

THE HIGH COUNTRY NEWSLETTER



Vol. 4C Nos. 8-10 Boulder, Colorado August-October, 1989

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Vol. 4C No. 8

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AUGUST MEETING

WHERE: Denver Public Library, 1357 Broadway, in Room 305.

Free parking at on-street meters after 6:00 pm, or park in off-street lots on Broadway or on 13th. Call 494-5482 for details.

WHEN: Monday August 14th at 6:00 P.M.

TOPIC: We will complete our study of *At the Feet of the Master*. Read Part V: Chapters 4, 5 & 6 - Cruelty, Superstition and Service - pages 396-477. David Blaschke suggests that we reflect on the following questions:

How can we put some of the precepts from “*At the Feet of the Master*” to practical use?

How, for example, would one go about eliminating gossip, superstition and cruelty from their own life?

If things begin with our thoughts, how can we change our thinking to create the new attitudes and habits we wish to acquire?

If we simply try to think “good” thoughts, will this have any long term effect? If we don’t cultivate “good thoughts,” how can “right action” result?

We will need to decide on a new topic (or topics) for future meetings. Some possible choices are *The Key to Theosophy*, *The Voice of the Silence*, *Light on the Path*, *The Sayings of the Ancient One* and *The Bhagavad Gita*.

Another possibility is to change the format and have some meetings devoted to “the spiritual biography” of some historical figure of particular interest: to be chosen, researched and presented by a study center member. They could be theosophical figures - H.P.B., Colonel Olcott, Judge, Besant, Sinnett, Hume, Leadbeater, Purucker, Tingeley - or non-theosophists - Gandhi, Aurobindo, Milarepa, Sai Baba, Yogananda, Cayce — the list is endless. Give this some thought. What would be your choice?

AUGUST POTLUCK BREAKFAST

WHERE: Barbara Ginsberg’s home. Call her at 696-0794 for directions.

WHEN: Sunday August 27th at 9 A.M.

TOPIC: A free talk by S. Krisnamurthy on “The Art of Teaching: Informative and Intuitive. (See July Newsletter)

NEWS AND COMMENTARY

The following article by Gerald Schueler appeared recently in the “Theosophical Action Network” and poses some questions that probably have occurred to many of us.

A MODERN LOOK AT THE THEOSOPHICAL MASTERS

The Question. Are the theosophical Mahatmas, H.P. Blavatsky’s teachers and the real founders of the modern theosophical movement, lofty spiritual beings or physical men long deceased? If the former, should we attempt or encourage communication with them? If the latter, who, if anyone, is guiding the theosophical ship? To whom or to what do today’s theosophists turn to for help in times of trouble?

A Definition: First of all, what do we mean by a Mahatma or Master? William Quan Judge wrote, “A Mahatma endowed with power over space, time, mind, and matter, is a possibility just because he is a perfected man. Every human being has the germ of all the powers attributed to these great Initiates, the difference lying solely in the fact that we have in general not developed what we possess the germ of,

while the Mahatma has gone through the training and experience which have caused all the unseen powers to develop in him, and conferred gifts that look god-like to his struggling brother below.” (*OCEAN OF THEOSOPHY*, page 13) The Mahatma or Master, is a highly evolved man. He has developed magical and mystical powers. Yet, like all of us, he is mortal. While admitting that Masters are mortal men, Judge writes “They are, truly, living men, but not such as ourselves. They have bodies, but these bodies are made up of the most highly refined and spiritualized matter; matter of which we have but slight conception” (*ECHOES OF THE ORIENT*, Vol III page 437).

H.P.B.’s Response. This very question was put to H.P.B. and her response can be found on page 288 of *THE KEY TO THEOSOPHY*. The question was stated: “Who are they, finally, those whom you call your “Masters”? Some say they are “Spirits,” or some other kind of supernatural beings, while others call them “myths.”” H.P.B.’s response was, “They are neither ... they are living men, born as we are born, and doomed to die like every other mortal.” Perhaps this should have been the final answer to the whole question of the mysterious Masters. But was it?

The Help of Masters. Most theosophists believe that even though the original Masters have deceased, yet such lofty beings still exist and can help. G de Purucker writes:

“The Masters of Wisdom and Compassion are always ready and always waiting and always working. The door is never shut on those whose feet are on the pathway. The Great Ones work among men continuously, uninterruptedly; and have done so for ages. Anyone whose feet are on the path, who shows even the smallest glimmer of the Buddhic Splendor, is watched, guided, helped; and if he succeeds, he finally is openly received into the Brotherhood.” (*FOUNTAIN-SOURCE OF OCCULTISM* page 684).

Thus the line of Masters is unbroken, even though the original founders of the TS have probably been deceased for many years.

The Need for Personal Supermen. Are the Masters behind the TS supermen? It is apparent that many theosophists have thought so. Theosophy knocks down the idea of a personal God that we can turn to in times of trouble, substituting Be-ness which is altogether too abstract a notion for most folks. Have theosophists set up the Masters or Brothers as a replacement for a personal God? We seem to need an all-knowing all-powerful deity (or deities) of some sort to turn to; if there is none,

then perhaps we shall simply make one up (thus the phenomenon of channeling wise and fatherly beings). Could this be the reason so many theosophists have Christianized HPB's teachings over the years? Basically, modern theosophists are confronted with a real problem. If we agree that the Masters were physical men, now deceased, then who or what will be our personal God-concept? Who will future theosophists turn/pray to for guidance? HPB speaks of gods and hosts of various intelligent and semi-intelligent beings in higher spheres, but they remain too foreign to us to be of much use in our lives. Should we look to the replacements, the students, of those original Masters? If so, where are they? Should we look to the higher planes for disembodied Masters? If so, how do we go about communicating with them?

Channeling Masters. William Quan Judge wrote that "Occult help from Masters requires a channel just as much as any other help does, and the fact that the currents to be used are occult makes the need for a channel greater" (*ECHOES OF THE ORIENT* Vol 1, page 320). Since Judge's remark, several students of theosophy have "channeled" messages and teachings from supposed Masters. Is this ethical? How can we know if such channeling is true or false?

The Answer. The textbook 'answer' here, most likely, is that we should find a spiritual guiding light within ourselves. Our personal God is within us. Are there any other answers? Can we look to disembodied Masters without becoming entangled in psychism?

The Challenge. Some theosophists have been able to find God (or at least divinity) within themselves. Many have not, and those are the ones who leave the TSs seeking spiritual guidance elsewhere. Should we let them go? Should we encourage them to seek help from Masters? Should we encourage them to seek help from within themselves, and if so, how? — Gerald Schueler.

Most Westerners outside of the Theosophical Society, having never heard of the Masters and never having entertained the idea of a world-wide spiritual brotherhood, will logically ask; "If such a Brotherhood of perfected beings exists, how is it that history fails to record their existence or their influence on world affairs?" Just this question was posed by Allen O. Hume, one of the recipients of the Mahatma

Letter correspondence which took place in India in the 1880s. The Master K.H. replied, in His first letter to Hume:

Of your several questions we will first discuss, if you please, the one relating to the presumed failure of the "Fraternity" to "leave any mark upon the history of the world." They ought, you think, to have been able with their extraordinary advantages to have "gathered into their schools a considerable portion of the more enlightened minds of every race." How do you know they have made no such mark? Are you acquainted with their efforts, successes, and failures? Have you any dock upon which to arraign them?

