

# The Eclectic Theosophist

FOLLOWING THE BLAVATSKY AND POINT LOMA TRADITION  
ISSUED BI-MONTHLY BY POINT LOMA PUBLICATIONS, INC.

Per Copy 75¢

Subscription (6 issues)

\$5.00; foreign \$5.50 (by air \$7.50)

P. O. Box 6507, San Diego, California 92106

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NO. 93

May/June, 1986

## ARE WE CHAINED TO THE PAST?

*J. J. Ekins*

Editorial in the Southern California Federation News Letter, Winter 1986. It reads in full:

By 1879 world brotherhood became the main object of The Theosophical Society. In 1895 internal strains split the Society in two and by 1930, G. de Purucker, leader of the Point Loma Society, began a fraternization movement that showed much promise at first, but faded out after the War. Attempts by several Theosophical organizations to revive it in the 1950's continued for a time, but also soon died.

During the Centennial Convention of the T.S. in New York, International President John Coats, made a formal statement acknowledging William Q. Judge as a co-founder of The Theosophical Society, thus, for the first time since 1895 removing a major barrier to communication between The Theosophical Society in America and all of the other traditions. This opened the door for the 1984 Networking Conference in Ojai, California, which has since kicked off similar conferences and efforts all over the world.

The issues that underlie antagonisms between the organizations are varied, and the mere mentioning of them in some circles still begets emotional reactions, even though the points of debate are all over fifty years old. Because of this sensitivity, the Society evolved an unwritten policy that even though freedom of presentation of views is encouraged, controversial views are to be avoided. This has resulted in younger members being left, to a greater degree, ignorant of these controversial issues, and thus also ignorant of the historical reasons behind certain policies and attitudes within The Theosophical Society.

Past events have demonstrated that 'keeping the lid on' controversy doesn't work. These issues resurface again and again, flaring up out of control, only to do their damage and be 'recapped'. Today, a renewed interest in theosophical history is beginning to sweep the World Theosophical Society. Leslie Price of England, has begun a theosophical history magazine and will be conducting a historical conference this summer in London. A video tape on the

history of the American Section is being produced for the annual convention this year. Historical articles are appearing in the Northwest Federation News Letter, and Krotona School offers theosophical history as an element in their training course. Outside The Theosophical Society, academic interest in theosophical history is growing, and for the first time an accredited course in Theosophy was offered in a State university last year. Recently, a play on Blavatsky was given an extended run in Los Angeles, evidencing an enduring public interest in this enigmatic woman.

As this interest in history continues, more sensitive issues will begin to surface. Will they be brought up to the fresh air of honest examination directed toward the clear discernment of truth? Much depends upon the motivation of the seekers, as well as the attitudes of those onlookers with emotional ties to the past. For networking to succeed, those who still feel the sting of the past need to drop the "we who are right", "they who are wrong" attitude. Such an attitude only preserves and continues unexpressed hostility and distrust. Organizations are made up of human beings, and it is a safe guess that each has made its share of mistakes. More can be gained by seeking out our own mistakes, rather than focusing upon those of others. We need to realize that traditions concerning teachings and policies in each theosophical organization are unique and have evolved from their own histories. Traditions and policies that have the effect of putting up barriers against a sister organization, however, damage the effectiveness of the over-all Movement. As Edwin Markham once wrote:

*He drew a circle that shut me out,  
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout:  
But love and I had the wit to win,  
We drew a circle that took him in.*

In other words, we need to seek the positive in others and find ways to work together. The work of Theosophy *per se* is too important to be handicapped by the past of its own organizations. If the theosophical fraternities cannot do the work for which they were designed, the Theosophical Movement will find another form for expression.

## THE LIGHT THAT SHE BROUGHT H.P. Blavatsky as Intermediary of Great Sages

*G. de Purucker*

The following are extracts from *H. P. Blavatsky: The Mystery*, Chapter IV of Part I. The "Mystery" is that part of the human constitution which by training can be made so completely still and quiet as to receive the impress or 'message' from a more highly evolved being, a Teacher or Mahatma. This HPB was able to do; and the first part of this book, which invites careful study, explains this with force and clarity not elsewhere found in theosophical literature today. "The *Mediator or Intermediary*," says the author, "is a highly evolved human entity always possessing a strong and vigorous individuality, and usually a forceful and positive personality, and is the Messenger or Transmitter between others greater than he or than she is, and human beings in general." (p. 32). Part II (13 chapters) of the book is titled "Philosophic and Scientific." — ED.

There is about H.P. Blavatsky a certain grandeur that impels us towards search for the inner meaning of things and an effort to awaken the deepest part of our nature where all truth abides for us to discover. We have not identified ourselves with her work for our own salvation's sake; our aim is at a mark more unusual: to make mankind happy glimpsing the wonderful hope that we cherish, glimpsing the wonderful truths; to unfold in our lives a divine influence to take out into the world and to give to humanity, that the great heart of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky may be understood; and that the doors of the temple of peace and brotherhood may be opened wider and wider, that we may look out beyond and see other and other portals of other and other temples opening and opening to the utmost heights; and that many may see and come forward who now fall back and die, and must, until the light so shines through their lives that without speech or writing it will make itself known.

This was the light that she brought into the world; it was for these ends she came, and was heroic, and suffered. Therefore if we would pay right tribute to her we must weigh well every word that we utter and protest against the entry into our minds of any single worthless or personal thought. For she offered her life on the altar of truth, and had little to support her but the power of the great doctrines that she brought with her; for the whole world was against her in the beginning. Through every phase and action of her career that superb courage shone which manifests in the world but here and there, in those whom we call the heroes; and then only when their highest motives are dominant in their minds, and some lofty emergency calls into play that which is greater than the normal self. For this kind of courage is spiritual: it is inherent in the Spiritual Will, the noble ruler of the mind; it is a quality that marks the Divine Soul of Man. . . .

She saw how humanity had been drifting through the ages unaware of its birthright and unconscious of its dignity; how the indefiniteness of modern ideas had confused the minds of the people and engendered everywhere uncertainty and helpless doubt; how the essential truths of religion had been honeycombed with falsehood by the tortuous forces that retarded the progress of mankind: and she left for posterity a body of teachings with power in them to change the whole world, and as it were to raise from the dead the Immortal Part of man . . . .

The case of H.P. Blavatsky was identical with what has taken place at other times, when, for various reasons, a Messenger is sent forth from the glorious Association of the great Sages and Seers, exactly as she was. In all cases of the appearance of these Messengers, their work is based on the combination, briefly speaking, of two facts, or rather the concurrence of two quite distinct and yet closely similar sources of spiritual and intellectual inspiration: first, inspiration from the Messenger's own Spiritual Self or Inner Essential Divinity, . . . and this is in large part the result of previous initiations which the Messenger has passed through; and second, constant and continuous help in an intellectual and psychospiritual way from the Messenger's Teacher or Teachers, who have sent the Messenger forth into the world in order to do the work which the civilization of the time, in its cyclic evolution, has made possible . . . .

