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Editors: W. Emmett Small, Helen Todd

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OPPORTUNITY IN KALI-YUGA

G. DE PURUCKER

We live in a very interesting age, Companions, a time when history is in the making. I do not think that in the recorded annals that are open to us at the present time there has ever been an epoch when serious-minded students of the Ancient Wisdom, which we call Theosophy, have the opportunities that now *we* have. It is precisely the stress and the strain which are opening our hearts and tearing the veils away from our minds. It is the same thought that our Masters have told us applies to kali-yuga, the Iron Age, a hard, rigid age where everything moves intensely and intensively and where everything is difficult; but precisely the age in which spiritual and intellectual advancement can be made most quickly. There actually have been ages in the past when chelas or students have longed for conditions to be more difficult than they were; to give them the chance to advance faster.

In the Golden Age, which it is beautiful to dream about, in the so-called Age of Saturn, in the age of man's innocence, everything moved smoothly and beautifully and all surrounding being co-operated to make everything beautiful and pleasant; and there is something in our hearts that yearns to return to it; but it is not what the chela longs for. He longs for opportunity; he longs to climb; he longs to test what is in him, to grow from within.

Isn't it a strange paradox that the hardest, cruelest, of all the yugas is precisely the one in which the quickest advancement can be gained? I think there is a world of wisdom in this thought; and I speak of it tonight because only a few days ago I received a most pathetic communication from one of "Ours" who wanted to know if there was not something good in the kali-yuga: if mankind had to go under without hope. Why, it is the very time when the chances are the most frequent for progress! It is the opportunity-time.

—Closing remarks at a meeting
of the Headquarters Lodge
Point Loma, California
September 29, 1935

Of The Most Vital Importance

... the recognition of pure Theosophy — 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.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY: to the American Convention
April, 22, 1888

HOW THE DOCTRINE OF REINCARNATION CHANGED MY LIFE

JAN MOLIJN

The important thing about the doctrines of Theosophy is not supremely, it seems to us, what appeals to some students as their intellectuality, but the fact that they are practical and can powerfully affect one's life. They are, after all, facts about Man and the Universe, the truths of Natural Being. But they are understood, naturally enough, in all-varying degree by the individual giving them attention. The great ideas, for example, of Reincarnation, Karma, Cycles in manifested life, the Composite Nature of all things, the Basic Law of Brotherhood and of Love and Compassion — thoughts on these have deep meaning. They give people courage, fortitude, inspiration, vision, in degree. The following article is the first of a series that shares with the reader what one or other (or all) of the Theosophical doctrines mean to the individual, what influence they have had on his or her life. —Eds.

I was brought up in a somewhat orthodox Protestant family by loving parents. Though obviously unaware of the consequences, they sent me to a denominational primary school, where the religious teacher told us that as a result of the original sin committed by Adam and Eve, all human beings, both innocent babies and senior citizens, were subject to eternal damnation unless, through the grace of God, they were granted the belief that the expiatory death of Jesus had saved them and opened for them the way to eternal heavenly bliss. That our very existence was an abomination to God was drummed into our young minds, and understandably we cowered under these blows, though the subsequent break gave some consolation. At the time we kids could, of course, not possibly see through the unholy doctrine that we were vexed with. It was only much later that I realized what harm had been done and how illogical and distorted this dogma of predestination really is.

It was not before my twenty-eighth year, after I had accepted a post as teacher in the north of Holland, that in a private restaurant I met with a psychiatrist whose accounts of what he had experienced dispelled the darkness that hung over my mind so that I could gain an insight into the real background of the Christian dogmas. If the rats and mice that one of the psychiatrist's neurotic patients saw constantly running in his room were realities to him but not to others, could not Jesus' atonement be real to some, but extremely doubtful to non-believers, I asked myself. Will we ever know whether the Crucifixion ever actually took place and whether the Jesus of the New Testament really was the only son of God?

A considerable time later I had the good fortune to stumble upon a booklet by the British Rev. L. D. Weatherhead, Ph.D., entitled *The Case for P. incarnation*. Here, for the first time in my life, I was confronted with the doctrines of karma and rebirth, which were to give answers to so many of my burning questions. Among the all-important subjects that are discussed in this booklet is that of God's justice. The author compares the happy life of Betty Smith with the miserable fate of Jane Jones, and asks himself how life can be so unjust. Is it God's will? Then how unlike any human father He must be, and a human father who thus exerted his will would be clapped into jail. But if we accept the idea that

all these inequalities are the result — in a cosmos of cause and effect — of earlier causes, the product of some distant past, the fruit of previous choices, then our sense of justice is preserved. None of these can be the will of God whose nature is said to be wisdom, knowledge and holiness. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" may be indeed a law that applies for the sowing in lives before this and for the reaping in the present life and lives after this. We are not concerned here with rewards and punishments, but with causes and effects, which may relate to good as well as evil happenings in our lives.

It stands to reason that this single booklet, however significant it may have been at this crucial period of my life, did not satisfy me completely. I needed more specific convincing information. When I happened to look up a footnote in Weatherhead's brochure I saw a reference to the works by Dr. G. de Purucker, a Dutch translation of whose *Theosophy and Modern Science* I devoured in a few days' time. Though I had also consulted several books from various groupings and societies, it was as if the contents of Dr. de Purucker's books, such as *The Esoteric Tradition* and *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, which I read later, recalled long-forgotten memories which made me feel 'at home' at last.