How could your world collect proofs of the doings of men who have sedulously kept closed every possible door of approach by which the inquisitive could spy upon them. The prime condition of their success was, that they should never be supervised or obstructed. What they have done they know; all those outside could perceive was the results, the causes of which were masked from view.

To account for these results, men have in different ages invented theories of the interposition of "Gods," Special Providences, fates, and the benign or hostile influences of the stars. There never was a time within or before the so-called historical period when our predecessors were not moulding events and "making history," the facts of which were subsequently and invariably distorted by "historians" to suit contemporary prejudices.

Are you quite sure that the visible heroic figures in the successive dramas were not often but their puppets? We never pretended to be able to draw nations in the mass to this or that crisis in spite of the general drift of the world's cosmic relations.

The cycles must run their rounds. Periods of mental and moral light and darkness succeed each other, as day does night. The major and minor yugas must be accomplished according to the established order of things. And we, borne along on the mighty tide, can only modify and direct some of its minor currents.

If we had the powers of the imaginary Personal God, and the universal and immutable laws were but toys to play with, then indeed might we have created conditions that would have turned this earth into an Arcadia for lofty souls. But having to deal with an immutable Law, being ourselves its creatures, we have had to do what we could and rest thankful.

There have been times when "a considerable portion of the enlightened minds" were taught in our schools. Such times there were in India, Persia, Egypt, Greece and Rome. But, as I remarked in a letter to Mr. Sinnett, the adept is the efflorescence of his age, and comparatively few ever appear in a single century.

Earth is the battleground of moral no less than of physical forces; and the boisterousness of animal passions under the stimulus of the rude energies of the lower group of etheric agents, always tends to quench spirituality. [*Combined Chronology - Mahatma*

A question which occurred to me (editor) when I first joined the Theosophical Society and read of all of the correspondence between the Masters and the Founders and early theosophists like Sinnett, Hume and others was: “That’s wonderful, but it all happened over a hundred years ago and K.H. and Morya ought by natural processes to be dead by now. Can they still be alive by some secret of longevity or have others taken their place?”

H.P. Blavatsky had this to say on the subject to Charles P. Johnston in 1887 [Blavatsky Collected Writings Vol. VIII, pp. 399-400]:

“This is my Master,” she said, “whom we call Mahatma Morya. I have his picture here.” And she showed me a small panel in oils. If ever I saw genuine awe and reverence in a human face, it was in hers, when she spoke of her Master. “He was a Rajput by birth,” she said, “one of the old warrior race of the Indian desert, the finest and handsomest nation in the world.” Her Master was a giant, six feet eight, and splendidly built; a superb type of manly beauty. Even in the picture, there is a marvelous power and fascination; the force, the fierceness even, of the face; the dark glowing eyes, which stare at you out of countenance; the clear-cut features of bronze, the raven hair and beard - all spoke of a tremendous individuality, a very Zeus in the prime of manhood and strength.

I asked her something about his age. She answered:

“My dear, I cannot tell you exactly, for I do not know. But this I will tell you. I met him first when I was twenty, - in 1851. He was in the very prime of manhood then. I am an old woman now, but he has not aged a day. He is still in the prime of manhood. That is all I can say. You may draw your own conclusions.”

“Have the Mahatmas discovered the Elixir of Life?”

“That is no fable,” said H.P.B. seriously. “It is only the veil hiding a real occult process, warding off age and dissolution for periods which would seem fabulous, so I will not mention them. The secret is this: for every man there is a climacteric, when he must draw near to death; if he has squandered his powers, there is no escape for him; but if he has lived according to the law, he may pass through and so continue living in the same body almost indefinitely. ... Adepts are a necessity in nature and in supernature. They are the links between men and the gods; these ‘gods’ being the souls of great adepts and Masters of bygone races and ages, and so on, up to the threshold of Nirvana. The continuity is unbroken.”

From this, the implication is clear that Masters K.H. and Morya might just still be present in the same physical bodies as they were in the 1880s. But even if not — it is the spiritual identity, not the body, that is important and we read in the literature of Theosophy that the Masters can consciously reincarnate in a new body when needed for their work. In *ISIS UNVEILED* Vol. I, p. 437, we have the following account:

Early in the present century [19th] a Florentine Scientist, a skeptic and a correspondent of the French Institute, having been permitted to penetrate in disguise to the hallowed precincts of a Buddhist temple, where the most solemn of all ceremonies was taking place, relates the following as having been seen by himself. An altar is ready in the temple to receive the resuscitated Buddha, found by the initiated priesthood, and recognized by certain secret signs to have reincarnated himself in a new-born infant. The baby, but a few days old, is brought into the presence of the people and reverentially placed upon the altar. Suddenly rising into a sitting posture, the child begins to utter, in a loud, manly voice, the following sentences; “I am Buddha, I am this spirit; and I Buddha, your Dalai Lama, have left my old decrepit body at the temple of ... and selected the body of this babe as my next earthly dwelling.” Our scientist, being finally permitted to take, with due reverence, the baby in his arms and carry it away to such a distance from them as to satisfy him that no ventriloquial deception is being practiced, the infant looks at the grave academician with eyes that ‘make his flesh creep’, as he expresses it, and repeats the words he had previously uttered.

For those who accept the premise that such a brotherhood actually exists, the question immediately arises, as Gerald Schueler suggests; “How can we know whether ‘channeled’ messages from supposed “Masters” are authentic or not?”

There are many books currently in print and on the shelves of the “New Age” bookstores containing present-day ‘channeled’ messages claiming to originate from not only the two Masters Morya and Kuthumi, accepted by most theosophists as the authors of “*The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett*”, but in addition other beings such as The Maha-Chohan, Djwal Khul, Hilarion, Serapis Bey, Gautama Buddha, Jesus Christ, etc., etc.

How, indeed, can we judge the authenticity of these channeled communications?

Alice Bailey, originally a theosophist, left the TS and formed her own organization in the 1920s and 1930s with channeled teachings from an entity calling himself “The Tibetan”, later claimed to be Djwal Khul. Elizabeth Claire-Prophet, and her now deceased husband Mark Prophet, have authored books of channeled

“teachings” claimed to originate from all of the above Masters!!

The question of the authenticity of credentials of a “Messenger” of the Masters was discussed by G de Purucker in *FOUNTAIN SOURCE OF OCCULTISM*, pp. 686-7:

“How are we to know?” Suppose that a Mahatman came to you with a legally drawn document with an imposing red or blue seal, saying something like this: “To all whom it may concern: Be it known that I, Maha-Chohan of Shambhala, hereby certify that — is my fully authorized agent to do such and such work in the Theosophical Society, and to be successor of so-and-so in the Esoteric Section.” What would you think? Your first instinct would be one of amusement, perhaps. The second would be one of suspicion.