## BROTHERHOOD UNLIMITED

*John B.S. Coats*

Brotherhood cannot be restricted within the Theosophical Society, although, admittedly, to become a Theosophist in the sense that H.P. Blavatsky described it is a far, far more difficult matter. We are all inclined to think of brotherhood as a group of people who have much in common — a very easy view to take; but surely brotherhood really means an immense diversity and brings the understanding that its true expression means the recognition of and acceptance that all the 'others' have to be brought into the same world family to which you and I belong. In any large family, the various members can fight sometimes among themselves, and argue and disagree in a most belligerent manner, but the fact of 'The Family,' though sometimes affected thereby, is not lost — it is a family. In the same way, Humanity is a brotherhood and there is nothing for us to do but recognize it. "Let the brotherhood for which we stand be Real," wrote one of the Elder Brothers. Well, is it? In our attempts to follow the suggestions given us at the beginning of the past hundred years, have we fallen into sectarian

views as to who should or should not be helped? Has it not been said that "The *Chiefs* want a 'Brotherhood of Humanity', a real Universal Fraternity started; an institution which would make itself known throughout the world and arrest the attention of the highest minds."—(*The Mahatma Letters*, p.24)

But nevertheless we must agree with those who say that it is not only what we do, but *how* we do it that is important. We grant to our Society a certain dignity, and this is surely good when we think of how the Movement was begun, and yet, even here, we may sometimes get our values mixed up. To go slumming may seem to some a loss of dignity, but is it? There are members who vaunt the fact that they would never go into an American 'bar' or an English 'pub'. Surely it depends upon where the need of the moment lies. "Where trouble is, where suffering is, where ignorance is, where quarrel is, where injustice is, where tyranny is, where cruelty is — there must we find the earnest members of Our Society, those who study the truths of Theosophy and practically apply them to lead the world from darkness into Light, from death to immortality, from the unreal to the Real." — (From an Elder Brother). Is it because we are not pure enough that we dare not risk contamination? Is it wrong to suggest that the greatest of men, the purest of the pure, would fail in a human need for help on such a ground? Surely not. The drunkard, the drug-addict, the perverts of all kinds desperately need help, and if they do not seem to react warmly to our initial efforts, does it mean we have lost our faith and we no longer believe that good seeds for a future flowering have been sown? No Theosophist should cavil at such things. To be all things to all men in our varying capacities is obviously a hard job, but what view of brotherhood and love can deny the need? We cannot all do everything, but we can so arrange our work that we *try*.

— Reprinted from 'On the Watch-Tower',  
*The Theosophist*, September 1975

### THE ONENESS OF THE HUMAN FAMILY: A DECLARATION

We are indebted to our friend Rosemary Vosse, editor of *Koeksister* (Wynberg, South Africa), for an announcement (which she includes in full in her issue No. 50, of November 1985), from "The Temple of Understanding," 145 East 32nd St., New York, N.Y. 10016, a non-profit tax exempt educational corporation whose aims are: "To promote understanding between the World's Religions; To recognize the Oneness of the Human Family; To create a Spiritual United Nations in Washington, D.C." We quote five of the 10 points of the Declaration. — ED.

1. The oneness of the Human Family, irrespective of color, sex, creed, nation, or any other distinctive

characteristics.

2. The harmonious place of the individual person in the total order of things, as a unique entity of Divine origin, with a basic relationship to the Universe and Eternity.

3. The importance of spiritual exercises, meditation, prayer, contemplation, and inner research as links between human life and the universe.

4. The existence of an incipient conscience at the heart of humanity which speaks for what is good and against what is bad for the human family; which advocates and fosters understanding, cooperation and altruism instead of division, struggle and indifference among nations . . . .

9. An affirmation of the law of *Love and Compassion* as the Transcending Force which alone can break the nemesis of war and establish a planet of Peace.

(The Declaration concludes with "A Prayer for Peace":) "Lead me from Death to Life, from Falsehood to Truth. Lead me from Despair to Hope, from Fear to Trust; Lead me from Hate to Love, from War to Peace. Let Peace fill our heart, our world, our universe."

### THE GOAL OF THE QUEST

*Hugh Panson Fausset*

We come into this world, bearing in our souls the impress of past experience, whether exclusively our own or received from those who have preceded us on our Ray of spiritual descent to this earth. Whatever the pattern of this hidden background may be, it determines the situation into which we are born here and within which we live our human lives.

Because this situation is largely hidden from us as our lives begin to unfold, we react to it in all sorts of faulty ways. But later, when we are able to survey our journey and have become all too familiar with the kind of person we are and the problems we have repeatedly had to face, we discover a surprising consistency in what had seemed, often enough, tragic mischance.

The great Masters, who appear in different ages and civilizations to point the way, are born on this earth with an awareness of being which transcends the ordinary human condition. Their truth and example reinforce the truth within ourselves and strengthen and direct us in our quest. But the quest must be our own. A great teacher can only quicken in us a Light which waits the moment when we will allow it to shine in all its purity. That moment of inward revelation, which is also one of release from the false tensions of the divided human state, is the goal of the quest . . . .

It is through the pain of conflict that we learn more and more to detach ourselves from blind enjoyment, and the spectator in us begins to manifest as an organ of pure reason or intuition. This faculty of direct perception is what the Indian scriptures call the *Buddhi*. It is beyond self-interest or compulsive attachment to external things, being transparent to a Light which informs it from within. This Light, no longer hidden within the flame, begins to shine clear in a heart pure and simple enough to receive the truth and an intelligence rendered wise by love.

—Excerpts from “The Inlooker”, *Hermes*, December 1985, U.T.F., Santa Barbara, Calif.

## PAGES FROM THEOSOPHICAL HISTORY — 2

Well known to historians of the Theosophical Movement are the stresses and strains resulting finally in separation of the Society into two main branches in 1895, the American Section, then the largest of the theosophical Sections, taking the name of “The Theosophical Society in America” with complete independence under the presidency of William Q. Judge. Not always remembered, however, in after-years are the following paragraphs from the Report of the First Convention of the T.S. in America, session of April 29, 1895. — ED.

### PROCLAMATION

The Theosophical Society in America by its delegates and members in first Convention assembled, does hereby proclaim fraternal good will and kindly feeling toward all students of Theosophy and members of theosophical societies wherever and however situated. It further proclaims and avers its hearty sympathy and association with such persons and organizations in all theosophical matters except those of government and administration, and invites their correspondence and co-operation.

To all men and women of whatever caste, creed, race, or religious belief, whose intentions aim at the fostering of peace, gentleness, and unselfish regard one for another, and the acquisition of such knowledge of man and Nature as shall tend to the elevation and advancement of the human race, it sends most friendly greeting and freely proffers its services.

It joins hands with all religions and religious bodies whose effort is directed to the purification of men's thoughts and the bettering of their ways, and avows its harmony therewith. To all scientific societies and individual searchers after wisdom upon whatever plane and by whatever righteous means pursued, it is and will be grateful for such discovery and unfoldment of Truth as shall serve to announce and confirm a *scientific basis for ethics*.