It took me several years to change from a dogmatic Christian to a convinced reincarnationist, but from the time I became satisfied of the truth of the twin doctrines of karma and reincarnation, I had been thankful to H. P. Blavatsky and her Teachers — who gave the doctrines of the Ancient Wisdom to the Western world anew — and to Dr. G. de Purucker, who formulated the teachings of Theosophy in such lucid language, because it has been they who relieved me of the burden of sin and guilt that had kept oppressing me from my very youth. Now I know in my heart of hearts that all which happens to us in this life has not been ordained by God or gods, but is the consequence of two agencies: first, the divine impulse that governs our evolution from unconscious god-spark to — in a remote future — self-conscious collaborators with the kosmic architects; and second, our own thoughts, emotions, and actions, with which we either cooperate with or oppose the evolutionary impulse spoken of above. And last but not least, it was my wife — educated at the T. S. headquarters in Point Loma, who during a lifetime untiringly supported my efforts to arrive at a relatively satisfactory solution of the problems of life and death. Having ourselves been privileged to study the principles of the Ancient Wisdom, we cannot but co-operate with all who feel the inner urge to promulgate it to those of the four billion human beings inhabiting this globe who are clamoring for light in the darkness of dogma and superstition.

A CHAPTER OF THEOSOPHICAL HISTORY CLARIFIED

IVERSON L. HARRIS

Following are the "additional notes" by Iverson L. Harris to "Some Reminiscences of William Q. Judge" by E. A. Neresheimer, referred to in our last issue under "Historical Material". Though Mr. Neresheimer's "Reminiscences" are not known to many today, yet they have been in type for some decades, and to readers of them during those years they will have presented an incomplete and in certain instances not fully accurate picture. To some, interested not so much in the history of the Theosophical Society as in the teachings and doctrines themselves, the whole matter will appear

of minor or subsidiary importance; but to those historically minded, and especially to those who feel an inborn duty to defend those on whom misunderstanding has fallen, there is always urgency to place on record actual facts so that these speak for themselves and become part of a faithful record available to all.

These facts are now covered in the commentary which follows and are here printed as a practical means for their more public noting and their preservation. — EDS.

Serious students of Theosophical history usually have strong convictions — strong loyalties and sometimes even stronger prejudices, alas! This is understandable, but does not justify distortion of facts when these facts prove to be unpalatable and irreconcilable with attitudes taken and sometimes stubbornly maintained in the face of the established facts.

The World Centenary Congress of the Theosophical Society in New York in November 1975 took an historic step forward in its public — and apparently unanimous — recognition of William Q. Judge as one of the three principal Founders of the T. S. in New York in 1875, along with H. P. Blavatsky and Col. H. S. Olcott; and not only as such but as the master-architect and builder of the modern Theosophical Movement and best expounder of the Esoteric Philosophy in the U.S.A. in the Nineteenth Century. The timely publication of the first volume of Judge's Collected Writings is irrefutable evidence of his outstanding stature.

The time is now ripe to brush away some of the distortions, misrepresentations and falsehoods frequently promulgated by earnest but prejudiced or misinformed *ex parte* writers concerning what happened to the Theosophical Society in America immediately following the death of Mr. Judge on March 21, 1896.

There has long been a wide cleavage between those who vigorously and ardently maintained that William Q. Judge 'appointed' Katherine Tingley as his esoteric 'Successor' and those who, on the other hand, have chosen to apply to the Buddhist *guruparamparâ* of the Judge-Tingley 'succession' H. P. B.'s dictum that the 'Apostolic Succession' in the Roman Catholic Church was 'a gross and palpable fraud.'

The final *coup de grace* to the *bona fides* of Katherine Tingley's 'successorship' to William Q. Judge was loudly and publicly proclaimed by the anonymous writers of the United Lodge of Theosophists publications to have been in E. A. Neresheimer's *Some Reminiscences of William Q. Judge* privately circulated and publicly quoted in the early 1930's. On Page 17 of the typescript of this in many ways well-written, informative and generally authoritative account, Mr. Neresheimer writes:

Mr. Judge's "diary" is in my possession and can be seen at any time by any responsible Theosophist. I desire to state that "the further messages and quotations from Mr. Judge's diary" of which Mr. Hargrove writes in the above pamphlet of April 3rd, 1896, are not in the book and never were, as any inspection will verify. Those alleged "messages and quotations" attributed to Mr. Judge could only have been concocted by Mrs. Tingley, assisted by Mr. Hargrove and Mr. J. H. Fussell, who alone were closely associated with Katherine Tingley at Headquarters at that time, and who, with her, drafted all communications that then went out from Headquarters."

The historical facts completely contradict the charge that the people named "concocted" the notes, or memoranda, (sometimes miscalled the 'diary') in Mr. Judge's own handwriting. These Mr. Neresheimer naturally did not find in the

Judge Diary in his possession; they were written by Mr. Judge on fragments of paper, of which Mr. Neresheimer was fully cognizant at the time of Mr. Judge's death, as borne out by statements made by him at the time. Later, on a visit to Point Loma, Mr. Neresheimer admitted in the presence of his wife and other witnesses that the fragments of "messages and quotations" published by Mr. Fussell and Mr. Hargrove were actually in Mr. Judge's handwriting.

The details of the Judge 'diary' and the above-mentioned libelous charge and its refutation are set forth in *The Theosophical Forum*, Point Loma, Calif., Vol. IV, No. 5, January, 1933, and No. 7, March, 1933. Dr. H. N. Stokes' *O. E. LIBRARY CRITIC* of Washington, D. C., issue of September, 1932 reproduces the actual language of seven of these "messages and quotations" under the heading "The Judge 'Occult Diary'. Vindication of Tingley, Fussell, Hargrove." Dr. Stokes published further facts in this case in his issues of October, 1932 and March, 1933.