Did H.P.B. bring anything except herself? No; she herself was her own proof. If H.P.B. had appeared in the world with a formally witnessed and attested document certifying her status as a Messenger of the Lodge, would she in any wise have been greater than she was? Would her position as a Messenger from the Lodge thereby have been proved? The answer is an obvious No. H.P.B. proved what she was by what was in her.

The authenticity, I believe, is in the substance of the teachings. Compare the content of the teachings in the *SECRET DOCTRINE* and *THE MAHATMA LETTERS* with the contemporary “New Age” channelings in the bookstores. The former contain a wide range of metaphysical teachings in the fields of religion, philosophy and science with an abundance of references to recognizable world literature, becoming so abstruse at times as to challenge and confound even the experts in their fields of competence, while the latter - for the most part - exhibit a suspicious sameness of style and consist largely of platitudes devoid of any significant meaning. [ed. HCT]

Note: The article by Gerald Schueler was downloaded from the “Theosophical Action Network” and responses from readers of the High Country Newsletter are encouraged and will be printed in subsequent issues and uploaded to TAN for readers there.

THEOSOPHICAL CONVENTION AND SUMMER SCHOOL AT LAKE GENEVA

Your editor, Dick Slusser, High Country members Judy Modig, Tessa and Bob Goldhamer and Casper Lodge president Sheldon Sumey attended the convention

and summer school of the TS in A together at Lake Geneva Wisconsin July 15-21 and visited national headquarters at Wheaton Illinois on Saturday the 22nd. It was a very special time of making new friends and renewing old acquaintances for all of us.

At the opening of the convention, the activities of the various departments of headquarters were presented. The new QUEST magazine is being well received and is rapidly gaining circulation - presently having 3000 non-member subscribers and 10,000 sold on the newsstands. This new venture, along with the fieldwork program expenses and other non-income producing activities is producing a serious cash-flow problem. The governing board has had to make some difficult choices - and some (we hope) short term sacrifices have had to be made. Part of the problem is that although THE QUEST is doing well, receipts from sales lag about 6 to 9 months behind. To curtail THE QUEST at this time would be fatal to its success, but a cut had to be made somewhere. The board at their regular meeting chose, using the results of a member-at-large survey as guidelines, to suspend work on the TV Video program until the crisis is past. Members present expressed their viewpoint on program priorities by placing an allocated 10 beans each into 11 cups, representing the 10 programs in the MAL survey (AT July '89) plus the TV Video program, not previously represented. Surprisingly, TV-Video was favored by a 2-1 margin over the other programs. At this point its fate depends upon the support given it by the membership in the Annual Fund drive. It should be pointed out here that membership dues account for less than 10% of the income to headquarters - most of the seed money for new ventures comes from the Kern Foundation.

The TV-Video program has shown great promise and the first series of seven programs has been accepted by 33 stations nationally for broadcast. The problem is that while the demonstration tapes, which can be run on a home VCR, are relatively inexpensive to copy (\$5-\$6), the 3/4 inch commercial broadcast-quality tapes cost \$200 apiece to produce and are given to the TV stations free of charge. The response from the stations and viewers, so far, had been extremely enthusiastic.

Readers of this newsletter are urged to join us in making as generous a contribution to the Annual Fund as their finances permit — as we believe that this project is a rare opportunity to present Theosophy to the public in a way far more effective than any other currently available. We emphasize that it is a rare opportunity because the field of documentary, educational programming is relatively non-competitive at this time and there are many public and non-commercial stations, both on-the-air broadcast and cable, hungry for quality program material.

The High Country Study Center is in possession of VHS demonstration tapes for the first two series of programs. Tape #1 contains; Reincarnation - the Untrue Fact, Nicholas Roerich - Messenger of Beauty, The Meaning of Tibetan Buddhist Chanting and Truth is a Pathless Land. Tape #2 contains; Divination - Astrology, Tarot and the I-Ching, Hawaiian Shamanism, Joy before Night - Native American Traditions and The Mystic's Laboratory. Any Lodges, Study Centers or persons wishing to have copies of these demo tapes for the purpose of promoting and encouraging contributions to the Annual Fund to revive this program can obtain same by sending a check for \$7 per tape, payable to Richard Slusser 140 S. 33rd St., Boulder, Colo., 80303.

SUMMER SCHOOL AUDIO TAPES AVAILABLE

The lecture and workshop presentations in the summer school were excellent and enthusiastically received. Of special note were the presentations of “The Science of Spirituality” by Ianthe Hoskins, “Theosophy 101” by John Abbenhouse and “The Silent Master” keynote talk by Ed Abdill. Complete audio tapes of the sessions will be available for loan from the Olcott Library for members (1-800-654-9429) or from the High Country Study Center Library locally (Judy Modig 477-4788) in a month or so.

HIGH COUNTRY LIBRARY ACQUISITIONS

A number of new books for the High Country Library were obtained on sale at Wheaton, and also donated by the Olcott Library book-gift program for new Lodges and Study Centers. Included are three more volumes of *The Collected Writings Of H.P.B.*, *The Mahatma Letters*, *Heart Of The Koran* and *Reincarnation Explored*.

WILLAMAY PYM TO VISIT

Willamay Pym, second vice-president of the TS in A, will be a guest of the High Country Study Center in Denver on Wednesday, September 13 and will present a talk on “Paths to wholeness” at 7:00 P.M. at the Ross-Cherry Creek Library, located at 305 Milwaukee St.

In her talk, Willamay will explore the ways in which the stress and tension of modern living produce fragmentation of our selves leading to the illusion of separateness and alienation from others in our lives and will suggest ways in which we can re-integrate body, mind and spirit.

Prior to devoting full-time to theosophical work, Willamay worked for twenty years in the field of education and is a second generation theosophist of some fifty years standing. Linda Jo Pym, her daughter, following her example, works tirelessly as co-ordinator of the fieldwork department.

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

THE HIGH COUNTRY NEWSLETTER



Vol. 4C No. 9

Boulder, Colorado

September, 1989

SEPTEMBER MEETINGS

WHEN: Wednesday September 13 at 7:00 P.M.

WHERE: Ross-Cherry Creek Public Library, 305 Milwaukee Street. The library requests that we avoid parking in the library parking lot.

TOPIC: PATHS TO WHOLENESS, a free public talk by Willamay Pym, second vice-president of The Theosophical Society in America. In her talk, Willamay will explore ways in which the stress and tension of modern living produces fragmentation of our selves leading to the illusion of separateness and alienation from others in our lives and will suggest ways in which we can re-integrate body, mind and spirit.

WHEN: Monday September 18 at 6:00 P.M.

WHERE: Denver Public Library, 1357 Broadway, in Room 305.
Free parking at on-street meters after 6:00 pm, or park in off-street lots on Broadway or on 13th. Call 494-5482 for details.

TOPIC: At the August meeting, we decided to begin study of the Secret Doctrine using two different study guides: (1) GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH THE SECRET DOCTRINE by John Algeo, and (2) AN INTUITIVE APPROACH TO THE SECRET DOCTRINE by Beverley Noia. We plan to follow the approach of the two different guides on alternate months.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If you missed the August meeting and wish to participate in the SD studies, you will need the study guides (above). To order the John Algeo guide (1), call Terri Todd at 665-2577; to order the Beverley Noia guide (2), call Barbara Ginsberg at 696-0794. Please place your orders right away.