And lastly, it invites to its membership all those who, seeking a higher life hereafter, would learn to know the *Path* to tread in this.

## MADAME BLAVATSKY UNVEILED?

Leslie Price

The following are extracts from the “Conclusions” given by the author of his paper under this title, first presented on 12 April 1983 at a public meeting of the Society for Psychical Research in London.

Madame Blavatsky may have been officially unveiled by the 1885 report, just as Jesus of Nazareth, another ‘impostor’ was decisively dealt with by physical crucifixion. But Hodgson himself acknowledged she was a ‘rare psychological study’, and it is my view, which I have illustrated, that there was much more to her than he and his colleagues supposed, and that she is worthy of further study by psychical researchers. This is particularly appropriate at centenary time because, as Mrs. Sidgwick said at S.P.R. half-centenary, in speaking of the Blavatsky case “I have dwelt on this investigation at perhaps undue length because I think it had a great effect on our understanding of the difficulty of our work and the care required not to arrive at conclusions prematurely” (Proc. XLI p. 9).

I believe that conclusions were reached prematurely by the 1885 Committee, and that the S.P.R. as a whole has had to suffer consequences for this. But the 1885 debacle also has a long list of Theosophists who shared in the responsibility, including (as she said) H.P.B. herself, Theosophists at Adyar, and the Theosophical Society which forbade her to sue the Coulombs, in effect deserting her, and, perhaps, bringing upon itself many problems in later years. It is possible, however, that H.P.B. would never have got *The Secret Doctrine* finished if she had not been publicly discredited and forced back to Europe for health reasons.

As the S.P.R. enters its second century under the presidency of a Theosophist/Psychical Researcher Professor Ellison, may I invite all S.P.R. members and all Theosophists to join in an informal and cooperative effort to understand these complex historical events, and in particular to secure publication of surviving archival material in Adyar, London and elsewhere that is relevant. Both authors and editors have difficulty in publishing long historical pieces, and to help with such problems, I propose the establishment of a neutral Theosophical History Group, representing all those with an interest in Theosophical history broadly defined . . . .

Madame Blavatsky was the most important person ever to be investigated by the S.P.R. in detail. But in this paper I know that I have conveyed only glimpses of her many-sided character, and I have had to compromise between reviewing all the points on which she came into conflict with the S.P.R., but which formed only a fraction of her achievement, and dealing with deeper sides of her work and appearing

to neglect the serious charges against her. Not one lecture but a whole book would be required to follow up all areas of mystery, and not a book but a library to place her in context. Beyond written exposition and evidence, there is the voice of the silence.

## LIBERATION THEOSOPHY

W. R. Laudahn

“Freedom, liberation now” are words on many lips. The demand, though, is neither new nor overwhelming. Usually, it applies to the political economy. Real freedom is spiritual-intellectual, a scarce commodity. There are countless empty minds attached, in more ways than one, to full bellies. In *Isis Unveiled*, H. P. Blavatsky said that “We elbow soulless men and women at every step in life.” (Vol II, 369) The majority ‘enjoys’ spiritual slavery. The call for Freedom often rings hollow.

This is the problem. We have the appearance of social liberality without a more fundamental release. “Liberation Theology” is active in the Third World. “Red Catholics” hope to advance their Church through social revolution. Grinding poverty contributes little to faith. So, the idea is: “Take from the Haves and give to the Have Nots.” Such ‘theology’ attempts to prop up an established religion. Some would call that just another form of entrapment.

A ‘World Teacher’, J. Krishnamurti (originally sponsored by Annie Besant) recently passed away (having renounced the title). His message was total spiritual emancipation. “I am free from a particular form of prison,” he said in an interview, “but we create other prisons as we go along.” Krishnamurti continued by saying that “we have to be extraordinarily capable of standing alone. Nobody wants to do that.” He concluded that “nothing from the outside will change man.” (*East West Journal*, July 1983, p. 34).

Freedom’s call rings through the Perennial Philosophy. This outlook is based on a ‘direct beholding’ of the Great Self by its shadow, the lesser self. Here, the World Soul (supposedly ‘out there’) is interior to each individual. Echoing this ancient Theosophy, H. P. Blavatsky brought forward a profound truth. It is that ‘Nothing’ is the essence of the Absolute. Imagine religious Fundamentalists proclaiming that their God and Savior was — ‘nothing!’ Banish the thought. Rather, ‘He’ is pictured as ‘the Man Upstairs’ to whom we owe devotion, fear, and obedience.

On the other hand, *The Secret Doctrine* says that “When the Theosophists and Occultists say that God is no BEING, for IT is nothing, *No-Thing*, they are more reverential and religiously respectful to the

Deity than those who call God a HE, and thus make of Him a gigantic MALE.” (I, 352)

Popular religion — a mighty enslaver — leaves the impression that the Great Superman in the sky “created the world from nothing.” Very well, said ancient Theosophy, speaking through the Gnostics and Kabalists. But they placed a hyphen between ‘no’ and ‘thing’. The Reality behind ‘God’ is not, then, any ‘thing’ that we can put our finger on. It is the Unknowable.

To further confuse matters, the orthodox Creed arrived at the formula: “Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.” The latter comes close to the No-Thing. But the Holy Ghost is seldom mentioned and little understood. The Father and Son team is emphasized. Quite distinct from us, they are objects of worship. With them, we have a love-hate relationship. No freedom in this part of Heaven! Although Paul’s “Christ in you” idea resembles the Holy Ghost and Divine Nothingness.

“No-Thing” is at the “core of the core” (as G. de Purucker would put it) of God, Man and the Universe. It is the Fullness of the Void. The invisible potentiality is ever productive. It emanates and dissolves worlds and universes. Finally, these so-called ‘creations’ lie in the lap of Māyā, Cosmic Illusion. For various reasons, ‘perpetual motion’ machines might not work on our level. There is, however, the great eternal pulsation of the Cosmos, the Eternal Recurrence.

It is this knowledge (Gnosis) that is liberating. Such understanding, even if only partial, frees us from the limiting ‘God’ of simplistic religion. We then may cast off the fears associated with the “gigantic MALE.” It remains for us mentally and emotionally to bring inside of us spiritually That which is already there. It is internal and eternal. Thus armed with vital force, we advance beyond Liberation to Divine Unity.

Freely at one with the Un-named, we are ‘out of prison.’ Sometimes we enter other lesser jails, of which there are many. It is ‘hard to stay out of jail!’ This is not too bad if we enter as a diversion, for entertainment. Such pastimes are perhaps quite necessary at this stage of our development. We know, nevertheless, that the universal essence is ‘No-Thing,’ and that all ‘things’ are temporary. Some ‘things,’ like stars and planets, might last for billions of years. Still, their time will come. Just wait.