I have seen the originals of these 'messages and quotations' in Mr. Judge's handwriting, and I showed photographic copies of them to Miss Margaret Thomas (an active U.L.T. member) at Oakley House, Bromley Common, Kent, England, while I was attached to Dr. de Purucker's staff during the temporary transference thither of the International Headquarters of The Theosophical Society (Point Loma) in 1932-1933.

The anonymous author or authors of the U.L.T. History of the Theosophical Movement have persistently maintained that the statement that Katherine Tingley was 'appointed' by Mr. Judge as his esoteric 'Successor' is untenable and even fraudulent. But the Founder of the United Lodge, Robert Crosbie, fully aware of the documents on which the Esoteric Council at the Headquarters in New York accepted Katherine Tingley as having been pointed to (if not literally appointed) by W. Q. Judge to succeed him as Head of the Esoteric Section, for years thereafter was among the most outspoken in proclaiming the fact and the strength of Katherine Tingley's successorship. Witness, for example, the long article titled "The Sifting Process" published in *The Search Light* Vol. I, April, 1898, over the signature of Robert Crosbie. (Reprinted in *The Theosophical Forum*, Point Loma, Calif. Vol. III, Page 253, August 15, 1932, and in *THE O. E. LIBRARY CRITIC*, March, 1933, Vol. XXII, No. 4.) Why does the U.L.T. suppress the following from an address given by their Founder, Robert Crosbie, in the Fisher Opera House, San Diego, California, at a series of meetings in honor of William Q. Judge, on March 29th and April 1st, 1901 — five years after Judge's death?:

It should be noted that the Leaders of the Theosophical Movement did not become so by virtue of an election by vote — nor were they self-appointed. Mme. Blavatsky was the first leader, by the force of her wisdom and power of leadership, and all the true students of Theosophy accepted her as such. And when she appointed William Q. Judge as her successor, his leadership was accepted for the same reason — and so, too, with Katherine Tingley, who was appointed by William Q. Judge as his successor. And when she dies she will appoint her successor who will be followed by the faithful members — And thus is preserved the line of teachers and the continuity of the Movement.

A later change of attitude which led Mr. Crosbie to found the United Lodge of Theosophists, cannot alter the historic facts on which he based his judgment consistently and continuously for at least five years following Mr. Judge's death.

One phase of this brief historical review closes with the following item which appeared in *The Theosophical Forum* (Point Loma), June, 1937:

E. A. NERESHEIMER

The passing of our old and much loved Brother, E. A. Neresheimer, last April 16th, at his home in Santa Monica, California, in his ninety-first year, recalls his long years of membership in the T. S. and his devotion to Theosophy dating back to the time of H. P. Blavatsky and W. Q. Judge. As Dr. de Purucker said in a telegram of sympathy to Mrs. Neresheimer: "Nere's memory for magnificent past work for us all in Society will remain ever green and cherished."

But what of the succession of spiritual leaders in the Point Loma Theosophical Society, so positively proclaimed by Robert Crosbie?

When Katherine Tingley died in 1929, her office as "Leader and Official Head" and Esoteric Teacher was assumed by Dr. G. de Purucker, not through any written appointment but by the 'divine right' of intellectual and spiritual qualification — recognized and tested by his predecessor through long years of discipline and confidence. In his case, in superlative degree can one apply the infallible rule given by Jesus: "By their fruits shall ye know them."

For a more detailed — though, for one who knows the facts, notably restrained — account of what happened to the Theosophical Society following the death of Dr. de Purucker on September 27, 1942, see Charles J. Ryan's *H. P. Blavatsky and the Theosophical Movement*, Appendix IV, to the new special edition issued by Point Loma Publications, Inc. in 1975. This Appendix was reprinted in *The Eclectic Theosophist* Newsletter No. 29, July 15, 1975.

FROM LETTERS RECEIVED

Bilthoven, Holland
September 21, 1976

Editors, THE ECLECTIC THEOSOPHIST:

Some time ago I was told there were plans made at the Centenary Convention, November 1975, in New York, for a better co-operation between the publishing houses of the different branches of the Theosophical Movement. In your No. 34 Newsletter we read about a new step in the production of the Collected Writings of H. P. B., viz. the new edition of *The Secret Doctrine* in two volumes now being printed at Adyar, India. Indeed this would have been impossible had Boris de Zirkoff not for 40 years worked in this direction! I think everyone will recognize his merits on this point. But: a student who daily has those *Collected Writings* on hand is far more interested in having as soon as possible the Volume XII and XIII and the Letters of H. P. B. as there already exist excellent editions of *The Secret Doctrine*. One has a good photostatic edition published by the U.L.T., and also a good

verbatim reprint of Theosophical University Press. Was it, then, really necessary for B. de Z. to devote his energies to a new printing of that same work?! One is prompted to give a negative answer.

This is not meant as a negative criticism, but as an incentive, and at the same time as an offer, to help in editing as soon as possible those articles and letters of H. P. B. which are practically unknown. How much these are needed is demonstrated in the recent book by G. Barborka, *The Peopling of the Earth*. On p. 203-217 the writer quotes a nearly unknown article from *The Theosophist*, March 1958 (!) containing some fragments by H. P. B. found in the Archives at Adyar. This chronology is totally different from that given in Part II of *The Secret Doctrine* and does not dovetail either with the remarks made on page 116-17 of the *Collected Writings*, Vol. VI. If an article casually published changes the whole of the chronology as given in *The Divine Plan*, the chance is great that still more surprises are awaiting in the other pages of those volumes XII and XIII! So I would most emphatically ask or even beseech B. de Z. to stop with the new edition of the *S. D.* and to start the printing of those last volumes!