NEWS AND COMMENTARY

Is Chelaship Possible In The West?

Gerald Schueler has opened up another topic in the Theosophic Action Network which again raises some very relevant questions to Theosophists and others who wish to “live the theosophical life” and “enter the path.” His viewpoint and my commentary thereon follow. HC Newsletter readers are invited to join in the discussion — responses will, with permission, be reprinted here and uploaded to TAN for the benefit of network members.

Gerald Schueler:

EAST vs WEST: When is a person “ready” for spiritual development? Can a person in America today become spiritually enlightened?

In the July/August '89 issue of THE ECLECTIC THEOSOPHIST is a quote from Damodar, an early theosophist, which states that “Before a person can have the privilege of being admitted as a chela even, he has to pass through a succession of lives, and prepare himself theoretically for the task.”

While this sort of nonsense may have been perfectly acceptable in late last century India, it certainly has no part in today's America. It is a rather pernicious idea that suggests to the reader that s/he is unworthy of chelaship during this life, but if s/he works real hard and struggles mightily with stiff upper lip and high resolve, then maybe, just maybe, they will qualify next time around. I have read several Buddhist texts that espouse the same message of hope to women - if a woman tries real hard to do her best in this life (her “best” is usually defined as obeying her husband, her father, and her brothers) then maybe, just maybe, she will be reborn as a man in the next life. Fortunately these ideas never became mainstream, even in the East.

If one was a Master, or full Adept in the theosophical sense, then such a one would be able to look deeply into a candidate/chela and determine their readiness for initiation. Such a one could possibly even determine the nature of their past several lives.

However, where do we find such a one? Certainly not in the USA of the late Eighties. No theosophist, to my knowledge, since Leadbeater has even tried. And it is undoubtedly well and good that they have not. We don't need to remember ourselves as King Tut or Queen Nefertiti in order to qualify for chelaship, or to tread the spiritual path.

We do not need to know the details of our past lives, or even of our immediate past life, in order to know whether we qualify for chelaship or not. It is only necessary that the desire for chelaship burns within our heart. That is the only qualification. What Damodar and others have left unspoken is that if this fiery desire for truth burns within us now during this life, then we have already had enough lives of preparation. If a lifetime or more of preparation is necessary, what else can it be for other than to ignite that very fire? What can possibly be the difference between one person who yearns for some kind of truth beyond his or her own mortality, and another who is happily convinced that only what the physical senses detect has reality? Only the amount of past experience two people have had can make this kind of difference.

To tread the spiritual path, the only requirement is desire - you must want to tread it very badly, at the gut level. If your desire is only on the surface, a curiosity or whim, then you won't travel very far. You will only travel far along the path if the desire burns within you at a high level. And if it does, then nobody is going to convince you to slow down or to take a "safer" path. Your own need will propel you forward into dangerous waters; dangerous yet necessary because enlightenment can only come about after you have crossed over these dangerous waters - the Dark Night of the Soul described by the Christian mystics.

Although the spiritual path can be slow or fast, gradual or steep, depending on one's desire to reach the spiritual peaks, one's race, age, sex, religion, and politics count for nothing at all. Whenever I hear someone suggest that some kind of mystical requirements are necessary, especially those that require you to wait around for future lives, my blood pressure rises and I simply have to speak out. No one should ever have the hopeless feeling that they don't qualify for spiritual understanding, but must wait for some future life before they can even try. The many well-known Satori experiences in Zen Buddhism show us clearly that enlightenment can come at any time, often at some unexpected moment - if we are prepared. This preparation should never be put off until later. But the fact is, if we have the desire we will already be on the road of preparedness, and if we have not the desire then we will be content to wait and will make up lots of excuses for waiting.

Western occultism in general, and theosophy in particular, if it is to survive and

prosper in the West today, must revise many of the old ways, procedures, and techniques that, while all well and good in last century's India, are totally unfit and inapplicable here and now. Let us not tell new or prospective members that they must wait until a future life before they can begin to develop their own inherent spirituality. Spiritual development can begin now, this very minute. The very desire for it implies the readiness of the candidate. If I had read Damodar's quote right after coming into theosophy, I would have left the TS soon afterward for something that was meaningful for me in this life. I certainly never joined a TS with the goal of improving my future lives. As it was, I was blissfully ignorant of Damodar's quote and I asked many questions and received many meaningful answers, and I was able to tread the spiritual path almost from the day I joined.

Lets face it - chelaship in the USA today, is not what the term meant to the original founders of the TS back in 1875. We no longer need a personal guru or Master to give one-on-one instruction, nor do we have time for such a thing, even if a qualified Master was available. Society today is vastly different from that of 19th century India. Today's guru is a book. Today's Yoga is done sitting comfortably in a chair. Today's ascetic is a member of an intricate complex society which demands a lion's share of one's time and thought, leaving one free for meditation and other spiritual techniques only during selective hours on selective days. Today's ascetic is often sexually active, and responsible for a family. Today's ascetic lives in a high-tech city rather than a forest.

Does this mean that today's Seeker can no longer become enlightened? Do we have to retreat to a mountain and renounce our world in order to understand it? Must we renounce ourself in order to understand ourself? Must we sit crosslegged and stare at our navel for hours a day? Not at all. The goal remains. The candidates remain. But the 'modus operandi' has changed with the times. The Path now lies along new channels and meanders past new sceneries, while it still steadily goes upward, as surely as it ever did. But if today's TSs think that the old pathways are still sufficient, then membership will continue to drop as people look elsewhere. Jerry Schueler - August 1989

* * * * * Dick Slusser - Response * * * * *

Jerry,

I read your two responses on "Tech aspects of spirituality" with much interest and I agree with some of the positions you take — but only partially.

It does seem to me that there is clearly a prevailing attitude on the part of the leadership of the various Theosophical lineages to discourage any efforts to actively

pursue the 3rd object of the TS; namely the investigation AND CULTIVATION of the powers latent in humanity. While I have recognized this, I have also accepted that the reason for the avoidance of the pursuit of the 3rd object has been because of the hazards involved for the aspirant.

In EAST vs WEST, you seem to argue that the sole qualification and prerequisite for ‘spiritual development’ is ‘that the desire for chelaship burns within our heart’ and that other prerequisites that applied in the India of the 1880s no longer are valid or necessary in our present milieu — the high-tech city environment of the West.