‘The few’ are attracted to these insights because of a richer spiritual heritage than that of the many. They should, then, be alert to the consequences of taking this ‘strong medicine.’ It separates the ready from the unready. This is ‘Service beyond the call of duty.’ Finally, each stands alone — ‘all one.’ One in All, and All in One. The circle is as wide as the Boundless. *The Secret Doctrine* phrased it as

“ABSOLUTE ENDLESS NO-THING.” (I, 214).

In the endless sea of cosmic Space, each conscious unit (as a personal self) is at the Center. This point can be anywhere. The real, liberated soul is here, there, and everywhere. There is no “Thy Soul and My Soul.” “Countless undetached sparks” are “shining” in the “one Flame.” (SD: I, 120)

Primary is the identical essence in each spark. Imagination clothes all forms, their energy continually coming from the Source. Inwardly, it all remains, as Emerson said, “the same, the same.” Gods and angels are well “above the fray,” only appearing to work — with our assistance. Great leaders have ‘feet of clay.’ The Rock of Ages will crumble. Each dogma will fall. Only the supreme interior Power appears again and again. Let us see and participate in the *real* action. All signs point to the Center within. To be embraced by this Divine One through Will and Mystery is to have an abiding Liberation.

### THE WORLD'S TRAVAIL

The fortieth anniversary of the United Nations was celebrated in October (1985) with a two-week commemorative session “filled with the usual rhetoric by world leaders attacking their foes and defending their policies” (*Los Angeles Times*, Oct. 24, 1985), reminding students of Theosophy of H.P.B.’s remarks on the condition of mankind:

With right knowledge, or at any rate with a confident conviction that our neighbors will no more work to hurt us than we would think of harming them, the two-thirds of the World’s evil would vanish into thin air. Were no man to hurt his brother, Karma-Nemesis would have neither cause to work for, nor weapons to act through. It is the constant presence in our midst of every element of strife and opposition, and the division of races, nations, tribes, societies and individuals into Cains and Abels, wolves and lambs, that is the chief cause of the ‘ways of Providence.’

The speech of Hasuhiro Nakasone, Japan’s prime minister, came as a ‘radical departure,’ the *Times* said, from the expected context of his talk. After warning against man-made ‘monsters’ confronting the world’s flora and fauna, Nakasone said that Japan would “never again permit the revival of militarism on their soil” He continued:

We believe that all living things — humans, animals, trees, grasses — are essentially brothers and sisters. Our generation is recklessly destroying the natural environment which has evolved over the course of millions of years and is essential for our survival. This folly can only be called suicidal.

Then Hashuhiro Nakasone, a naval officer in World War II, recited his own *haiku* (a Japanese verse form confined to three unrhymed lines and seventeen syllables) “to underscore the Japanese philosophical

view that ‘man is born by the grace of the great universe’ ”:

Afar and above the dark and endless sky,  
the Milky Way runs  
toward the place I come from.

Nakasone spoke in Japanese, but an official English text was provided by Japan.

— *Theosophy* (United Lodge of Theosophists), March 1986

### AND WE QUOTE . . .

#### *Must and Will Live*

It is not in the power of either Founders or their critics; and neither friend nor enemy can ruin that which is *doomed to exist*, all the blunders of its leaders notwithstanding. That which was generated through and founded by the ‘High Masters’ MUST AND WILL LIVE. Each of us and all will receive his or her *Karma* in it, but the *vehicle* of Theosophy will stand indestructible and undestroyed by the hand of whether man or fiend.

— H.P. Blavatsky: “ ‘Original Programme’ Manuscript,”  
BCW VII, 164-5

#### *The Essence of it All*

There is no death of anyone, but only in appearance, even as there is no birth of any, save only in seeming. The change from being to becoming seems to be birth, and the change from becoming to being seems to be death, but in reality no one is ever born, nor does one ever die. It is simply a being visible and then invisible; the former through the density of matter, and the latter because of the subtlety of being — being which is ever the same, its only change being motion and rest. For being has this necessary peculiarity, that its change is brought about by nothing external to itself; but whole becomes parts and parts become whole in the oneness of the all.

— From a letter written by Apollonius to Valerius, about  
70 A.D.: G.R.S. Mead: *Apollonius of Tyana*, p. 149

#### THE LIGHT OF LIGHTS

Have faith in life although it brings you pain,  
The herald of the dawn is always night;  
It is the cloud that brings the fruitful rain,  
The lowly soil for trees to grow their height.  
Learn that the bitter buds make sweetest fruits,  
Or dungeon mines that hold the brightest gems,  
As happy flowers come from lonely roots  
And beauteous leaves spring forth from twisted stems.  
Then there’s the slender lightning, thunder’s might,  
The fresh oases are, to desert, scars;  
Watch, too, the storm that paints the rainbow sight,  
Engulfing darkness that gives birth to stars.

See, night’ fruition comes, we’re not forlorn,  
A dewdrop’s radiant with the spectral morn!

— Bing Escudero

#### *To Love, to Understand, to Forgive*

It is impersonal love which is the secret of life, the cure for present evils, both individual and collective. By ‘impersonal’ is meant self-forgetful love. Even more, it means love for all beings, no matter whether base or noble, no matter how different or hostile to us or dear and close to our hearts. By controlling the Kama-Manas, the selfish demanding personality, we begin to understand, to love, and to *know* in a wonderful new way, bringing us happiness and peace. Becoming

quick to love and so to understand and forgive, irritation and criticism and resentment fall away from us. No matter what happens we shall then never hinder or be unkind but always try to help. Ultimately we shall go farther still and come to understand and forgive our enemies — the happiest state of all. Broadening then gradually our sympathies we extend our love to include all nations as well as our own beloved land. And thus we eventually become a power for universal good.

— Leoline L. Wright: *Man and His Seven Principles*, pp. 34-5 (Theosophical Manual No. IV)

### Fundamentally One

The Three aspects of consciousness, i.e., Religion, Philosophy and Science are fundamentally one because they represent one thing: the Reality of Nature. They are the means by which man approaches an understanding of himself and the surrounding universe. They are innate in him: instincts of his soul. The intuitional, devotional, and mystical aspect of man's nature is represented by Religion. Philosophy is the activity of intellect seeking the Way of life, "correlating and examining" itself and the universe. Science — knowledge — is research, investigation, and classification of the facts in nature. All three must work together because all are One.

— G.C. Le Gros

## TALBOT MUNDY AND THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Brian Taves

The following are extracts from a 33-page essay titled "Philosophy Into Popular Fiction: Talbot Mundy and The Theosophical Society," published in the *Southern California Quarterly*, Vol. LXVII, No. 2, Summer 1985. With many Notes and a Chronological Bibliography of his non-fiction writing, and 13 black and white pictures. (See comment on this in Items of Interest pages this issue.) — ED.

