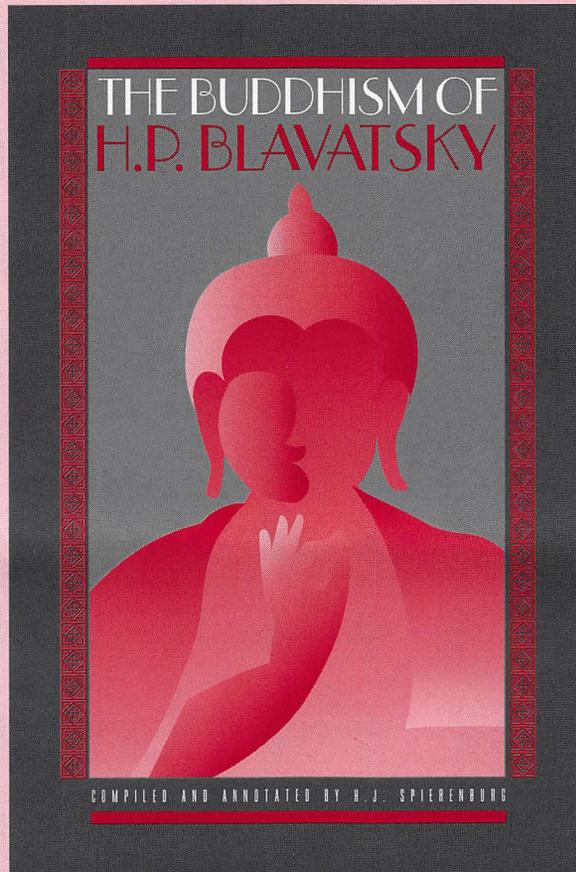
(From the section "Studies in *The Secret Doctrine*"
in *Studies in Occult Philosophy*, pp. 250-51)

Who is this Initiator; who is this Great Sacrifice? Who is this Silent Watcher? Please open your ears in reverence. Ages ago when the human race on this planet during this Fourth Round was still young, mind had not yet imbodyed in the then intellectually senseless early Third Root-Race, when therefore man was but slightly psychic, fully instinctual, but not yet intellectual, non-self-conscious as we understand this phrase. There were nevertheless a few in whom the lamps of mind burned bright, the most advanced of the human race who had been intellectually enlightened by Manasaputric descents before the vast majority of the race. They were even in the early part of the Third Root-Race fully self-conscious, intellectual and spiritual human beings; and all the rest of mankind were sunken in the dreamland as it were of non-intellectual activity.....

The First Time in One Volume

Here for the first time is a compilation in one volume of her perspective, both controversial and of stimulating value, for all interested in the Buddhist and Theosophic world view.

D.T. Suzuki spoke of Helena Blavatsky as "one who had truly attained," and praised her *Voice of the Silence* as being "true Mahayana Buddhism." The Lama Kazi Dawa Samdup, who translated the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* with Dr. W.Y. Evans-Wentz, said Blavatsky's writings showed "...intimate acquaintance with the higher lamaistic teachings..." She and Col. Olcott, then President of the Theosophical Society, formally took Buddhist vows in Sri Lanka in 1880



much to the shock of Christian missionaries and colonial powers. This bold action by her, and Olcott's extensive networking initiated a cultural revival there revitalizing Buddhist values.

Throughout the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Blavatsky influenced prominent Buddhists of all kinds: From late nineteenth century Singhalese Buddhists who were her close

associates, to the sixth Panchen Lama who in 1925 wrote an introductory preface to the Peking edition of her *Voice of the Silence*, and more recently Christmas Humphreys, Bhikshu Sangharakshita, Alex Wayman, etc. Throughout the century, Blavatsky's Theosophic exposition of Buddhist thought has gained influence and respect.

The Buddhism of H.P. Blavatsky
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....These few in whom the lamps of intellect had already begun to burn bright formed a group, a band, a brotherhood, of human guides. But yet something more was needed, something from a still higher sphere was required for the utter safety of all mankind, for the utter safety of those few souls, as well as of the great multitude of as yet non-intellectual human beings. So these few took council, went into themselves and sought the inner light. Oh how may this mystery be expressed? Uniting their will-power and their imagination, these ethereal beings, through Kriyasakti, through spiritual will-power and imagination, established contact with the waiting divinity, karmically waiting, the destined one for this globe, and provided the physical vehicle for the imbodiment of this waiting divinity, a true Avatara of a peculiar type. Through Kriyasakti this relatively small band of men in whom the flame and light of mind already burned brightly, united, and created if you wish, produced by their vitality and their will and their imagination, the vehicle. And behold the link was made with the waiting Dhyani-Chohan and before their eyes it was!...