But this is only part of some suggestions I would like to make. If I am permitted by the Editors of *The Eclectic* I would suggest that at least in some very practical points the energies, knowledge, and money of all Theosophical Publishing Presses should be pooled. I think that all should be united in the endeavor to have a set of "Classics" printed. I think all could co-operate in editing the following: *The Key to Theosophy*, *The Voice of the Silence*, *The Secret Doctrine* — by H. P. B.; *The Ocean of Theosophy* by W. Q. Judge; articles by Col. Olcott, as in *Practical Theosophy*. This set should be very cheap and is meant to be given to the greater libraries in countries where English reading students are to be expected. Secondly: a book containing Reminiscences of H. P. B. by those who knew her personally; a succinct biography and pamphlets, as e.g., "Madame Blavatsky on How to Study Theosophy". Perhaps one could also envisage a publication of the major works of some personal pupils of H. P. B., as e.g., Mead, Kingsland, and Alice Leighton Cleather.

If we could unite on these points the different organizations could publish their special authors for their own flock and for those who want to adhere to one of the existing "Societies". And, perhaps, still farther away: I think it would be a good thing, after a century of "Theosophy" to try to picture the place of H. P. B. in the esoteric and mystic traditions of the West (and East?). She named especially in *Isis Unveiled* and *The Key* many writers whom she looked upon as direct predecessors, especially religious-philosophical authors. But she also looked for readers in circles of "free-thought", as will be seen from many pages in *Isis Unveiled* and in *Lucifer*. A work on H. P. B. and her influence on those lines should be a common effort from many students and editors.

—J. H. DUBBINK

[Dr. Dubbink is a member of The Theosophical Society, Adyar, and one of the editors of *Theosophia*, official organ of that Society in Holland.]

BOOK REVIEWS

THE CRATYLUS, PHAEDO, PARMENIDES, TIMAEUS and CRITIAS of PLATO, *Translated from the Greek by Thomas Taylor, with Notes on the Cratylus and an Explanatory Introduction to Each Dialogue*. Wizard's Bookshelf, Minneapolis, 1975. 428 pages. \$30.00.

Here is a re-issue in the Wizard's Bookshelf "Secret Doctrine Reference Series" of five of Plato's most important Dialogues from the rare 1793 edition of Plato's works by the great English Platonist whose writings on ancient philosophy and the Mysteries exerted a profound influence on the thought of H. P. Blavatsky.

Born in 1758, Thomas Taylor devoted his life to the translation of the Greek Classics, believing the Platonic Philosophy to be the noblest revelation of divine truths ever imparted to man. Called by his admirers "the greatest Platonist of the modern world," and also known as "The Platonist," he saw Platonism as a viable philosophy of life and endeavored not only to promote a better knowledge of its principles in the modern world, but also to live his own life by the precepts of this "illuminated code of thought and action," which, if studied and lived, he believed would bring man to a noble and enlightened state.

Taylor called himself "a feeder of poets," rather than an actual poet, for it was his translations of Plato and other ancient philosophy that inspired such men as William Blake, Wordsworth and Shelley, as well as the American Transcendentalists Emerson, Thoreau and Alcott. H. P. Blavatsky refers to Taylor in *The Secret Doctrine* as "the most intuitional of all the translators of the Greek Fragments," and according to Richard Robb, the publisher of the present edition, even though "few if any Theosophists have ever read Taylor, H. P. Blavatsky's signed and worn copy of his *Plato*, which still exists at the Headquarters of the English Section of the TS at 50 Gloucester Place, London, indicates her regard for this edition."

The reason for this regard is not difficult to discover from a reading of Taylor's works, for far from being the dry pedant often expected of a classical scholar, he often wrote with fire and enthusiasm, inspired by his recognition of the hidden thread of Ancient Wisdom running through and uniting the Orphic-Pythagorean and Platonic writings. In one of his works he explained that he wrote not for his own age, but for other ages to come, believing that "the sublime theology which was first obscurely promulgated by Orpheus, Pythagoras and Plato, and was afterwards perspicuously unfolded by other legitimate disciples, a theology which, however, though it may be involved in oblivion in *barbarous* and derided in *impious* ages, will again flourish for very extended periods, through all the infinite revolutions of time." And, as H. P. Blavatsky repeatedly points out, there is *no* comparison between Taylor and Benjamin Jowett, the most widely-known 19th century Plato translator who often professed his own inability to make any sense out of the obscure passages in many of Plato's Dialogues, causing one to wonder why he bothered to spend his time translating them. As the publisher of this re-issue in the "Secret Doctrine Reference Series" remarks in his introduction, however, these obscure passages are rendered much clearer to anyone "with a thorough background in rather unorthodox occult teachings;" an advantage enjoyed by Thomas Taylor, who was well-acquainted with the arcana

of the ancient Mysteries, Chaldean magic, Hermeticism and Neo-Platonic mysticism, and was therefore able to interpret the obscurities of Platonic myth and symbolism in a profoundly illuminating manner. Indeed, the great value of the present re-edition lies in the introductions, notes and selections from Neo-Platonic commentaries provided by Taylor in abundance. (This volume contains, also, an exhaustive collection of passages from *The Secret Doctrine* relating to Thomas Taylor and Platonism, which should make it of added interest and use to students of Theosophy.)

Taylor, however, never enjoyed the popularity in the academic world that was accorded to Jowett, and like H. P. Blavatsky, was subjected to the constant carpings and attacks from "minute" critics who were, as Taylor himself expressed it, "more intent on *philology* than on *philosophy*." Yet the rejoinder given by Taylor's admirers to those who attacked his translations of Plato was, as H. P. Blavatsky notes in *The Secret Doctrine*, that Taylor "may have had less knowledge of the Greek than his critics have, but he understood Plato far better than they."