Mundy was clearly far more than a mere writer of diverting adventure tales; he was engaged, through his literature, in a lifelong discourse on philosophy and religion. He wrote stories that can be simultaneously read on two levels, as philosophical parables, but also for "that rare instinct which gives us just what we want, mystery, danger, unknown lands, [and the] occult realism of Eastern Thought."\* Mundy recognized this himself when he wrote of *Om*, "It is soaked with sound philosophy and stirring mystery, plus dangerous adventure."† As early as 1921 he had commented, "When writing, the plot and adventure are to me mere pegs on which to hang my preachment."‡

He used his stories for much larger purposes than either Kipling or Haggard; for Mundy, as with Joseph Conrad, exotic locales served more than decorative functions. Instead, the atmosphere Mundy so effectively vitalized provided an appropriate background for the treatment of serious, metaphysical subjects in the context of Oriental thinking. He adapted such an approach, especially between 1922 to 1930, in several different ways, using both mass-audience and literary types of works, depicting the ancient world and the fantastic mysteries of the modern Far East. With his own experience in the

far-flung corners of the world and the aid of the theosophical influence, Mundy was able to translate effectively Oriental ideas into a western idiom. Few, if any, other authors have so successfully reconciled such seemingly contradictory ingredients as adventure and philosophy.

Yet Mundy has remained overshadowed by his predecessors because, as Elmer Davis pointed out, his interests and theosophical bent were not shared by many readers, denying him the universal popularity achieved by Kipling and Haggard. At the same time, Mundy's foundation as an author whose works often first appeared in the 'pulp', albeit the best of them, prior to book publication, rendered him suspect from a conventional critical viewpoint. Together, these factors have deprived Talbot Mundy of the literary recognition he deserves.§

Mundy's association with the Theosophical Society was meteoric; he came into prominence very quickly, stayed a few years, and then was gone. This was probably inevitable; he came to Point Loma at the very end of its peak years, just before a decline set in.¶ But there was never any chance that Mundy would become the pillar of theosophy that Katherine Tingley doubtless hoped for. Such personal characteristics as his wanderlust, unsteady private life and financial instability all kept him from occupying a long-term position of leadership. By nature he was ill-suited for such a role: he had no intention of limiting his creative freedom or submerging his individuality to the demands of doctrinal constraints. As Dawn Mundy observed, "He started out at the bottom and went up through it until he got out at the top . . . I think he sort of went through things, and then looked for something else."\*\* Talbot Mundy was a man of independent mind and spirit, who sought above all to expose himself to a broad range of influences, which is why he lived in many different places, often among artistic and intellectual people, investigating a variety of sometimes contradictory religious practices . . . .

With Mundy's departure, the Theosophical Society lost its best opportunity to disperse its concepts to a large audience and have any hope of wide acceptance. For within his novels, the Eastern notions that were the basis of theosophical beliefs had their best chance

\* Virginia Lee, "Books and Writers," *Overland Monthly*, 83 (August 1925).

† Talbot Mundy to D.I. Chambers, January 8, 1924, Bobbs-Merrill Collection.

‡ Talbot Mundy to William C. Bobbs, Dec. 17, 1921, Bobbs-Merrill Collection.

§ Davis, "A Loss to Fiction."

¶ Dennis E. Berge in Iverson L. Harris, "Reminiscences of Lomaland Madame Tingley, and The Theosophical Institute in San Diego."

\*\* Provost interview.

to be favorably received without the instant, out-of-hand ("heretical") rejection that would likely be the result of a straightforward, unconcealed presentation. During the limited time of his own active involvement in the society, Mundy proved that it was possible to integrate fully the offbeat philosophy of a minority religious group into popular fiction and still maintain a wide readership. Simultaneously, his stories were, and still are, hailed as valuable teaching by the society; Mundy won the approval of both audiences, the already converted as well as the public at large. He was unique for achieving both these goals, the philosophy melding persuasively into his fiction.

Yet while promoting some of the specific ideas of the Theosophical Society, Mundy's tales were never mere propaganda, since he expressed Oriental concepts through the filter of his own experience and Occidental consciousness. This was the secret of his wide popularity and durability, the reason he was heralded not only by theosophists but attracted a personal following that has persisted and regenerated to this day. Evidence of this is the fact that sixteen of his books have been republished thirty-eight separate times in the forty-five years since his death. It was the 1920's, the period which included his residence at Point Loma, that inspired his finest fiction, reaching a standard he never matched before or after. *Om* and the Roman novels, and to a lesser degree *Caves of Terror*, *The Devil's Guard*, even *Full Moon* and *Old Ugly-Face*, not to mention the more numerous, less philosophical adventure stories, have proven to be lasting classics of their genres.

## BOOK REVIEW

### *Queen Cleopatra* by Talbot Mundy

Though this book was written many years ago, we felt this review of it by the Welsh poet and mystic Kenneth Morris may be read with interest by new readers of the *Eclectic*; and for those who knew both Talbot Mundy and Morris it may bring back a host of memories. — ED.

This is Talbot Mundy's latest novel, and probably the most important he has written. It has all his well-known verve and spirit, plus a new dignity and seriousness.

He gives surely the truest portrait yet given of the last of the Lagidae and of all the dynasties founded by Alexander's generals on the ruins of his empire — that great and ill-starred Queen of Egypt who fought with such flaming courage for the soul of Caesar, the Soul of the Mediterranean world, and above all the soul of Egypt, with all its precious legacy of wisdom from of old. The cycles were against her. All that world and age were crumbling, and she went down, leaving apparently nothing at all as the result of her struggle. But history is kept sweet by its Great

Defeated as well as by its great conquerors — always supposing they fought, as she did, on the side of the Soul. It is good to see one of the most popular of Englishwriting novelists undertaking her vindication.

Mr. Mundy depicts clearly the battlefield of that age with all its dispositions, and the fact that the weapon at her disposal, beyond her genius and heroism, was just her personality — the beauty and charm that age could not wither nor custom stale; — one wonders is that the one true line the writer of it wrote about Cleopatra?

Caesar and she, infinitely unlike in the aims and meanings of their lives, had inexhaustible daring in common; which partial kinship of spirit led her, perhaps, to imagine that he had a soul that could be saved. He had not, as it transpired: the Hierarch at Philae with all his ancient wisdom meant nothing to Julius Caesar: but that was not Cleopatra's fault. She used him to the extent that he could be used. But let us note that her union with him was lawful marriage to Egyptian law.

We hope that in another book Mr. Mundy will continue her story.

—Reprinted from, *The Theosophical Path*,  
May 1929, Vol. XXXVI, No. 5

### *Freedom Through Adversity*

Misfortune came upon me and stripped me of my loved and cherished possessions.

"This last remains," I said, taking a little comfort. And then that went with the rest.

Misfortune blocked my way to do one thing and another that I had formerly been rejoiced to do.

"This at least I can still do," I said, taking a little comfort. And that also was presently denied me.

My life was empty of all I had lived for.