Madame Blavatsky at a Distance

... I never met her. I never looked into her eyes. Words cannot picture regret. But after a time she wrote to me. . . Although she had a lion heart, it bled; but never broke. The subtle aroma of her courage spread over seas, invigorated and rejoiced every synchronous heart, set us to doing and to daring . . . To quote the words of one who lived in the house with her; 'They may say what they please about her personality. I never knew a better one. It had the sturdiness and dignity of the druidic oak, and she was well expressed by the druidic motto: *The Truth against the World.*' Although in the flesh she remained unknown to me, she alone of all the world's Leaders gave me Truth, taught me how to find it, and to hold it "against the world." The soul that can work such a miracle at a distance is no minor ray; it is one of the great Solar Centers that die not, even though for a time we miscall it Helena Blavatsky.

— J. Campbell Ver Planck
The Theosophical Journal,
March-April 1991.

“Is Theosophy a Religion?”

Theosophy is not a Religion we say, but RELIGION itself, the one bond of unity, which is so universal and all embracing that no man, as no speck from gods and mortal

down to animals, the blade of grass and atom can be outside of its light. Therefore, any organization or body of that name must necessarily be a UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD. Were it otherwise, Theosophy would be but a word added to hundreds of other such words as high-sounding as they are pretentious and empty.

—H.P. Blavatsky, *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, X, 163

The Unvarnished Truth

.... The unvarnished truth — H.P. Blavatsky was one in whom the mere personality was entirely absorbed in the spiritual individuality of her, the mere personality or human aspects being devoted on the altar of truth and to the service of her inner spiritual essence or divinity, and to the sublime work of the Great Sages and Seers who sent her forth as their Messenger among men.

She was indeed their chosen Messenger, and, so far as her Theosophical Message of the Ancient Wisdom went, she was the Mouthpiece, and the only Mouthpiece for the time being, of the Association of Great Sages and Seers. Such a choice in itself places her on the topmost pinnacle of human greatness; for none but great talent and lofty genius could be fit for a work so great and sublime.

—G. de Purucker, *H.P. Blavatsky: The Mystery*, p. 28

The Primary Purpose of The Occult Brotherhood

Nicholas Weeks

The fundamental motivation, for the work of this Occult Brotherhood was clearly expressed in 1882 by a Master writing under the name Koot Hoomi.

The word "God" was invented to designate the unknown cause of those effects which man has either admired or dreaded without understanding them, and since we claim, and that we are able to prove what we claim — i.e., the knowledge of that cause and causes — we are in a position to maintain there is no God or Gods behind them. . .

The God of the Theologians is simply an imaginary power... Our chief aim is to deliver humanity of this nightmare, to teach man virtue for its own sake, and to walk in life relying on himself instead of leaning on a theological crutch, that for countless ages was the direct cause of nearly all human misery. ¹

Therefore, the purpose of the Brotherhood is to reduce human misery by replacing the ancient, false, God-idea with the timeless Truth at the heart of the Secret Doctrine.

The fundamental Law in that system, the central point from which all emerged, around and towards which all gravities, and upon which is hung the philosophy of the rest, is the One homogeneous divine SUBSTANCE — PRINCIPLE, the one radical cause...

It is called "Substance-Principle," for it becomes "substance" on the plane of the manifested Universe, an illusion, while it remains a "principle" in the beginningless and endless abstract, visible and invisible SPACE. It is the omnipresent Reality: impersonal, because it contains all and every thing. *Its impersonality is the fundamental conception of the System* It is latent in every atom in the Universe, and is the Universe itself.²

Since most of humanity identifies with and is only familiar with our "manifested Universe" and manifested personality, we naturally are deluded by this limited illusion that we appear to be. However, rather than take the arduous route of questioning our most cherished and apparently obvious persona, we take instead the "broad and easy" way of assuming that something of a personal nature is the source of our self and our world. The Ageless Wisdom teaches just the opposite. "The Secret Doctrine points out. . . that Mankind, collectively and individually, is, with all manifested nature, the vehicle of the breath of One Universal Principle, in its primal differentiation."³