There have always been a few, of course, who have been aware of Taylor's genius and who have preferred his translations of the Greek classics to all others, but it is only recently that there has been evidence of a growing number of such admirers. The present volume is a further indication of this increasing interest in Taylor's work, and may signal the approach of the "ages to come" for which he himself declared that he wrote, perhaps also indicating that the merit of his work is at last coming to be recognized more generally.

—GARY DOORE

Echoes of the Orient. THE WRITINGS OF WILLIAM QUAN JUDGE, Vol. I, Compiled by Dara Eklund. Published 1975 by Point Loma Publications, Inc. lxviii 582 pp. Price \$7.00.

The publication of a collected edition of the writings of William Quan Judge is an event that should be hailed with gratitude by all students of Theosophy. The first volume is now at hand, and it is fitting that its appearance coincided with the Society's centennial celebrations, especially in view of the long-deserved recognition accorded Judge at the Centenary World Congress.

Judge's writings deserve to be better known, and this volume serves as an impressive introduction. Although he used a different approach in describing the Ancient Wisdom as he knew it, his output is entirely reliable and in complete compatibility with the teachings of H. P. Blavatsky and her Masters.

The title chosen for this book is a good one. True, there may be some confusion with a similar title (*Echoes from the Orient*) used much earlier for a collection of newspaper articles by Judge, but that little book is probably not sufficiently well known as to create problems. The point is, he had few equals when it came to interpreting Eastern philosophies to the West. Indeed, he was one of the very few who have successfully bridged the Orient with the Occident. Some of the benefits of that link are to be found in this stimulating collection.

Considering that he was a practicing lawyer, and that he devoted much time and channelled tremendous energy into the organizational side of the Theosophical Society during his short life, the literary output of William Q. Judge is quite amazing. Much of his writing is confined to short pieces — but are not to be criticized on that account. *Multum in parvo.*

In *Echoes of the Orient* will be found no fewer than 160 articles which originally appeared in *The Path*, the magazine he founded in 1886 and edited until his death in 1896. In addition, there is a round dozen of his "occult tales", a medium he used quite effectively to hint at otherwise unmentionable esoteric concepts.

Echoes of the Orient also contains a short biographical essay, "William Quan Judge, His Life and Work", compiled and edited by Sven Eek and Boris de Zirkoff. This is essentially that which was formerly published under the title *William Quan Judge — Theosophical Pioneer*. Until a full biography of Judge is written, this piece is the only authoritative treatment of this remarkable student of Theosophy. A short bibliography and a useful index are appended.

The contents of this book include some of the most valuable Theosophical writings available excepting those of H. P. Blavatsky, Judge's close friend and teacher. In them can be seen his stature as an occultist, which in retrospect can be assessed as being far beyond that of most of his contemporaries and of those who followed.

We can only thank the publishers for their enterprise, and especially for providing this book at a price which by today's standards must be considerably below cost. Their loss, however, will undoubtedly be more than compensated by the knowledge that their efforts will result in a host of new students being introduced to the exemplar of Theosophical study and practice, William Quan Judge.

—TED G. DAVY, in *The Canadian Theosophist*,
March-April, 1976

NUMBERS: THEIR OCCULT POWER AND MYSTIC VIRTUES by W. Wynn Westcott; reprint by Vasanta Press of the Theosophical Society (1973) of 1911 (3rd edition); available in both cloth and paper, 131 pages.

This collection of occult tidbits deserves a prominent spot in any occult, kabbalistic or numerological library. Complete with the original three prefaces by Westcott and the fullest amplification of the text by Westcott and his Rosicrucian students, it still has one serious flaw: its very comprehensiveness could easily be remedied by the addition of an index.

Parts I, II, and III serve as an introduction to Part IV. In parts I and II, five or six pages are devoted to gleanings from Pythagoras and his school concerning their general numerical philosophy and their complex classification of number types. Thus numbers are not merely even and odd but evenly even, evenly odd, and unevenly even, all of which types are even numbers. There are as well three categories of odd numbers. Just a taste of their elaborateness and occult significance is laid out. Part III is a concise Kabbalistic exposition giving the Hebrew numerical equivalents and their Greek correspondences. Unfortunately our modern mentors have not thought it necessary to insure against errors. Thus, in the table of Hebrew-Greek-Numerical correspondences, no less than fourteen errors are to be noted. In comparing this edition with the third edition, only two errors of omission were noted, both of which were dutifully carried forward into this fourth edition.

Part IV, as described in the contents, gives the "properties of the numbers according to the Bible, Talmuds, the Pythagoreans, the Romand, Chaldeans, Egyptians, Hindus, Medieval Magicians, Hermetic Students and the Rosicrucians." This part is further subdivided into seventeen chap-

ters treating numbers one through 13-1/2, higher numbers, Hindu, and Apocalyptic numbers.

In form, the book is little more than an expanded table of contents to an as yet unwritten encyclopedia of Kabbalistic, Rosicrucian, and other ancient numerologies and numerical symbologies. Used properly, this magnificent text can be an exhaustive mine of source-material for the erudite. For instance, are there ten or eleven sephiroth? This is an age-old Kabbalistic problem. The dictum of authorities that there are eleven can be derived from the paragraph on the twelve-lettered name of God (p.109). By the kabbalistic method of gematria, explained in Part III, this name of God is valued at 78, six more than the value of 72 given on page 120. This six is accounted for by the inclusion of the conjunction "and" (or Hebrew "vau") in the twelve-lettered name. By removing this letter the value is reduced to 72 with eleven letters. Eleven, however, is Kabbalistically contrasted "with the perfection of the Decad . . . the essence of all that is sinful, harmful and imperfect." (p.102). So one sephirah was hidden, leaving the usual ten, and the "vau" was included in the name of God as a key to the hidden knowledge.