In a vision of the night my soul stood forth and filled my chamber with its radiance, saying: "Whilst thou reliest on any outward possessions to give thee pleasure or upon anything thou mayest do, thy mind is turned aside from me and will not seek me. Therefore art thou deprived of all upon which thy mind and heart were most set. From me have come what seem to be thy misfortunes. I would guide thee to freedom and new birth. Hadst thou not power to become one with me, outgrowing the common life, I had not thus stricken thee. How else could I turn thee toward the way to divinity and wisdom and power and joy? Am I not thy friend, thy comrade, thy warrior, thy true self? Think thus constantly of me and in no long time thou shalt be one with me and bless thy deprivations."

So I stood up and entered upon the new life, and in no long time it was even as he had said, so that I was grateful and filled with joy.

— From the *Persian*

## XII: QUESTIONS – YOUR ANSWERS

We reach now the final questions of the series of 12 Theosophical Manuals issued by Point Loma Publications, Inc. It is on the important subject of *Theosophy and Christianity* and written by Henry T. Edge, a personal student of H.P. Blavatsky before coming to Point Loma to devote his life there to teaching and writing. — ED.

### I INTRODUCTORY

1. Why can you say that Theosophy is not hostile to Christianity? (p. 1)
2. What was the Abbe Huc's 'explanation' of his finding among the Tibetan priests of pre-Christian eras certain characteristic doctrines of the Roman Church as well as many of their rituals, etc.? (p. 2)
3. What is Religion *per se*? What are some basic truths at the heart of all religions? (p. 4)
4. What is one of the ways whereby the Masters of Wisdom accomplish their work? (p. 5) What happens after the withdrawal of the Teacher? (pp. 5-6)
5. In what way may Theosophy be considered a champion of Christianity (or any religion, for that matter)? (p. 7)
6. How may the real unification of religions be brought about? (p. 9)

### II HISTORICAL SKETCH

1. Name some historical figures who point to evidence that Christianity is not 'new' nor 'strange' but in its essentials known to the ancients? (pp. 10-11)
2. In what way should the figure of Jesus in the Gospels be considered? (p. 13)
3. Who were the Ebionites and the Nazarenes? (p. 13)
4. Who were the Marcionites? (p. 15)
5. Who was Mani and what was Manicheism? How long did it last? (p. 15)
6. Who were Clement of Alexandria, Celsus, Crigen, and what were some of their main ideas? (pp. 16-17)
7. What were some of the teachings of the Gnostics? (pp. 17-18)
8. Who was Valentinus and what were some of his teachings? (pp. 20-21)

### III THE BIBLE – FUNDAMENTAL TEACHINGS: I

1. From an occult standpoint what is the Old Testament? (p. 23; also p. 33)
2. What, in a word, does H.P. Blavatsky have to say about the esoteric character of the Gospels? (pp. 24-25)
3. What were Paul's main beliefs? (p. 25)
4. What is the exact translation of the Hebrew word *elohim*? (pp. 26-27, 29)
5. What are the "two accounts of the creation of man"? and what theosophical teaching supports this? (p. 28)

6. How have the story of the Garden of Eden and the curse upon Adam, the Fall and Temptation been perverted and misinterpreted? (pp. 28-29)
7. What is the real interpretation of the word *Lucifer*? (p. 29-30)
8. Are the stories about the Flood allegorical or are they historical physical events? (pp. 31-32) What was the last great Deluge? and when did it happen? (p. 32)
9. What is meant by Redemption and Salvation? (pp. 33-34)
10. Has the idea of the sacrament of the eucharist in Church ritual been largely misunderstood? What is the esoteric meaning of partaking of 'bread' and 'wine'? (pp. 35-37)
11. What is the esoteric meaning of baptism? (p. 35)

### IV: THE BIBLE – FUNDAMENTAL TEACHINGS: II

1. Why has orthodox Christianity banned the doctrine of reincarnation? (pp. 40-41)
2. What is the great creative trinity which stands at the head of cosmogonies? (pp. 43-44)
3. What is the theosophical interpretation of the Cross? (p. 46) How does the ceremony of the Cross, or crucifixion, pertain to an initiation performed in the Mystery Schools? (pp. 46-47)
4. Where did the Mystery Schools of the ancients flourish? (pp. 48-49)
5. What is the theosophic interpretation of the Second Coming of Christ? (pp. 51-52)
6. What are your conclusions about Love and Forgiveness after reading this section on the Golden Rule? (pp. 52-56)
7. What is meant (theosophically) by the Kingdom of God (or Heaven)? (p. 60)

### V. CHRISTIANITY AND MORALITY

1. What is the difference between religion as usually understood and true Religion? (p. 63)
2. Who and what esoterically is "God"? (pp. 64-65) Is there a personal, extracosmic God?
3. What does prayer really mean and in what spirit should it be carried out? (p. 66)
4. How would you explain Good and Evil? (pp. 67-68)

## ITEMS OF INTEREST & NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

### *Glimpses of Our Theosophical Heritage*

This is the modest title of a 2-hour audio-visual presentation of the history of the Theosophical Society 1875-91 given by Michel Chapotin, Vice-President The Theosophical Society in France, and his wife Diana Dunningham Chapotin. We had the pleasure of attending this presentation last March 18th at the Lodge rooms of the Los Angeles Branch of the T. S. where an interested group of both United Lodge members and members of the local Adyar T.S. Lodge had gathered.

Part I is titled: History as an Adventure: H.P.B.'s

Early Years and Travels. Formation of the T.S. in New York, with Col. Olcott, Judge, and others. H.P.B. and Olcott in India, and reference to *The Mahatma Letters*. Travels in Europe.

Part 2: The Coulomb Affair. The Writing of *The Secret Doctrine*, *The Voice of the Silence* and other Literature. Activities in London. H.P.B.'s Last Letter to the American Section T.S. "The Golden Stairs."

The Chapotins are to be congratulated on the accuracy of their reporting and their careful and representative selection of pictures. We were told that they will continue preparation of this history through the more-difficult-to-report ongoing years of the Movement.

### **"The Secret Doctrine Symposim" in Australia—Tasmania**

The Theosophical Society in Australia held its Annual National Convention, chaired by Dianne K. Kynaston, Gen. Sec., 18th-25th January 1986, at the Australian Maritime College, Newnham Campus, Launceston, Tasmania. Of special interest were the two days given to "The Secret Doctrine" Symposium and workshop, the latter led by Jeanine Miller, international guest speaker. Papers included: "The Secret Doctrine: 20th Century" by Dara A. Eklund (U.S.A., and read by Dianne K. Kynaston); "Senzar — The Mystery of the Mystery Language", by John Algeo (U.S.A., read by Charles Hulley); "Why Study the Three Fundamental Propositions?" by Virginia Hanson (U.S.A., read by Sheryl Nelson); "The Secret Doctrine as a Koan!" by Phil Harris; "The Secret Doctrine and Modern Geology" by Ted G. Davy and Hank van Hees (Canada, read by Erica Patient and Stanley Spencer); "Astronomy and The Secret Doctrine" by Hugh S. Murdoch (Australia); and a one-hour lecture "The Blazing Dragon of Wisdom" by Jeanne Miller (England). (the creative, serpentine force-Fohat)

The second day of the Symposium continued with presentation of 3 papers: "The Triple Evolutionary Scheme" by Joy Mills (U.S.A., read by Elaine Murdoch); "The Secret Doctrine: a Denunciation of Our Western Ways of Living and Thinking" by J.H. Dubbink (Holland, read by Alwyn Mielchel); and a final talk by Dianne K. Kynaston, General Secretary, "Taliesyn and the Mystery School".