The original fount of our higher and lower selves is *not* a God or Logos, the God or Logos, the Logoi, or any combination thereof. While we *are* connected with these higher Lives, they are not the Source, but at best more radiant links in the living network which is the Universe. As H.P. Blavatsky put it: "Everything, from spirit to the tiniest particle, is part of the whole, at best a link."⁴

That which lives and thinks in man and survives bodily death, 'is the 'Eternal Pilgrim,' the Protean differentiation in space and time of the One Absolute 'unknowable'.⁵ Thus, the very root of our personal being and personal world is that "unknowable", the "One divine Substance Principle." Since "*impersonality is the fundamental conception*" of the only Reality, perhaps we should reconsider the "reality" we invest in our self and our God; whether a He or She, a Planetary Logos, Solar Logos, or beyond.

But does the question of personal God or impersonal Principle really matter? The Master Koot Hoomi answered a similar query as follows: "I say, it matters everything..."⁶ One of the highest members of the Brotherhood, the Chohan, also told why "it matters."

The world in general, and Christendom especially, left for two thousand years to the regime of a personal God, as well as its political and social systems based on that idea, has now proved a failure.⁷

We have only replaced that old, prosaic, God and His angels, with such revamped "theological crutches" as the Goddess, Her Solar Logos, and His Planetary Logoi, the Christ and His Masters, not to mention the channelled "guides" that chatter so continually. This constant seeking

to contact, channel, invoke, or be guided by a divine entity, rather than our own "celestial ray from the one," is dangerous folly. As H.P.B. wrote:

Though they are "gods", still they are not to be worshipped. . . With the Pralaya. . . Brahma all the other Devas, and the gods are merged into the Absolute. Therefore, occultists do not worship or offer prayers to them. . . The worshipper. . . would do far better to remember that every man has a god within, a direct ray from the Absolute, the celestial ray from the One; that he has his "god" *within*, not outside of, himself."⁸

No theosophist, no *Occultist* in the true sense of the word has ever *worshipped* Devas, Nats, Angels or even *planetary* spirits. Recognition of the *actual existence* of such Beings—which, however exalted, are still gradually evolved *creatures* and finite—and even reverence for some of them is not *worship*. . . An Occultist's reverence for certain high Spirits may be very great in some cases. . . But it stops there. For the Theosophists these planetary "angels" occupy no higher place than that which Virgil assigns them: "They boast ethereal vigour and are form'd/ "From seeds of heavenly birth", as does also every mortal. Each and all are occult potencies having sway over certain attributes of nature. And, if one attracted to a mortal, they do help him in certain things. Yet, on the whole, the less one has to do with them the better.

Around two thousand years ago the great Bodhisattva Nagarjuna wrote:

If you desire the higher realms and liberation, meditate upon the Right View. Even good deeds by a person with wrong view, all have dreadful fruition.¹⁰

Right View consists of confidence in the Law of Karma and the non-selfhood, or lack of inherent existence, of everything. The dreadful fruit of such ideas as "God" or "self" would be that one would never be able to spiritually advance beyond this present world, and spiritual stagnation means spiritual death. But could a "God" conception when strongly held, really be so disastrous? Not for a few lifetimes, perhaps. But after many lives of sincere but erroneous belief, the magnetism and other invisible results attracted to the person are almost impossible to remove. The Master Morya, when commenting on some Hindu theists who would not, or could not, give up the notion of "God", wrote:

Faith in the Gods and God, and other superstitions attracts millions of foreign influences, living entities and powerful agents around them; . . . unprogressed *Planetaries* who delight in personating gods and sometimes well known characters who have lived on earth. . . These are the gods the Hindus and Christians and Mahomedans and all others of bigoted religious and sects worship.¹¹

No matter how foolish, bigoted or evil Theism and its followers may be, Karma forbids any direct assault upon their freely chosen beliefs. This is why Koot Hoomi did not write of destroying the God-idea or converting ardent theists, but of "delivering" humanity from this theistic nightmare. Only those whose minds are open enough to

consider the truths of the Wisdom Religion should be exposed to these ideas. As K.H. once wrote, "degrade not truth by forcing it upon unwilling minds." Some theists may learn from their karmic trials and look for a better way, but karma will do most of the "converting" that may occur, not the Occult Brotherhood or its admirers. One other reason for the little proselytizing by followers of the Occult doctrine is the certainty that our "celestial ray"—given one is striving for selflessness—will provide, or help us find, all the inspiration and guidance we need.