An amazing compendium.

—JOHN DRAIS

COMMENT ON SOME CURRENT THEOSOPHICAL PERIODICALS

Corresponding Fellows Lodge of Theosophists Bulletin — following the Blavatsky Tradition — (Worthing, England) concludes in the October 1976 issue the series by its editor, Elsie Benjamin, on the Stanzas of Dzyan begun in August 1975. (The first article of the series was reprinted in *Eclectic* No. 31, November 1975). The entire series is recommended reading for all students. We recall these lines from H. P. Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 21:

"The Stanzas, therefore, give an abstract formula which can be applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to all evolution: to that of our tiny earth, to that of the chain of planets of which that earth forms one, to the solar Universe to which that chain belongs, and so on, in an ascending scale, till the mind reels and is exhausted in the effort."

Recent issues have studied at some enticing length the following subjects: "The Symbology of the Seal of The Theosophical Society"; "The Monad"; "Individuality, studied from Three Aspects"; and, in the November issue, in answer to correspondents' questions, a discussion on the difference between "The Complete Works of H. P. Blavatsky" and "The Collected Writings of H. P. Blavatsky."

This *Bulletin* is unique among theosophical periodicals in that every member has a voice — and it is heard. The "Discussion and Comment" section is thus very humanly interesting, and the writers are from many lands and backgrounds.

Theosophy (ULT, Los Angeles), section 'On the Lookout': for January 1976 carries interesting comment on a recent paperback issued by Princeton University Press: *Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries* by George E. Mylonas. In the same issue and section, is a description of Mystery Hill, New Hampshire, which a group of the New England Antiquities Research Association places as contemporary with the earliest stages of Stonehenge. Pertinent comment by H. P. Blavatsky is given on megalithic or cyclopean remains in the Mediterranean basin, in Denmark, Shetland, Sweden, Germany, Spain, Africa, Palestine, Algeria, Sardinia, India, Russia, Siberia, and Peru and Bolivia. In 'On the Lookout' in the June issue, under "Lost Keys", is pertinent reflection

on "how widely and fundamentally acceptance of the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation would alter and eventually eliminate the most pressing social and moral problems." The lead article in August *Theosophy*, "The Man of Mind", and the article "A Time of Trial" in the September issue, contain challenge and thoughtful substance for all readers. If *The Eclectic Theosophist* were a journal of many pages, these are among articles on the current scene that would be published from this always theosophically stimulating magazine.

The American Theosophist, Wheaton, Illinois. Organ of The Theosophical Society in America (Adyar). A review of the Special Spring Issue 1976, "The Feminine Principle", appeared in *Eclectic* No. 36, September 15, 1976. These special issues, published twice a year, have lent fine representation from a wide range of qualified writers covering such subjects as A Philosophy of Wholeness, The Path of Self-Unfoldment, On Death and Dying, H. P. Blavatsky's Contribution to Modern Thought, Some Approaches to Healing, and Theosophy; the Seed of Synthesis. It is hoped that the past quality and tone of these special issues will be sustained. Much of the content of the other monthly numbers understandably are given to reportings of interest mainly to national members, such as listing branch activities, summaries of Conventions, membership statistics, workshops. The lead article "Viewpoint" by the Section's President, is as a rule on some subject of general interest to the national membership and is treated in a practical and commonsense manner.

We cannot but regret the editor's selection in the September 1976 issue of an old article "Is Mars Inhabited?" by Fritz L. Kunz and Ruby L. Radford, and its editorial introduction. The implication that science will come around to recognize C. W. Leadbeater's psychic investigations of the planet Mars can hardly be called tenable, and in fact encourages a misconception leading both to confusion and a misunderstanding of certain basic theosophical teachings. Recent scientific and astronomical research presents no evidence that the canals on Mars are anything other than natural markings on the surface of the planet. In the light of this and other statements made one seriously questions the value of a reprint of an article of this nature. The name of Theosophy does not gain in reputation thereby.

Hermes (Brahma Vâch), Santa Barbara, California (U.L.T.). (Brahma is defined on the cover as "Theosophia, the Divine Wisdom — the aggregate of knowledge and wisdom that underlies the universal homogeneity of Eternal Good. . .").

This monthly is rich in its wide-ranging gleanings of truth from all cultures and all ages. In the February 1976 number, "The Soul of Tibet" deals sympathetically with the tragic happenings in Tibet which led to the escape and exile of the Dalai Lama. The article is an impassioned protest against the "sudden confrontation between a way of life centered in spiritual concerns — with an integrity of its own . . . and the crude forces of aggression . . ." It poses the question as to what will befall these traditionally gentle and child-like people. Further, it is a sincere searching for the deeper significance as to the future destiny of the rich store of sacred texts — thousands of them — which came originally from India, Nepal and China and of which for centuries Tibet has been the sacred repository. Lastly, the writer says, all this is a challenge to the whole world.

The March issue contains a lengthy article, "Meditation and Self-Study". It first discusses the present 'human condition': the restless search, on the one hand, for a reliable method of self-study in order to cope with the frustrations of every-day life and achieved intelligent human relationships; and on the other hand, an authentic technique for meditation in order to escape these frustrations. To comprehend both aspects, apparently poles apart, it is suggested that we turn to "the meticulous and enigmatic wisdom of that immensely compassionate human being known as Helena Petrovna Blavatsky and to her *Voice of the Silence*." The writer asserts: "If there were not a fundamental connection between meditation and self-study, the wisdom of this great book would be lost to us."