### **Networking and Fraternalization in Germany**

In Germany Hans-Dieter Rex and Helga Deutsch, of Barsinghausen, have undertaken active work of cooperation among the various theosophical groups in this country. They plan an "Informationpaper" to acquaint the public with the theosophical work *in general*, giving addresses of centers, notice of meetings, books and periodicals available, etc. The response, they say, has been very positive, the following groups having agreed to give it their hearty support.

1. Die Theosophische Gesellschaft Adyar in Deutschland e.V. with branches in several large cities;
2. Theosophische Gesellschaft in Deutschland e.V. (founded 1897 by Dr. F. Hartmann), with branches in several cities;
3. Die Theosophische Gesellschaft Pasadena, with study-groups in Munchen, Altendiez, Weissach; and co-workers active in translating English theosophical literature into German;
4. Ursula and Georg Schwarm, Nurnberg, with their study-group;
5. Die Theosophische Gesellschaft Arbeitskreis Unterlengenhardt in Berlin, with several branches in other towns.

From quotations from many letters received we select only a few:

(From Zweibruecken): "I am greatly interested in the work you outline and will report to your Informationpaper, wishing much success for our common work." (From Altendiez): "Your letter speaks to my heart. Whoever labors for altruism seriously, for such a one tolerance must be an absolute necessity, especially where there is a spiritual relationship." (from Nurenberg): "Your outline to bring the different theosophical groups nearer together is of the utmost importance, and we wish you the best possible success." (From Berlin): "We believe your undertaking comes up to the highest law of Theosophical Principle."

Mr. Rex adds: "Yes, we see the danger, too, that the doctrines can be 'watered down', and it is our duty to do all we can to keep them pure. At the same time we hold in mind what Dr. de Purucker wrote in his letter of July 11, 1934, to the membership of the Theosophical Society (Point Loma):

. . . and also we realize with clarity that organizational differences, while having certain ugly features, nevertheless have one advantage at least among others that I could enumerate: that is, that these organization distinctions of different or individual opinions at least keep the Theosophical Movement, or tend so to keep it, from falling into the old and fatal pit of disaster that has always been the fate of every religious organization up to the present day — churchism, dogmatism, spiritual and intellectual crystallization . . . ."

Isn't it very important that thoughts are interchanged and one learns from another? To keep the Theosophical Movement living, to let the flame shine and keep the doctrines pure at the same time — this is our duty, and we know, too, that it is not easy."

### **Krotona School of Theosophy**

The Spring 1986 term opened March 24 with a special five-day seminary featuring Dr. Geddes MacGregor, Emeritus Distinguished Professor Philosophy at the University of California, author of *Reincarnation in Christianity*, and other books. The seminar's title is "The Evolution, Transmission and Inner Meanings of the Bible", and Dr. MacGregor points to some of the inner meanings of many of the Biblical texts.

The Spring program also includes one-day seminars

by: Willamay Pym, President, Seattle Branch T.S.: "Self-Awareness: the Human Potential"; by Dr. Lawrence W. Fagg, Research Professor in Physics at Catholic University of America: "Two Faces of Time"; and Dr. Raimundo Panikkar, Professor of Religious Studies at the University of California Santa Barbara: "The Upanishadic Wisdom: The Great Utterances." "Climaxing the regular classes of the Spring term will be a celebration of Spring, with music, poetry, and numerous other features relating to this season, when all of nature experiences rebirth and renewal."

### **Gifts to Canadian Universities**

Again we are indebted to the vigorous efforts of the Theosophical Society in Canada in donating books to twenty-two University Libraries in their country. This time acceptance had come from them to receive "The Inner Group Teachings of H. P. Blavatsky To Her Personal Pupils", A Reconstruction of the Teachings by H. J. Spierenburg, with a Short Historical Introduction by J. H. Dubbink. A big "Thank You!"

### **Besant, Olcott, Judge**

We are indebted to Mark Jaqua, of Napoleon, Ohio, who, in reference to our editorial about Judge in *Eclectic* No. 92, sends us extracts from the United Lodge history *The Theosophical Movement 1875-1950*, pages 296-97, quoting both Mrs. Besant and Col. Olcott as privately having admitted that they had wronged Mr. Judge who was innocent of charges brought against him. Mrs. Besant's admission was made to Mr. B. P. Wadia, of Bombay, India; and Col. Colcott's to Mrs. Laura Holloway. He is quoted as saying to her: "We learn much and outgrow much, and I have outlived much and learned more, particularly as regards Judge . . . I know now, and it will comfort you to hear it, that I wronged Judge, not wilfully or in malice, nevertheless, I have done this and I regret it."

### **The Story of the Mahatma Letters**

"I have been, for some time, researching into the history of the Theosophical Movement, using, where available, original source material, from diaries, newspapers, letters, old journals, forgotten books, and personal interviews. There are now a surprising number of people working in the area of Theosophical history both from within and without the Theosophical groups, and also both within and without the academic world."

Thus John Cooper, under the above captioned title, begins his survey (6½ pages in *Theosophy in Australia*, December 1985) which condenses a talk given at the Blavatsky Lodge of the T.S. in Sydney, Australia, in May 1985. In the fascinating sweep of theosophical history he portrays, covering the period

of 1870 to 1900, the reader is led to a review of the letters written by the Mahatmas and received not only by H. P. Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott, but also by Damodar, Terry, Francesca Arundale, Ramaswamier, Mohini M. Chatterjee, W. T. Brown, Anna Kingsford, Franz Hartmann, Laura Langford, C. W. Leadbeater, Subba Row, and Annie Besant. He also covers points of controversy that have wracked the Theosophical Movement, both from within and without, from the earliest days. Of one of the great divisive issues *within* the Movement known as the Judge Case he writes:

Judge was one of the founders of the Theosophical Society in New York in 1875. He was General Secretary of the American Theosophical Society. After the death of Madame Blavatsky he and Annie Besant were appointed joint Heads of the Eastern School of Theosophy by the Committee of the E.S. who had worked with H.P.B. in London. Judge was an eminent member of the Society until he was accused of forging letters from the Mahatmas. This was a complex and most horrendous part of Theosophical history and shattered the Society into two disunited fragments, leading to a lack of balance within the Theosophical Movement. I do not subscribe to the belief that tensions and trials throw out the worst members of the Theosophical Society. All too often it has thrown out the best members.

### **In England**

The week of July 28 to August 4 is scheduled for a combined Convention and Summer School to be held at the College of Ripon and York St. John, under the auspices of the Theosophical Society in England. Guest speakers are Mrs. Emily Sellon from New York and Mr. Trevor Leggett from London. For information write to: 50 Gloucester Place, London W1H 3HJ, or *The Theosophical Journal*.