Let us hope these thoughts, from the Noble One, the Patron of all true Adepts, Gautama Buddha, will help us all to do our duty, by striving to awake humanity from its nightmare:

Those who mistake the unreal to be real and the real to be unreal, dwelling in wrong thoughts, never arrive at the real.¹²

Those who know the real to be real and the unreal to be unreal, dwelling in right thoughts do arrive at the real.¹³

Oneself is one's own refuge; what other refuge can there be? With oneself fully controlled, one obtains a refuge which is hard to gain. By oneself indeed is evil done and by oneself is one defiled. By oneself is evil left undone and by oneself indeed is one purified. Purity and impurity depend on oneself. No one can purify another.¹⁴

— *The Canadian Theosophist*
July-Aug. 1990

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2. H.P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine (SD)* 1, 273.
3. *Ibid.*, II, 492.
4. *H.P. Blavatsky Collected Writings (BCW) X*, 395
5. *SD II*, 728.6. *ML* p. 140.
7. "The Maha Chohan's Letter" in *Letters from the Masters of Wisdom* First series, p.8
8. *BCW X*, 345.
9. *BCW X*, 13-14.
10. *Nagarjuna's Letter*, trans. Geshe Lobsang Tharchin, p. 81.
11. *ML* pp. 455-56.
12. *Letters from the Masters of Wisdom*, First Series, p. 38.
13. *Dhammapada*, vv. 11-12, trans. Venerable Acharya Buddhārakkhita Thera.
14. *Dhammapada*, vv. 160,165, trans. Walpola Rahula. In *What the Buddha Taught*, p.130
5. *SD* 11, i28.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

H.P.B. Centennial "White Lotus Day"

Theosophical magazines around the world have devoted special issues this year commemorating the centennial of the death of H.P. Blavatsky May 8, 1891. We name only a few that have reached us. The May special number of *Le Lotus Bleu* (Paris), leads with a reprint of an article by Salomon L'Ancri, "H.P.B., the Sphinx of the 19th Century," followed by "Reflections on *The Voice of the Silence*," by Jean-Louis Siemons, and Section II of H.P.B.'s "The Esoteric Character of the Gospels."—*Theosophia* (official organ of the T.S. Adyar, of the Netherlands), carries special articles by well-known Theosophists of yesterday and today, opening with Wim van Vledder's "H.P. Blavatsky and Theosophische Vereniging." It also has a new study by H.J. Spierenburg, "The Vedas in the Work of H.P. Blavatsky."—*The Theosophical Journal* (England) opens its Commemorative Issue with the General secretary's article, "H.P.B., Messenger of Light," which we here republish, and a reprint of G.R.S. Mead's words at the crematorium at Woking, addressed to: "Friends and Brother Theosophists." (Mr. Mead was then General Secretary of the European Section T.S. and Private Secretary to H.P.B. during the last two years of her life.) The March-April issue also reprints the article by J. Campbell Ver Planck, "Madame Blavatsky at a Distance." (Extracts given in this *E.T.* number.)—*Sunrise*, April/May (Pasadena T.S.), has an unusual cover photo of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, by Enrico Resta, London, 1889; and also photo reproductions of H.P.B., of December 1878, en route to India on the S.S. Canada; of W.Q. Judge, New York City 1895; Henry Steel Olcott, San Francisco, October 1891, and a copy from the Original Minutes Book of the Theosophical Society, First Meeting, New York City, September 18, 1875. The overall title of this special issue is "H.P.B., Theosophy, and the Theosophical Society," and leads with an article of the same title by the editor, Grace F. Knoche, followed by 15 other original and pertinent presentations. Also included are H.P.B.'s famed articles from the first issue of *The Theosophist*, "What is Theosophy?" and "What are the Theosophists?"

Other theosophical magazines with special commemorative articles include: *Der Theosophische Pfad* (Die Theosophische Gesellschaft, Berlin, Irmgard Scheithauer, editor), with "The Esoteric She," W.Q. Judge's tribute to H.P.B. —*Theosophy in New Zealand*, its March issue opening with "Moment of Truth, A Tribute to H.P. Blavatsky" by Jeanine Miller (based on a talk given on White Lotus Day at the Krotone Institute, School of Theosophy, Ojai, California, May 1987).