In my understanding there is vast difference between the ‘spiritual development’ that comes as the natural result of meditation practice and the requirements for chelaship — which are far more stringent, and another matter altogether! The Damodar quote in the ECLECTIC THEOSOPHIST is from the larger context of a letter to Carl Hartmann in DAMODAR AND THE PIONEERS OF THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT (pp. 303-06), and what was not included in the ECLECTIC is relevant to the question of qualifications and prerequisites for chelaship and the spiritual path. Damodar says on pp. 304-05;

“You are now too far advanced in age to be able to become a `practical occultist.’ According to our Indian rules, a chela is accepted for practical occultism either at the second or third [septenary] cycle of his age at the latest. [This would be by ages 14 to 28 - no later. (ds)] This is no whim or caprice on the part of the venerated Masters; all their rules and laws are based upon a thorough comprehension of the hitherto unknown laws of nature, and a better understanding of the Humanity that surrounds Them. Modern science even has found out that after each seven years, the body of a man is entirely changed. You will thus perceive that for the body to be so completely changed within seven years, the process must be going on gradually all the time, and the new body that is thus formed is entirely of the man’s own making, for this process of the emission and the attraction of atoms is going on all the time. If, therefore, knowing this secret, the man controls his desires and passions all the time, so that he will emit from himself those atoms that are not suited for his progress, at the same time giving them a good tendency so that they may not prove a nuisance to others, and if he attracts only those atoms which are suited to his progress, then the body he will have formed will be entirely his own creation, and he can use it in any way he likes. For the completion of this process seven years are necessary. You will thus see why the probationary period is fixed for seven years. It is no arbitrary rule, but the necessary condition exacted by nature itself. This is the reason why the neophyte has always to guard self against self; i.e., he must watch all the time his desires and passions, so as to prevent them from attracting atoms unsuited to spiritual progress. When, therefore, the third cycle of a man’s age is past, his vitality is, in the first place, expended in directions opposed to spiritual progress; in the second place, his mind has been wont to run in channels which are inconsistent with psychical development and from which it is extremely difficult to turn it into correct

grooves. Hence chelas are admitted and brought up from their young age. ... Here, then, my friend, remember that no one becomes an adept in one life.”

In reading the Taimni reference (THE SCIENCE OF YOGA), I came upon additional reasons given to explain the obstacles in the way of the aspirant on the path of spiritual development (pp. 36-7);

“As a rule, when the Yogi is still learning the technique of Samadhi he has to spend considerable time on a particular plane in studying its phenomena and laws before he is in a position to attempt passage into the next higher plane. His progress depends not only on his present effort but also on the momentum of the past and the Samskaras (*) which he brings from his previous lives. The science of Yoga cannot be mastered in one life but only in a succession of strenuous lives devoted to the Yogic ideal. And those who are impatient and cannot adopt this long term view are not yet qualified to enter this path and make steady progress towards their goal.”

(*) In the THEOSOPHICAL GLOSSARY (THEOSOPHY CO.), Samskaras are: “Impressions left upon the mind by individual actions or external circumstances capable of being developed on a favorable future occasion or even a future birth.”

But chelaship is still Chelaship, unless we have corrupted the term to mean something trivial. In the sense it was understood in the 1880s, it was a most serious commitment indeed for Guru and chela alike. Master K.H. said, regarding the conditions submitted to by the Master for the sake of his chela:

“I am also of opinion that few candidates imagine the degree of inconvenience — nay, suffering and harm to himself the said initiator submits to for the sake of his pupil. The peculiar physical, moral, and intellectual conditions of neophytes and Adepts alike vary much, as anyone will easily understand; thus, in each case, the instructor has to adapt his conditions to those of the pupil, and the strain is terrible, for to achieve success we have to bring ourselves into a FULL rapport with the subject under training. And as the greater the powers of the Adept, the less he is in sympathy with the natures of the profane who often come to him saturated with the emanations of the outside world, those animal emanations of the selfish, brutal, crowd that we so dread — the longer he was separated from that world and the purer he has himself become, the more difficult the self-imposed task.” [*Mahatma Letter* 49, p. 279, 3rd ed.]

Regarding the necessary qualifications for the candidate for chelaship, Master K.H. had this to say to A.P. Sinnett:

“You were told, however, that the path to Occult Sciences has to be

trodden laboriously and crossed at the danger of life; that every new step in it leading to the final goal is surrounded by pit-falls and cruel thorns; that the pilgrim who ventures upon it is made first to confront and CONQUER the thousand and one furies who keep watch over its adamantine gates and entrance — furies called Doubt, Skepticism, Scorn, Ridicule, Envy and finally Temptation — especially the latter; and that he who would see beyond had to destroy first this living wall; that he must be possessed of a heart and soul clad in steel, and of an iron, never failing determination and yet be meek and gentle, humble and have shut out from his heart every human passion, that leads to evil. Are you all this? Have you ever begun a course of training which would lead to it? No; you know it as I do. You are not born for it; nor are you in a position, — a family man with a wife and a child to support, with work to do — fitted in any way for the life of an ascetic ...” [ML 62, p. 346, 3rd ed.]

What, exactly, are the requirements of chelaship? In *BLAVATSKY COLLECTED WRITINGS*, Vol. IV, pp. 607-610; “Chelas and Lay Chelas,” H.P.B. tells us:

- “From Book IV of Kiu-Ti, ... we learn the qualifications expected in a Chela were:
1. Perfect physical health;
 2. Absolute mental and physical purity;
 3. Unselfishness of purpose; universal charity; pity for all animate beings;
 4. Truthfulness and unswerving faith in the law of Karma, independent of any power in nature that could interfere: a law whose course is not to be obstructed by any agency, not to be caused to deviate by prayer or propitiatory exoteric ceremonies.
 5. A courage undaunted in every emergency, even by peril to life;
 6. An intuitional perception of one’s being the vehicle of the manifested ... Divine Atman (Spirit);
 7. Calm indifference for, but a just appreciation of everything that constitutes the objective and transitory world, in its relation with, and to, the invisible regions.

Such, at the least, must have been the recommendations of one aspiring to perfect Chelaship. ... Since the advent of The Theosophical Society, ... the rules of Chela selection have become slightly relaxed in one respect. Many members of the Society, ... thinking that if other men had hitherto reached the goal, they too if inherently fitted, might reach it by following the same path, pressed to be taken as candidates. ... All were refused at first, Col. Olcott, the president himself, to begin with: ... he was not formally accepted until he had proved by more than a year’s devoted labors and by a determination that brooked no denial, that he might safely be tested. ...

They were nearly all married men, and hence were designated “Lay Chelas.” ... A Lay Chela is but a man of the world who affirms his desire to become wise in spiritual things. Virtually, every member who subscribes to the second of our three “Declared objects” is such; for though not one of the ... true Chelas, he has yet the possibility of becoming one, for

he has stepped across the boundary line which separated him from the Mahatmas, and has brought himself ... under their notice. ... In joining the Society and binding himself to help along its work, he has pledged himself to act in some degree in concert with those Mahatmas, at whose behest the Society was organized The joining, is then, the introduction; all the rest depends entirely upon the member himself.

In view of all this, it seems quite clear to me that for the reasons given by Damodar, Taimni and H.P.B., one would be deluding one's self to expect to be accepted into genuine chelaship by one of the Masters in this lifetime — much less to attain to Adeptship, for the requirements for chelaship must surely be the same today — and tomorrow — as they were in 1882 and ages past.. But we can, I think, by making the pledge to our higher Self to work seriously to further the three objectives of the Society, consider ourselves as Lay Chelas under the observation of our chosen Master.