The June issue has an article "Universality and Sectarianism", applicable to today's problems; and the July number discusses, among other subjects, The Community of the Future," which seeks to probe into the urge evidenced today to set up "communities, communes, conceptions of community, at several levels and in concentric circles, in a new and more intentional sense than any known in recorded history."

The Theosophist, Adyar, Madras, India. International monthly of The Theosophical Society. To quote from the April issue: "*The Theosophist* for Oct./Nov. 1975 was a double-number and the first of five special issues celebrating the Centenary of the Society. In these issues we have tried to cover the many aspects of our work — recalling the past, assessing the present and gathering ideas for the future that lies ahead. From the earliest beginnings . . . through the ups and downs of the Society's often chequered career, and the many changes that have taken place — up to today and the tremendous opportunities offered for our service to Universal Brotherhood in this rapidly changing world, the story has been told. The last three special numbers for January, February and March, 1976, include all the reports of the Task Forces that met at the World Congress in New York, those of the various working groups held at the International Convention at Adyar in December last, as well as some of the Science Seminar papers. There will be more to follow. The idea behind the formation of these groups was that members generally should have the opportunity of giving their own views on the directions in which the Society might move in the years ahead as well as a number of ways in which such ideas might be implemented. The reports show that many of our members are thinking over these matters and there is no doubt that action will result. These reports may be published together in booklet form and be available shortly around the world. All General Secretaries will be receiving them so that in each country they may have official consideration."

For these reports alone this magazine should interest vitally the theosophical reader who wishes to keep informed. Attention should also be called to the section "On The Watch-Tower" written usually by the President, John B. S. Coats, but also occasionally by the Vice-President, Miss Joy Mills. It takes, to paraphrase its own words, a bird's eye view of events, comments on them, and interprets what is seen in the world in the light of Theosophy. A very helpful and at times challenging monthly contribution.

The Canadian Theosophist, official organ of The Theosophical Society in Canada (Adyar). Much of this year's contents has also been the printing of the texts of talks given at the Centenary World Congress in New York in November 1975. The January-February issue presented an excellent over-all report of that Congress written by the National Secretary Ted Davy (reprinted in *Eclectic* No. 35, special issue, July 15, 1976); and also Notes on Task Force Study Group No. 9, "Theosophical Publications: Programs and Policies", by Doris Davy. This should be of special interest to all who recognize the vital importance of this aspect of theosophical work. This magazine also contains interesting articles, such as the one in the May-June issue on "Thomas Taylor (1758-1835)", Joan Sutcliffe's "The Dory" in May-June of last year, Hugh Murdoch's "Stonehenge, an Astronomical Treatise" (illustrated), a valuable paper first given at the session on Theosophical research at the Australian T. S. Convention 1975, and first published that year in *Theosophy in Australia*, October 1975. Book reviews are also well written and generally more detailed than many other theosophical periodicals. The serious effort given to concentration on the original teachings is evidenced in the continuation over several years of The Secret Doctrine Question and Answer series conducted by Geoffrey A. Barborka.

Sunrise, The Theosophical Society — International (Pasadena, California). This journal has carried some informative articles this year throwing slanting theosophic light on topics of vital current interest. We select only a few: (Aug.-Sept.) "Celts and Druids, Who Were They?" by E. A. Holmes. The value of this article is enhanced by the references to H. P. Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine* which corroborates the fact of the antiquity of intelligent men, and makes valid the theory of the Indian-Egyptian origin of the Celtic Peoples. "Thomas Traherne: His Search for Felicity" by Elsa-Brita Titchenell is a comprehensive distillation of this mystic's illumined thought linking him with searchers in the Hermetic Tradition. Also by the same writer (May), "A Larger Earth, a Broader View" brilliantly illustrates how Science and Theosophy meet in a study of our planet. And the October issue carries our vision to greater depths by the article "On the Sun, the Planets and Meteoric Veils", selections from *The Mahatma Letters* and G. de Purucker's *Studies in Occult Philosophy*.

Das Höhere Leben (The Higher Life), quarterly, The Theosophical Society in Germany. Besides original articles of its own writers, this magazine is notable in its sharing translations from other theosophical books and magazines. Among such are (Jan.-Mch.): "Prayer and Aspiration", by G. de Purucker (*Wind of the Spirit*), "Our Real Work is Self-Preparation," by Joy Mills (*The Theosophist*, April 1975), "Karmic Visions" (a prophetic study of the workings of karmic law in European history from the fifth century onwards) by H. P. Blavatsky (*Blavatsky: Collected Writings*, IX); (April-June) "Discipline Precedes the Mysteries" by Vonda Urban (*The Canadian Theosophist*); (July-Sept) "Ancient and Modern Spiritualism Contrasted" by G. de Purucker (*Fountain-Source of Occultism*); "The Sacredness of the Moment and the Day", by Katherine Tingley. Other articles in these issues are "Yoga", by Franz Hartman, "Daily Responsibilities" by Gertrud Bänzner, "How May we Create a Link with our Elder Brothers?" by Erhard Bänzner, and "Theosophy in the Bible" by Hartmann.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

International Center for Theosophical Studies and Research

This, we read in the April 1976 issue of *The Theosophist* (Adyar), is to be an expansion of The School of the Wisdom. It will be under the special direction of Miss Joy Mills, International Vice-President, who is also Director of Studies. "This Center will function at different times during the year on a more extended basis than that of the School of the Wisdom which took place only between October and February. . . . As the summer months are too hot for westerners, in particular, to remain at Adyar for the purposes of study, we are envisaging seminars in May and June at Kotagiri which is 6,000 ft. high and where the Theosophical Society owns property large enough for such a purpose".