An Outreach Project

The following comes from Dick Slusser, editor of *The High Country Theosophist* of Denver/Boulder, Colorado (140 s. 55nd St.) A very active monthly of the American Section T.S., Wheaton, informative, often challenging, but basically encouraging serious study of Theosophy. (E.g., issues this year: Jan., Rules for Being Human; Feb., A Theosophist's Reflections on the Persian Gulf War; March: Are the Teachings of Theosophy Outdated?; April: The Moon, an Enigma.) Dick Slusser recently wrote us: . . . an idea for an outreach project for the HC Study Center occurred to me at the 1988 S. D. centenary conference in Pasadena when one of the African delegates spoke of the need for theosophical books and intercourse with American theosophists. At our Sept. 23rd meeting, I introduced the "Sister Lodge" idea to our group and it was enthusiastically accepted....

With the end of the cold war and the return of freedom of thought in eastern Europe there may be some golden opportunities to help theosophists there who have had to work "underground" until now. I remember a description on one of John Coats' tapes (from the 1960s) of a visit he made to "underground" theosophists in Czechoslovakia. I think that there is a great deal of good that we American theosophists can do along these lines at this time, and perhaps it would be a good idea to encourage others to initiate their own efforts. The whole concept is still in a germinal stage in my mind.

Two points should be made: (1). The High Country Study Center seeks a theosophical group in Africa, eastern Europe, or other world country for a "Sister Lodge" affiliation for mutual help and exchange of ideas. (2) We are also interested in serving as a focal point in the U. S. to facilitate the making of connections with other groups here and abroad for this project. —(Those interested should write to: Dick Slusser, 140 S. 53rd Street, Boulder, Colorado 80303).

One Hundred Years of Theosophy in Canada

This is a special Centenary Year for Theosophy in Canada since the Toronto Theosophical Society came into existence on February 25, 1891, and, as all Theosophists know it also marks, as *The Canadian Theosophists* of Jan. — Feb. 1991 says, "the one hundredth anniversary of the death of Madame Blavatsky on May 8, 1891." That date is customarily observed as White Lotus Day by students who respect her enormous contribution to modern Theosophy.

This year, White Lotus Day will have a special significance for them. "The editors then go on with the article, A Hundred Years of Service to Theosophy in Canada," and reproduction of the charter issued to the Canadian TS, signed by "H.P. Blavatsky, Corresponding Secretary, H.S. Olcott, President, and William Q. Judge, General Secretary American Section," dated February 25, 1891.

A history of Theosophy in Canada is being compiled to mark the Centenary. "Any reader possessing material that might be useful to this study is asked to contact the editors. Letters and old magazines are often valuable sources." (Address: Mr. & Mrs. T.G. Davy, Editors, *The Canadian Theosophist*, 2307 Sovereign Crescent S.W., Calgary, Alta, T3C2M3, Canada.)

We quote briefly from the lead article in the *C.T.*, March-April, 1991, "William Q. Judge, A Center of Light and Hope": . . . "The inspiration lives on. Judge's writings are a precious legacy, for they contain a philosophy that continues to inspire, the more so when we know he practised what he preached. When he wrote that each member should be "a living, breathing center of light and hope for others," he was not just coining a pretty phrase. Nor was he pointing to himself — a more humble individual would be hard to find — though a better description of his own example could hardly be composed. "In our celebrations of a hundred years of Theosophy in Canada, we should remember our debt to Judge, who was truly the personification of the "center of light and hope" he urged us all to be."

—T.G.D.

Theosophy Science Center

News has come from India of the founding of a Theosophy Science Center, functioning from January 1991, under the auspices of the International Headquarters at Adyar. "It seems appropriate," the announcement adds, "to inaugurate the activities now, this being the international H.P.B. year. H.P.B. described *The Secret Doctrine* as the synthesis of Science, Religion and Philosophy, and in her writings made it clear that Theosophy is Divine Knowledge or Science in its true meaning. The second object of the T.S. implies the unity of the three disciplines, namely the pursuit of Truth . . .

"There is reason to believe that scientists are slowly moving toward the theosophical view of ultimate reality, of a spiritual source being the ultimate cause of all manifestation in Nature. This spiritual source is the ultimate essence of each constituent part of compounds in Nature—

—from star to mineral atom . . . (S.D. vol. I). It will be the philosophers, social scientists, psychologists, technologists, educationists and theosophists all over the world to interrelate and form a network for promoting the aims of the TSC . . . The TSC will try to organize lectures and seminars in tune with its objectives in various locations, with the help of sections or lodges of the T.S. and Theosophy-Science groups. Depending on the programs made in fulfilling its objects, TSC will consider publication of a periodical newsletter." [Dr. A. Kannan, who has been active along these lines for many years, will be the Secretary; and the International President of the TS will be the ex-officio chairperson of the TSC.]