So we should not therefore assume that much progress toward the goal cannot be made in the present life, or that one should not attempt to pursue the various Yogas and meditation with serious intent, for the longest journey begins with the first steps. I agree wholeheartedly with you that the time to begin on the path is now. And it is in these first steps that I think that the leadership of the TSs has been sadly lacking. Apparently we have no leaders either able or willing to take on the task of guiding those with the “burning desire” to enter the path. The spiritual retreats offered by the TS in A, Wheaton may be a good way to begin — and I'm interested. I know from past experience that no amount of unguided “sitting meditation” can be productive of progress without the proper instruction by one who knows how to guide the aspirant through the various stages of Dharana, Dhyana, and Samadhi (*).

(*) Dharana: The intense and steady mental concentration directed to some subject of thought with the mind and heart absolutely freed from the disturbances of sense attractions. (*SANSKRIT KEYS TO THE WISDOM RELIGION*, Tyberg, p. 62)

Dhyana: ‘Meditation,’ ‘Spiritual contemplation.’ (Tyberg p. 60)

“... it is the occasional appearance of distractions in the mind [in the case of Dharana] which constitutes the essential difference between Dharana and Dhyana.” (*THE SCIENCE OF YOGA*, Taimni, p. 278)

Samadhi: The highest state of Yoga, hence Union with the Spirit within. It is the “state of faultless vision.” (Tyberg p. 63)

“... when the initiate has attained SAMADHI he becomes practically omniscient for the Solar Universe in which he dwells, because his consciousness is functioning at the time in the spiritual-causal worlds. All knowledge is then to him like an open page because he is self-consciously conscious ... of Nature’s inner and spiritual realms, the reason being that his consciousness has become kosmic in its reaches.” (OCCULT GLOSSARY, G. de Purucker, p. 150)

For those wishing to hear additional opinion on the question of “Chelaship in the West”, we refer the reader to two audio tapes available from the Olcott Library of TS in A headquarters in Wheaton, Illinois:

1. DISCIPLESHIP IN THE NEW AGE by Christmas Humphries
2. IS DISCIPLESHIP POSSIBLE IN THE WEST? by Gordon Plummer

Members of the TS in A can borrow audio tapes “free of charge” except for return postage and can order by calling the new toll-free number (see below), or can obtain copies of the above from the High Country Study Center.

* * * * * TS IN A “800” NUMBER IS CHANGED * * * * *

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THE HIGH COUNTRY NEWSLETTER



Vol. 4 No. 10

Boulder, Colorado

October, 1989

OCTOBER MEETINGS

WHEN: Sunday October 8th at 9:30 A.M. Brunch meeting; bring food to share.

WHERE: Jack De Mooy's home in Ft. Collins. (303)-482-7553

Directions: Take I-25 north to Ft. Collins exit #269 (State highway 14), west on S.H. 14 to Le May, north on Le May about 2 miles to Country Club Road, east 2 blocks on Country Club Road to Belmont, south on Belmont 1 block, left on Hillside Drive to 2nd house on the left (1310).

TOPIC: We will view the Ed and Mary Abdill video FUNDAMENTALS OF THE AGELESS WISDOM; part 1: Introduction to Theosophy and the First Fundamental Proposition. We will use study guides provided by The Dept. of Education (Wheaton) to discuss the concepts introduced in the video.

WHEN: Monday October 16th at 6:00 P.M.

WHERE: Denver Public Library, 1357 Broadway, in Room 305.
Free parking at on-street meters after 6:00 pm, or park in off-street lots on Broadway or on 13th. Call 494-5482 for details.

TOPIC: In September we began our study of H. P. Blavatsky's SECRET DOCTRINE with parts 1 and 2 of John Algeo's study guide: GET-

TING ACQUAINTED WITH THE SECRET DOCTRINE. We shall continue with part 3, An Overview Of The Book; part 4, The Writing Of The Secret Doctrine; and part 6, How To Study The Secret Doctrine. On your own, read part 5 (Editions Of The Secret Doctrine) before the meeting, and bring any questions you may have to discuss. If we can finish part 6 (How To Study The Secret Doctrine), we should be ready in November to begin with Beverley Noia's AN INTUITIVE APPROACH TO THE SEVEN STANZAS OF DZYAN.

NEWS AND COMMENTARY

THE MYSTERY OF H.P. BLAVATSKY AND HER WRITINGS

A TRIBUTE

H. P. Blavatsky was one of the most controversial figures in the intellectual world of the nineteenth century and today, one hundred years later, she is largely unknown to the general public, usually maligned by the mainstream press but revered as a bringer of spiritual light by the few who call themselves theosophists. She was slandered in the infamous 1885 report of the Society for Psychological Research as “one of the most ingenious and accomplished impostors in history,” a malicious falsehood that has been uncritically accepted in print to this day. In April 1986, 101 years later, the S.P.R. in its journal published an article vindicating H.P.B. and disclaiming responsibility for their 1885 report. [*American Theosophist*, July 1986.]

To the materialist, the Agnostic and the Atheist, for whom only the world of the senses exists, such charges are accepted uncritically. But for those who have learned that as William James said “there lie all about us other states of consciousness entirely different - separated by the filmiest of screens,” this woman, the nineteenth century Sphinx has a message.

For those so disposed to acquaint themselves with her two major works, *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine*, it would be well to learn something of the paranormal methods used in writing them, and of the history of this remarkable woman, for they are no ordinary books and H.P. Blavatsky was no ordinary author.

From *OLD DIARY LEAVES*, First Series, p. 202, Colonel H.S. Olcott, presi-

dent-founder of the Theosophical Society and faithful collaborator with H.P.B. had much to say regarding H.P.B. and the extraordinary writing of *ISIS UNVEILED*:

One day in the Summer of 1875, H.P.B. showed me some sheets of manuscript which she had written, and said: "I wrote this last night 'by order,' but what the deuce it is to be I don't know. Perhaps it is for a newspaper article, perhaps for a book, perhaps for nothing: anyhow, I did as I was ordered." And she put it away in a drawer, and nothing more was said about it for some time.

This was the beginning of *Isis Unveiled*. Regarding H.P.B., Olcott goes on to say [op. cit. pp. 206-13]:

I have known a Jewish Rabbi pass hours and whole evenings in her company, discussing the Kabbala, and have heard him say to her that, although he had studied the secret science of his religion for thirty years, she had taught him things he had not ever dreamed of, and thrown a clear light upon passages which not even his best teachers had understood. Whence did she get this knowledge? That she had it, was unmistakable; whence did she get it? ... To judge from her conversation and habits before she took up this monster literary task, she had not learnt it at all, whether from one source or another; but when she needed it she had it, and in her better moments of inspiration ... she astonished the most erudite by her learning quite as much as she dazzled all present by her eloquence and delighted them by her wit and humorous raillery.

One might fancy, upon seeing the numerous quotations in *Isis Unveiled* that she had written it in an alcove of the British Museum or of the Astor Library in New York. The fact is, however, that our whole working library scarcely comprised one hundred books of reference. ... Whence did H.P.B. draw the materials which compose *Isis*, and which cannot be traced to accessible literary sources of quotation? From the Astral Light, and by her soul-senses, from her Teachers — the "Brothers," "Adepts," "Sages," "Masters," as they have been variously been called. How do I know it? By working two years with her on *Isis* and many more years on other literary work.