The Fifth European School of Theosophy will be held October 11-26, at Tekels Park, Camberley. Joy Mills, Director of the Krotona School of Theosophy, Ojai, California, will be Guest Tutor. Geoffrey Farthing, Ianthe Hoskins, Adam Warcup and others will also take part. Address inquiries to: Mrs. Elise Probert, 21 Alfreda Road, Whitchurch, Cardiff CF4 2EH, Wales.

### **"Theosophical History"**

The First International Conference on Theosophical History will be held July 18-20, at 50 Gloucester Place, London, sponsored by the Theosophical History Centre. Mr. Leslie Price, Editor of *Theosophical History*, and Secretary of the T.H.C., writes: "Our conference is shaping up well for July. From the States I hope to have Michael Gomes, Paul Johnson (Virginia), John van Mater and James Santucci, giving papers. David Reigle will have a paper from an English or rather Scottish follower of Tibetan Buddhism to discuss his work on HPB's Tibetan context. I'll be giving a paper on priorities in theosophical history, and Robert Gilbert has some new data on the E.S. and the Golden Dawn."

Mr. Price adds: "THC hopes to print the autobiography of Sinnett this summer in a verbatim edition, using copies held at the T.S. in England."

Meanwhile Leslie Price has himself come out with the second study published by the Theosophical History Centre, this one titled "Madame Blavatsky Unveiled?". (The first was by Dr. James A. Santucci: "Theosophy and the Theosophical Society"). This will be of great interest to theosophical students, as it deals largely with the famed S.P.R. report of 1885, known generally as the Hodgson report because largely collated by Richard Hodgson.

[Theosophy and the Theosophical Society," by James A. Santucci, 35 pages, \$3.00. "Madame Blavatsky Unveiled?" by Leslie Price, 44 pages, \$5.00. *Theosophical History*, an independent quarterly journal, \$10.00. For the above, write to: Theosophical History Centre, 50 Gloucester Place, London W1H 3HJ, England.]

### In Germany

Verlag Esoterische Philosophie (with Headquarters at Hannover, W. Germany) held a seminar at Bad Sachsa, April 26-27. This group has an article, written by Herman Knoblauch or by other members, in each issue of *Kulturring*, a journal which reaches some 20,000 readers. Recently they have also inaugurated "Theosophische Studiengesellschaft" (after the model of the HPB and WQJ Clubs at Point Loma). This introduces Theosophy to younger inquirers and students, and stresses the important fundamentals, preparing those who wish later to join the Society (Theosophische Gesellschaft). The latter's regular public lectures, writes Barbel Ackermann, Secretary, are attended usually by 120 or so.

### Talbot Mundy and Theosophy

Brian Taves, who has visited us several times at Point Loma Publications, has for some years been an avid student of the life and writings of Talbot Mundy, and his essay, from which we quote in this *Eclectic*, gives merely a taste of this careful study. He earned his B.A. and M.A. degrees in cinema history and criticism at the University of Southern California where he is presently a doctoral student in cinema critical studies with a minor in twentieth-century U.S. history. His writings have appeared in *Film Quarterly*, *Framework*, *Films in Review*, *Classic Images*, and the *Los Angeles Times Calendar*. His essay, as stated, is available (\$6.00 plus 50¢ postage) from the Historical Society of Southern California, 200 East Avenue 43, Los Angeles 90031, California, and composes about a third of its 110 pages. Mr. Taves writes: "Theosophists might be interested in the comprehensive bibliography of Mundy's philosophical articles, both within and outside of Theosophical journals, which appears at the conclusion. This list, by the way, is substantially more complete and accurate than that found in Donald Grant's bio-bibliography. Five of the 13 illustrations have never before been published."

### FROM LETTERS RECEIVED

**D.E. Studio City, Calif.** — Keep the 'younger' voices speaking out. Rick Nurrie reminds those of us who have been in Theo-

sophical work some decades that affiliated or not, *all* of us are fellow-students. Our mission is to free these sacred writings from sectarian dogmatism, pursuing Truth in a wholehearted brotherly spirit. Rick also epitomizes young students who delve enthusiastically into the root-teachings of Theosophy and see them as providing livable precepts.

**David Zuk, President Toronto Theosophical Society, Canada:** — We would like to thank you for your excellent editorials. We have a study class on *The Ocean of Theosophy* (W.Q. Judge), and both books of Crosbie. *The Divine Plan* (Barborka) has been a basic textbook with this Lodge for many years. Any and all material from Point Loma is very welcome.

**Dianne K. Kynaston, General Secretary, The Theosophical Society in Australia** (dated 4th February 1986): — Greetings from Australia. I am still in the process of finalizing all the work that comes in the wake of a convention, but thought I would drop you a line to let you know how the Secret Doctrine Symposium went.

For me it was a successful event. Most of the papers were well received and there was a diversity of subject matter. I am enclosing a rough outline of the programme.

Whereas participants in the SD2 were students of *The Secret Doctrine*, the audience for this symposium were mainly TS members who had come for the Convention, and quite a good deal of them have not seriously looked at *The Secret Doctrine* at all. Therefore I was pleased to find that generally most people really enjoyed the sessions; there was a lot of audience discussion after the papers and also during the workshop sessions; and many people stated afterwards that they had a much better understanding of the value of the S.D. This to me is a most important point, as to me one of the main objectives of such gatherings is to make people aware and interested in 'The Secret Doctrine'.

Jeanine Miller was an excellent speaker. She is a deep student of 'The Secret Doctrine' (this being coupled with a profound knowledge of both Egyptian and Hindu Cosmology), and she is full of such enthusiasm for her subject that she aroused quite a lot of interest in the deep subjects she spoke on.

Later this year we will issue a special issue of our magazine devoted entirely to the proceedings of the Symposium, and will publish some of the best papers. The paper enjoyed the most was that of John Algeo on the subject of 'Senzar'.

I know there was a lot of criticism about the quality of the papers presented at the SD2, and the papers presented at the Tasmanian Symposium may not be that much better, but I feel that every effort we make to arouse people's attention and interest in studying 'The Secret Doctrine' is a worthwhile activity. There were times when I had my doubts about what I was doing, but I am very glad that I made such an effort. I was inspired by the SD2 to organize the symposium and I hope that there will be many more International Symposiums in the future. This is probably the greatest legacy the SD2 could bequest the theosophical world — i.e. to start a chain of similar events which would encourage us to study a work of supreme value — 'The Secret Doctrine'.

All the best for 1986.

Yours Fraternally,

**M.S., Detroit, Michigan** — ( am thoroughly (though slowly) reading Vol. 2 of Purucker's *The Esoteric Tradition*, learning many facts of Theosophy and thrilling to the vistas opened up.

**H.T., Dallas, Texas:** Thank you for the breadth of the Theosophical outreach you bring us in the *Eclectic*.