Dr. Rupert Sheldrake on "The Memory of Nature"

From *Theosophy in Australia* we learn that Dr. Sheldrake, a recognized scientist with a Ph.D. in Biochemistry from Cambridge, lectured for the Blavatsky T.S. Lodge in Sydney. He gave "a wealth of examples from sources as diverse as modern biology, quantum physics, and comparative religion, and explained his concepts of Morphic Resonance and Formative Causation."

He also spoke on November 27, 1990 to the Melbourne Lodge TS to an audience of over 250. The Melbourne Lodge on December 9, 1991 celebrated the centenary of its birth, the Gen. Sec. Dianne Kynaston doing the honors, giving a talk on the early days of Theosophy. Early incidents of the Lodge were recalled by two over-90 year olds, as well as the Lodge President.

Threshold Correspondence Courses

These are planned "to stimulate the higher mental faculties of the student, to awaken his intuitions, and encourage him to move forward on the Eternal Highway of Self-discovery. We are told that ALL TRUTH IS WITHIN US, and that books, lessons, teachers, etc., can only point the way. Each individual, through self-induced and self-devised efforts, must *find himself*, his *Divine Self*, and thereby discover the infinite Wisdom and Compassion already dwelling with him."

The above is quoted from *Messiah*, issued quarterly and edited by Marcheta Henry, P.O. Box 5, Weaubleau, Missouri, 65774. Course No. 1 is based on W.Q. Judge's *Ocean of Theosophy*, No. 2 on the set of twelve Theosophical Manuals published by Point Loma Publications; and other courses follow. For full information write *Messiah*.

From Letters Received

As we go to press it has been too soon to receive "official reports" of the important recent commemorative HPB meetings held marking the centenary of her death on May 8, 1991, but the following excerpts from letters received from individuals attending the two day meetings in Wuppertal/ Elbertfeld and Pasadena, will give some flavor of the happenings there.

Mrs. E. J. Lauber. London: (about the recent HPB Commemorative Centenary): We all met in Wuppertal/ Elbertfeld of Gebhardt fame, of course. There were six or seven Theosophical 'Sections' all in utter friendship and very conscious of their COMMON GROUND. Helga Rex was unsurpassed in administration (with her daughter too) and in her addresses before and after the event. There were about 150 or so those two days in (luxurious) beautiful Novotel Hotel. Apart from lectures there were group discussions very ably led. Addresses (Irmgard Scheithauer's and Wilfried Goltz especially) were absolutely outstanding and uplifting. . . In London we had five days of White Lotus, most successful for members and the public too; altogether a very intense focus on H.P.B. these weeks, *and* her Cause/Work/Sacrifice... *and* her SOURCES too!

Wilfried Goltz. Berlin:—All in all Wuppertal was a success. Helga Rex gave her best in her final speech and in organization. Material for my talk was drawn from Kingsland's *The Real H.P. Blavatsky*, G. deP.'s *H.P. Blavatsky. the Mystery and Wind of the Spirit*, the *Bhagavad-Gita* and *The Light of Asia*. Daniela Deutsch, Helga's daughter, did well in assisting me and reading some pieces. The workshops proved more successful than anticipated. They helped people to get to know others who "think differently." They were conducted brilliantly by Sybille Krause, who tied things together to show this open-discussion was a tribute to H.P.B. There was some discussion in answer to whether we should work more closely with "New Age" people and not hold so closely to our theosophical vocabulary and teachings. I responded with reference to what H.P.B. said in a letter to a Convention in America which made it clear that we should hold to the high level of the Real Teachings. . . . We had fine people in this Group: Klare Baer of Munich (member of Pasadena), Erica Lauber of London (Adyar), Irmgard Scheithauer (Berlin-Point Loma) and others. So this was good. We will now see how things evolve in Germany and we will try to sustain the work Helga Rex is doing in the right direction, as we see it.

Rosemary Vosse, Wynberg, South Africa: —We had quite a successful event on May 4-5 (commemorative days for H.P.B. Centennial at the TS in Cape Town, widely publicized with the help of Hugo Oosterwijk of the Pasadena group. Now he and Renee, president of the TS (Adyar) are conducting a weekly group together, while some of the interested people on my side of the “mountain” are being encouraged to attend my meetings, as suggested by Renee.