To watch her at work was a rare and never-to-be-forgotten experience. We sat at opposite sides of one big table usually, and I could see her every movement. Her pen would be flying over the page, when she would suddenly stop, look out into

space with the vacant eye of the clairvoyant seer, shorten her vision as though to look at something held invisible in the air before her, and begin copying on her paper what she saw. The quotation finished, her eyes would resume their natural expression, and she would go on writing until again stopped by a similar interruption.

I remember well two instances when I, also, was able to see and even handle books from whose astral duplicates she had copied quotations into her manuscript, and which she was obliged to “materialise” for me, to refer to when reading the proofs, as I refused to pass the pages for the “strike-off” unless my doubts as to the accuracy of her copy were satisfactory. ... I said: “I cannot pass this quotation, for I am sure it cannot read as you have it.” She said: “Oh don’t bother; it’s right; let it pass.” I refused, until finally she said: “Well, keep still a minute and I’ll try to get it.” The far away look came into her eyes, and presently she pointed to a far corner of the room, to [a bookcase] on which were kept some curios, and in a hollow voice said: “There!” and came to herself again. “There, there; go look for it over there!” I went, and found the two volumes wanted, which, to my knowledge, had not been in the house until that very moment. I compared the text with H.P.B.’s quotation, showed her I was right in my suspicions as to the error, made the proof correction and then, at her request, returned the two volumes to the place ... from which I had taken them. I resumed my seat and work, and when, after awhile, I looked again in that direction, the books had disappeared!

The “copy” turned off by H.P.B. presented the most marked dissemblances at different times. While the handwriting bore one peculiar character throughout, so that one familiar with her writing would always be able to detect any given page as H.P.B.’s, yet, when examined carefully, one discovered at least three or four variations of the one style, and each of these persistent for pages together, when it would give place to some other of the calligraphic variants. ... One of these H.P.B. handwritings was very small, but plain; one bold and free; another plain, of medium size, and very legible; and one scratchy and hard to read, with its queer, foreign-shaped a’s and x’s and e’s. There was also the greatest possible difference in the English of these various styles. Sometimes I would have to make several corrections in each line, while at others I could pass many pages with scarcely a fault of idiom or spelling to correct.

Most perfect of all were the manuscripts which were written for her while she

was sleeping. The beginning of the chapter on the civilisation of Ancient Egypt (vol. i, chap. xiv) is an illustration. We had stopped work the evening before at about 2 a.m. as usual, both too tired to stop for our usual smoke and chat before parting; she almost fell asleep in her chair while I was bidding her good-night, so I hurried off to my bedroom. The next morning, when I came down after my breakfast, she showed me a pile of at least thirty or forty pages of beautifully written H.P.B. manuscript, which, she said, she had written for her by _____ well, a Master, whose name has never been degraded like some others. It was perfect in every respect, and went to the printers without revision.

Now it was a curious fact that each change in the H.P.B. manuscript would be preceded, either by her leaving the room for a moment or two, or by her going off into the trance or abstracted state, when her lifeless eyes would be looking beyond me into space, as it were, and returning to the normal waking state almost immediately. And there would also be a distinct change of personality, or rather personal peculiarities, in gait, vocal expression, vivacity of manner, and, above all, in temper. ... [H.P.B.] would leave the room one person and anon return to it another. Not another as to visible change of physical body, but another as to tricks of motion, speech, and manners; with different mental brightness, different views of things, different command of English orthography, idiom, grammar, and different — very, very different command over her temper; which, as its sunniest, was almost angelic, at its worst, the opposite. ... Yet, upon the theory that when her body was occupied by a sage it would be forced to act with a sage's tranquillity, and when not, not, the puzzle is solved.

Many of those who were associates of H.P.B., including A.P. Sinnett, were perplexed by these strange and seemingly inconsistent character traits she exhibited. In *MAHATMA LETTER #26*, entitled “K.H.’s Confidential Memo about Old Lady,” Sinnett was given insight into her strange and often bizarre behavior:

I am painfully aware of the fact that the habitual incoherence of her statements — especially when excited — and her strange ways make her in your opinion a very undesirable transmitter of our messages. Nevertheless, kind Brothers, once that you have learned the truth; once told, that this unbalanced mind, the seeming incongruity of her speeches and ideas, her nervous excitement, all that in short, which is so calculated to upset the feelings of sober minded people, whose notions of reserve and manners are shocked by such strange outbursts of what they regard as her tem-

per, and which so revolt you, — once that you know that nothing of it is due to any fault of hers, you may, perchance, be led to regard her in quite a different light.

Notwithstanding that the time is not quite ripe to let you entirely into the secret; and that you are hardly yet prepared to understand the great Mystery, even if I told of it, owing to the great injustice and wrong done, I am empowered to allow you a glimpse behind the veil. This state of hers is intimately connected with her occult training in Tibet, and due to her being sent out alone into the world to gradually prepare the way for others. After nearly a century of fruitless search, our chiefs had to avail themselves of the only opportunity to send out a European body upon European soil to serve as a connecting link between that country and our own. You do not understand? Of course not. Please then, remember, what she tried to explain, and what you gathered tolerably well from her, namely the fact of the seven principles in the complete human being. Now, no man or woman, unless he be an initiate of the “fifth circle,” can leave the precincts of Bod-Las and return back into the world in his integral whole — if I may use the expression. One, at least, of his seven satellites has to remain behind for two reasons: the first to form the necessary connecting link, the wire of transmission — the second as the safest warranter that certain things will never be divulged. She is no exception to the rule, and you have seen another exemplar — a highly intellectual man — who had to leave one of his skins behind; hence is considered highly eccentric. The bearing and status of the remaining six depend upon the inherent qualities, the psycho-physiological peculiarities of the person, especially upon the idiosyncracies transmitted by what modern science calls “atavism.” Acting in accordance with my wishes, my brother M. made to you through her a certain offer, if you remember. You had but to accept it, and at any time you liked, you would have had for an hour or more, the real baitchooly to converse with, instead of the psychological cripple you generally have to deal with now. [*Mahatma Letters* 3rd ed., pp. 201-2]

A.P. Sinnett evidently shared his letters from the Master K.H. with A.O. Hume, the other Englishman with whom the Tibetan Brotherhood was corresponding for the purpose of transmitting a portion of their occult wisdom to the western world, for in a letter to H.P. Blavatsky, Hume says:

Now I know all about the Brothers’ supposed explanation, that you are a psychological cripple, one of your seven principles being in pawn in Tibet — if so, more shame to them keeping other people’s property to the great detriment of the owner. But grant it so, then I ask my friends the Brothers to “precisez” as the French say — which

principle have you got old chaps?

It ain't the Hoola sariram, {Sanskrit; Sthula Sarira = physical body (definitions are not part of quoted letter, ed.)} the body — that's clear for you might truly say with Hamlet "Oh that this too solid flesh would melt!"