The courses of study in the first Term include: *Isis Unveiled: Ancient Philosophies* (B. R. Mullik, Leader; Dr. Mullik is also Assistant Director of Studies). Paths to Self-Realization (Joy Mills, Leader); Trends in Science, Theosophically Viewed (A. Kannan, Leader); Sanskrit for Western Students (Seetha Neelakantan, Leader); and there is a course titled "Practical Applications." A brochure on the subject states: "While specific courses in various aspects of theosophical study will be presented, the central purpose of the program is to encourage each participant to become a genuine student and not merely a listener, that through individual study and reflection in the rich atmosphere of Adyar creative insight, loving understanding and deeper comprehension may develop. . ."

From Italy about Point Loma Publications, Inc.

NOTIZARIO DELLE STRADE ALTE (News from the High Roads)

(Translated from *Il Quaderni Dell'Eta' Dell' Acquario*, Bresci Editore, Torino, Italy), Quaderno No. 9, has the following item:

"In order to commemorate the Centenary of the Theosophical Society, which was celebrated in the United States from the 14th to the 20th of November (1975) at the Statler Hilton Hotel in New York, Point Loma Publications (P.O. Box 9966, San Diego, Ca. 92109, U.S.A.) has published some books of outstanding value: *H. P. Blavatsky and the Theosophical Movement*, by Charles J. Ryan, 442 pp.; *Echoes of the Orient*, by William Quan Judge, 650 pp. with interesting illustrations which recall the early development of the Theosophical work in the world; *Golden Threads in the Tapestry of History*, by the historian and poet Kenneth Morris (born at Wernoley Bettws, Wales, on July 31st, 1879 and died at Cardiff on April 21st, 1937), in which the historical journey of the nations is told, from their birth, childhood, youth, maturity, old age, to their death and their rebirth. Each nation has its days and its nights, its summers and its winters. Golden threads mark the woof of their destiny. By this method Prof. Morris used to teach at the Theosophical University of Point Loma. It is due to the constant work of service of the Theosophist Iverson L. Harris that these stimulating and worthwhile books have been published, a true celebration of the Theosophical Society's centenary."

Plaque Honoring H. P. B. at Würzburg, Germany

On May 1, 1976, some 40 members of the Theosophical Movement met about 2 p.m. at Ludwigstrasse 6, Würzburg, Germany. The occasion was the unveiling of a memorial

plaque honoring H. P. Blavatsky who during the years 1885-86 lived at this address and wrote parts of *The Secret Doctrine* there. The General Secretary of the TS (Adyar), Mr. Siegfried Kuska, welcoming the representative group, spoke on the life and work of H. P. B., dwelling specially on the time she spent in Würzburg. Mary Linne spoke at the conclusion of the ceremony on "Universal Brotherhood" expressing satisfaction that members of different theosophical groups could come together in spiritual accord.

Engraved on the plaque are these words (in German): "Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, nee von Hahn, Founder of the Theosophical Society, 1875, worked here 1885/86, writing (parts of) *The Secret Doctrine*."

Iti Mayā Śrūtam.

A brochure from the Theosophical Study Center in the San Fernando Valley, California, announces its continued series of "The Teachings of *The Secret Doctrine*" (conducted by Jerry Ekins) at 8744 Kester Ave., Panorama City, Sundays at 8 p.m., and October public lectures at Glendale Federal Savings & Loan, 12191 Ventura Boulevard, Studio City, by Elizabeth Kubler-Ross, "On Death and Dying", and on Oct. 10th, by Dr. Robert Bonnell, on "Plato, Teacher of the Mysteries" (Oct. 25).

A magazine called *Iti Mayā Śrūtam* will also be published by the Center. "This magazine," it is explained in the brochure, "will be published to acquaint inquirers with Theosophy and the Theosophical Movement. It will contain articles about famous Theosophists, Theosophical centers around the world, and reprints of articles on many aspects of Theosophy. . ."

The following explains the choice of title of the magazine: "Sanskrit is the ancient and most sacred language of India; the language of its Religion, Philosophy, Literature and Science. Many of the sources of wisdom for Theosophical teaching are derived from writings in Sanskrit. We feel that it is only appropriate to present this magazine under the aegis which literally means "Thus Have I Heard." It is a tradition for the sages of India to present their age-old teachings prefaced by *Iti Mayā Śrūtam*, thereby claiming no glory for themselves, but paying open tribute to the ancient sources of all wisdom. We, too, reverently hope to achieve the same standards: to Present to you Theosophy, not through the bias of our own egos, but purely and directly. "Thus Have We Heard, and thus we impart it to you."

Theosophical Co-operation in Publishing

* *Golden Precepts* by G. de Purucker, will be published for Point Loma Publications, Inc., by The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Illinois, under the same agreements that applied a year ago in the publishing of *Theosophical Manual No.2: Reincarnation: A Lost Chord in Modern Thought*, by Leoline L. Wright. Date of publication is Spring of 1977.

* Theosophical Publishing House (Wheaton) in its illustrated Christmas announcement of *Quest* selections particularly appropriate to this Season, includes *The Mystery-Tale of Jesus the Avatarā (Clothed With the Sun)* by G. de Purucker.

* Point Loma Publications has issued a Winter 1976-77 Supplement to last year's Centenary booklist, and devotes 3 pages to a listing of books by Theosophical Publishing House (Wheaton) and Theosophical University Press (Pasadena).

These are all practical applications indicative of goodwill and co-operation marking, we trust, only first steps which will continue and grow stronger in the new theosophical centenary ahead.