M.R.M., Encinitas, California: —Looked up my file. Wonderful to find letters from Mr. Iverson L. Harris, dated July 1, '71, Sept. 8, '71, Sept. 30, '71, and Feb. 23, '72 ... Also a few Theosophical bulletins and the *Eclectic* since March of 1971 – a 20th anniversary for me as a subscriber.

P.M. Mississauga, Canada: I have been reading G. de P.'s *Messages to Conventions*. No matter which book of G. de P.'s I read, it is as if he himself is there in person talking. With most books I know that I am reading them. But with G. de P. it is talking. It is a firsthand experience as if he is right there! And over and over and over again the one thing he emphasizes, be it a lesson on cosmogenesis, on hierarchies, or on some mundane subject, is love and Brotherhood. I wish I had had the honor and privilege of having been with him at Point Loma. I have read his books, more than once; and after this I've grown attached to him. My life has become more meaningful, had more purpose and indeed become sweeter after I came in touch with Point Loma. Till then I was fumbling, looking for something, but where and what I could not tell or find, I had known of Theosophy since very young. But there was a void. Then I got to know friends and the teachings from Point Loma, and above all I found G. de P. and am grateful. Even if I do not master all the technical teachings, at least I'm sure of one thing I have learned: that there *is* a higher side to each one of us. That there is a divinity *within* each one of us and, being offspring of the stars of the universe, that sublime Divinity actually exists within the core of us. A realization of this simple truth is what perhaps Theosophy with all its doctrines is all about.

Len Marlieb, Miami, Florida: — Looking forward to the third binding of back issues of E.T. Which is without doubt the finest representation of Theosophy. Its objectivity makes it a true champion! (End of 1991 should make third vol. bound ready. — Ed.)

A Man to Remember

Fox at the Wood's Edge (Henry Holt, 1990) by Gale E. Loren is a biography of Loren Eiseley, who died in 1977.

Eiseley, a professor of Anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania, often noted in both *Manas* and *Lookout*, was also an interpreter of science, and an essayist in books about nature. In *The Immense Journey*, Eiseley not only indicated that he did not believe in “dead” matter, but challenged the inadequacy of Darwinian theory to account for the human brain. Betty Ann Kevles, who reviews *Fox at the Wood's Edge* (*Los Angeles Times*, Sept. 18, 1990) writes:

I am sorry that Christianson waited until two-thirds through the text to point out Eiseley's role as environmental visionary. Along with Rachel Carson in the 1960's, Eiseley warned of what he called the “fifth horseman” of the Apocalypse—technology. This man-made creation seemed to him a maelstrom “consuming flesh, soil, minerals . . . wrenching power from the atom, until the ancient sounds of nature are drowned in a cacaphony of something which is no longer nature.” Yet, like his hero Henry David Thoreau, Eiseley did not mix much in nature ... “while creating the grand illusion that the wilderness was his natural abode.”

Loren Eiseley was also a poet, and while he may not have mixed much in nature,” he had the gift for creating hauntingly memorable images, drawing from nature a sense of awe and the “oneness” of life. One of his admirers, Theodosius Dobzhansky, an eminent biologist, commented: “Poetry and science are about as unmixable as oil and water.” “Yet there are exceptional scientists who succeed in making just such mixtures. Loren Eiseley is one of the exceptions.”

Theosophy, Los Angeles (ULT), February, 1991

THEOSOPHY PURE AND UNADULTERATED

Willy Schmit

These are a few thoughts after reading the editorial “The Enduring Fundamentals of Theosophy” (*Eclectic*, Jan./Feb. 1991), being a response to an article in *The American Theosophist*, Nov., Dec., 1990, by John Algeo, “The Tree of Theosophy: Prolegomena to a History of Theosophical Thought.”

To Theosophists who have dedicated many years to the study of Theosophy, it is utterly incomprehensible that the word “outdated” should be labeled to theosophical teachings or *The Secret Doctrine*. It would be the same, in my opinion, as asserting that the sun, or the processes of Nature, or great music, could ever become outdated. Without proof of apt quotations (with title and page) from the theosophical writings needed to elucidate and support the author's viewpoint, that word 'outdated' (referring to Theosophy itself) becomes an empty slogan.