And it can't be the linga sariram {Linga Sarira = the astral or model body}, as that can't part from the body, and it ain't the kama rupa {Kama Rupa = the emotional or desire principle} and if it were, its loss would not account for your symptoms.

Neither assuredly is it the Jivatma {Jivatman = the essential Self or individuality i.e. the monad or Atma-Buddhi}, you have plenty of life in you. Neither is it the fifth principle or mind {Manas}, for without this you would be "quo ad" {as to} the external world, an idiot. Neither is it the sixth principle {Buddhi = spiritual consciousness i.e., understanding, judgement and discrimination} for without this you would be a devil, intellect without conscience, while as for the seventh {Atman = the supreme SELF, a spark of the ONE unknowable Divinity} that is universal and can be captured by no Brother and no Buddha, but exists for each precisely to the degree that the eyes of the sixth principle are open.

Therefore to me this explanation is not only not satisfactory — but it having been offered — throws suspicion on the whole thing.

These comments in the handwriting of Master Morya appeared in the margin of the letter:

Very clever — but suppose it is neither one of the seven particularly but all? Every one of them a "cripple" and forbidden the exercise of its full powers? And suppose such is the wise law of a far foreseeing power!

[*LETTERS OF A.P. SINNETT TO H.P. BLAVATSKY*, letter #156 p. 307].

H.P.B.'s health deteriorated steadily and most markedly in 1884 with the publication by the Christian College magazine in Madras of the "Coulomb letters," forgeries whose intent was to show H.P.B. as an imposter and charlatan and the Masters as her invention, and thereby to destroy the Theosophical Society. The mental anguish resulting from this, added to the devastating S.P.R. report produced a life-threatening medical crisis in H.P.B. which compelled her to leave India for Europe in March 1885 under doctor's orders.

Had it not been for the intervention of Mahatma Morya, her master, on at least three different occasions, she would have in all certainty died before having com-

pleted her most valued works; *Isis Unveiled*, *The Secret Doctrine*, *The Key to Theosophy* and *The Voice of the Silence*. The poignancy of her sacrifice to her Master's work is deeply moving in this account of Morya's final life-saving intervention in March 1887. This was during the time when she was living at Ostend Belgium and working on the Secret Doctrine. As recounted by Countess Wachmeister:

“In the meanwhile H.P.B. was getting worse, and the Belgian doctor, who was kindness itself, tried one remedy after another, but with no good result, and I began to get seriously alarmed and anxious as to what course I should adopt. H.P.B. was in a very lethargic state, she seemed to be unconscious for hours together, and nothing could rouse or interest her. Finally, a bright inspiration came to me. In the London group I knew there was a doctor Ashton Ellis, so I telegraphed to him, described the state that H.P.B. was in, and entreated him to come without delay.”

Dr. Ellis arrived the next night, and had a consultation with the Belgian doctor. They both agreed that the case was practically hopeless, and it was exceedingly rare for anyone to live as long as H.P.B. had done with kidneys so much diseased. The Countess continues:

“Several times the following day Dr. Ellis massaged her until he was quite exhausted; but she got no better, and to my horror I began to detect that peculiar faint odour of death that sometimes precedes dissolution. I hardly dared hope that she would live through the night, and while I was sitting alone by her bedside she opened her eyes and told me how glad she was to die, and that she thought the Master would let her be free at last. ... She had hoped that she would have been able to give more to the world, but the Master knew best. And so she talked on at intervals, telling me many things. At last, she dropped off into a state of unconsciousness, and I wondered how it would all end. ... Even to me, who had been alone with her for so many months, she was an enigma, with her strange powers, her marvelous knowledge, her extraordinary insight into human nature, and her mysterious life, spent in regions unknown to ordinary mortals, so that though her body might be near, her soul was often away in commune with others. Many a time I have observed her thus and known that only the shell of her body was present.

“Such were the thoughts which passed through my mind, as I sat hour after hour that anxious night, watching her as she seemed to be getting weaker and weaker. A wave of blank despondency came over me, as I felt how truly I loved this noble woman, and I realized how empty life would be without her. No longer to have her affection and confidence would be a most severe trial. My whole soul rose in rebellion at the thought of losing her. ... I gave a bitter cry and knew no more.

“When I opened my eyes, the early morning light was stealing in, and a dire apprehension came over me that I had slept, and that perhaps H.P.B. had died during my

sleep — died whilst I was untrue to my vigil. I turned towards the bed in horror, and there I saw H.P.B. looking at me with her clear grey eyes, as she said ‘Countess come here.’ I flew to her side. ‘What happened, H.P.B.? — you look so different to what you did last night.’ She replied, ‘Yes, Master has been here; He gave me my choice to die and to be free if I would, or I might live and finish *The Secret Doctrine*. He told me how great would be my sufferings and what a terrible time I would have before me in England (for I am to go there); but when I thought of those students to whom I shall be permitted to teach a few things, and of the Theosophical Society in general, to which I have already given my heart’s blood, I accepted the sacrifice, and now to make it complete, fetch me some coffee and something to eat, and give me my tobacco box.’” [THE REAL H.P. BLAVATSKY by W. Kingsland, pp. 117-18]

H.P.B. did live for four more years to complete *The Secret Doctrine*, *The Key to Theosophy* and *The Voice of the Silence*, during which time she gathered around her a group of dedicated students of inner teachings in London and passed finally to her well earned rest on May 8, 1891.

For those wishing to read further concerning the life and message of this remarkable woman, the following partial Bibliography is offered.

<i>H.P. Blavatsky: The Mystery</i>	G. De Purucker	Point Loma Publications
<i>The Real H.P. Blavatsky Reminiscences of H.P.B. and The Secret Doctrine</i>	W. Kingsland C. Wachmeister	Theosophical Publishing House Theosophical Publishing House
<i>H.P. Blavatsky and The Secret Doctrine</i>	V. Hanson	Theosophical Publishing House
<i>Blavatsky and The Secret Doctrine</i>	M. Heindel	De Vorss & Co.
<i>H.P. Blavatsky and The Theosophical Movement</i>	C. J. Ryan	Theosophical University Press
<i>H.P. Blavatsky, Tibet and Tulku</i>	G. Barborka	Theosophical Publishing House
<i>Mme. Blavatsky Defended</i>	I. Harris	Theosophical University Press
<i>Letters of H.P. Blavatsky To A.P. Sinnett</i>	A.T. Barker	Theosophical University Press
<i>Isis Unveiled</i> (2 Vol.)	H.P. Blavatsky	Theosophical University Press
<i>The Secret Doctrine</i> (2 Vol.)	H.P. Blavatsky	Theosophical University Press

<i>The Key to Theosophy</i>	H.P. Blavatsky	The Theosophy Company
<i>The Voice of the Silence</i>	H.P. Blavatsky	Theosophical Publishing House
<i>From the Caves and Jungles of Hindostan</i>	H.P. Blavatsky	Theosophical Publishing House
<i>Collected Writings of H.P. Blavatsky (14 Vol.)</i>	B. De Zirkoff	Theosophical Publishing House

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