Those acquainted with *The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett* will be conversant with the explanations given therein about adeptship and the requirements needed for the attainment of such a spiritual development. To them there is no doubt that no greater difference is possible than between these important documents and the writings of C.W. Leadbeater. We can safely assume that the latter did not like the *M.L.*

Theosophy in its pure unadulterated form has given back to mankind the knowledge of its rightful place in Nature as inherently divine beings, with endless possibilities of growth by reason of evolution. It has given us insight and consolation when confronted with the problems of life.

It has revealed to us the mysteries of birth and death, and confronted us with the ever re-adjusting workings of karma. The study of these grand ideas calls for our undivided attention. Like the alchemists of old we have to accomplish the transmutation of our human natures.

The majestic ideas of Theosophy will never become outdated, nor can they be substituted. Theosophy has taken root in the hearts and minds of all who have intuited these great truths and made them part and parcel of their daily lives. And this has been made possible through the exertions of the great hearts known in the world as H.P. Blavatsky, W.Q. Judge, and G. de Purucker, who, by their high spiritual development, by their lives and writings, have given us the knowledge of these universal ideas.

Theosophy "outdated"? Do you want to see if this is so? Then you will have to really study the theosophical teachings, for as the saying goes, "the proof of the pudding is in the eating." No one else can do that for you. To accept without deep search and self-questioning is to neglect your own spiritual and intellectual capacities. H.P. Blavatsky said it pithily: "Theosophy is not for those who want to lean, not for the sluggards." In studying, your inner monitor will be your guide. As the Buddha said: "Do not believe it because I say so; think for yourself." And in studying, we have to read behind the words, between the lines; we have to ponder each theosophical idea, viewing it from different angles in order to fully understand the value of paradoxes and metaphors as a means of preventing the crystallization of our thoughts.

Of this we can be sure: Theosophy, pure and unadulterated, is as living now as it was in the past, it is our job and our privilege to help keep it so.

— Willy Schmit is director of programs at The Hague for the School for the Study of the Esoteric Philosophy, and of the Netherlands branch of Point loma Publications, Inc.

The Spirit is Left to Starve

Ferret out wrong ideas, not individuals. The "new dispensation" which claims to be "in tune with the times" is precisely that it says it has superseded the "out of date fundamentalist theosophy," with a modern enlightened system. Indeed this new wave of pseudo-theosophy accepts hatha- and kundalini-yoga (radically imbalanced toward the physical) with its emphasis on chakras of the *body*, hypnotism, survival of the *personality* after death (rendering reincarnation absurd), channeling (mediumship), prayer, past life recalls, and terminology borrowed heavily from the church pulpit. In short, everything that stands in direct opposition to the ancient wisdom. No restraints or ethical considerations here to obstruct a headlong plunge into — *black magic*. No emphasis on altruism, brotherhood, or Buddhist philosophy. Only the hollow glamour of phisic toys, permissiveness, and external observances. They are definitely in tune with these times as physical technology runs rampant, bereft of philosophy. The psychic and intellectual ego is satiated *ad infinitum*, while the spirit is left to starve. No. Theosophy changes not one iota with the cycles of time, or the fads that boil to the surface in the cauldron of society. The first Law of Nature is equilibrium ... balance... equity. We call it Karma. The Middle Way is no sophistry, but a mirror of nature, requisite for attunement. Discretion, altruism, and learning through correspondences and deductive reasoning (from universals to particulars) are the measures of real Theosophy. Revelations and assertions lead...*nowhere*.

— Wane Kell

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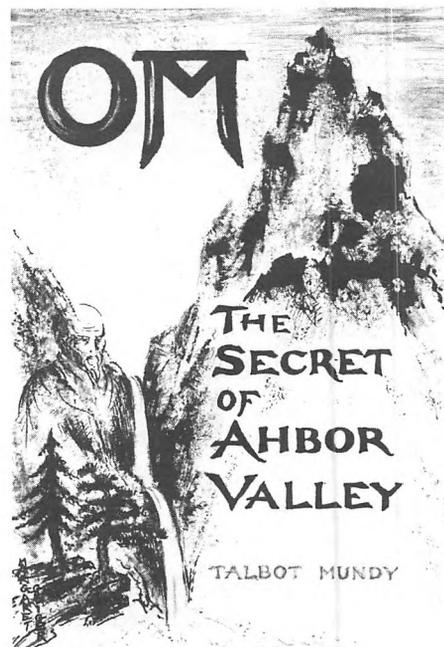
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