

FOLLOWING THE BLAVATSKY AND POINT LOMA TRADITION

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THE GREATEST NEED

JOHN B. S. COATS

It is with the work of our theosophical centers that we should concern ourselves continually, not only with sending out what we feel to be the pure waters of Theosophy, but also with maintaining our contact with the sometimes quite adulterated manifestations of that 'purity'. By our intelligent interest and effort, we can try to bring back a certain standard into those areas where it has fallen below the level of excellence.

We need to be well organized in a world which demands it. But sometimes people ask whether we are becoming too organized and oriented toward the materialistic and commercialized society in which we live. We may feel that all spiritual organizations, amongst which we may be happy to include The Theosophical Society, have always accepted the idea that the purity of any teaching is to some extent lost and the power to channel truth defiled by too much contact with very material things. Our work is that of spiritualizing society and seeking to raise matter and all about us to a higher level.

It is easy to forget the need for a deep purity in our interest to make Theosophy known. Is it not true to say that however much we welcome needed funds, without which it would be difficult to proceed, the strength of such a society as ours depends in the long run more on the quality and sacrifice of our members than it does on our bank accounts? Whilst it is impossible to stand outside the many methods which are accepted by the world around us, such as mass media advertising and so on, we should be careful not to gear ourselves too closely to the current commercial trend.

In this world, the development and distribution of food supplies, the provision of health and help, especially after periods of national disaster, child and animal welfare and, in the plant world, the desperate need for more trees, all depend on man's care. The danger of nuclear power, even the production of it for peaceful purposes, involves us in a quite appalling problem of disposal of nuclear waste, and one hardly realizes sometimes what we are doing to nature about us. We have to be concerned and active and yet remain pure and inviolate in our deepest concern.

—Extract from Presidential Address to the 99th Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society, (Adyar) Varanasi, India, December 26, 1974.

ISIS UNVEILED

The following is reprinted from *The Theosophical Journal*, —January/February 1977. The author, Ianthe H. Hoskins, who is General Secretary of the Theosophical Society in England

(Adyar), quotes H. P. Blavatsky: "My Work has appeared. It was born, the dear thing, last Saturday, September 29 . . .". Then Miss Hoskins adds this introductory note: "The year was 1877 the writer, Madame Blavatsky; the work, the two volumes of *Isis Unveiled*. During this year 1977, to mark the Centenary of its publication, each issue of the *Journal* will devote some space either to passages from *Isis Unveiled* itself or to relevant commentary or notes to assist in introducing new readers to it." *Eclectic* readers, we feel, will be interested in this first selection.—Eps.

The compiler of the *Collected Writings* of H. P. Blavatsky, Boris de Zirkoff, inserts a brief note in the place where *Isis* chronologically belongs.* He recommends to the reader's attention the account given by Col. Olcott in *Old Diary Leaves* of the way in which *Isis* was written. The whole chapter is fascinating,† but the few extracts given here for the benefit of those who do not have access to the *Diaries* must suffice. The Colonel writes:

" . . . nothing could have been more commonplace and unostentatious than the beginning of *Isis*. 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."

A little later, while staying with friends, ". . . she wrote me that it was to be a book on the history and philosophy of the Eastern Schools and their relations with those of our own times. She said she was writing about things she had never studied and making quotations from books she had never read in all her life: that, to test her accuracy, Prof. Corson had compared her quotations with classical

MEDITATIONS—I

O thou Golden Sun of most excellent splendor,
Illumine our hearts and fill our minds, so that we,
Recognizing our oneness with the Divinity, which is
the heart of the Universe,
May see the Pathway before our feet, and tread it to
those distant goals of perfection,
Stimulated by thine own radiant light.
(*Tat savitur varenyam, bhargo devasya dhîmahî, dhiyo
yo nah prachodayât.*)

—Paraphrase from the Sanskrit by G. de Purucker

**Collected Writings*, Vol. I, page 264.

†*Old Diary Leaves*, First Series, Ch. XIII.

works in the University Library, and had found her to be right. Upon her return to town, she was not very industrious in this affair, but wrote only spasmodically, and the same may be said as to the epoch of her Philadelphia residence, but a month or two after the formation of the Theosophical Society, . . . the writing of *Isis* went on without break or interruption until its completion in the year 1877. In her whole life she had not done a tithe of such literary labor, yet I never knew even a managing daily journalist who could be compared with her for dogged endurance or tireless working capacity. From morning till night she would be at her desk, and it was seldom that either of us got to bed before 2 o'clock a.m. During the daytime I had my professional duties to attend to, but always, after an early dinner, we would settle down together to our big writing-table and work, as if for dear life, until bodily fatigue would compel us to stop. What an experience!"

The colonel then describes his own part in the work, amanuensis, proof-reader, collaborator, contributing information and ideas from his own fund of studies. He continues:

"She worked on no fixed plan, but ideas came streaming through her mind like a perennial spring which is ever overflowing its brim. Now she would be writing upon Brahma, anon Babinet's electrical 'meteor-cat'; one moment she would be reverentially quoting from Porphyrios, the next from a daily newspaper or some modern pamphlet that I had just brought home; she would be adoring the perfections of the ideal Adept, but diverge for an instant to thwack Professor Tyndall or some other pet aversion of hers, with her critical cudgel. Higgledy-piggledy it came, in a ceaseless rivulet, each paragraph complete in itself and capable of being excised without harm to its predecessor or successor. Even as it stands now, and after all its numerous re-castings, an examination of the wondrous book will show this to be the case.

"If she had no plan, despite all her knowledge, does not that go to prove that the work was not of her own conception; that she was but the channel through which this tide of fresh, vital essence was being poured into the stagnant pool of modern spiritual thought?"

Visitors of all kinds came to see her, and where they had some specialized knowledge, she made use of whatever conversation yielded of value. Among these, "I have known a Jewish Rabbi pass hours and whole evenings in her company, discussing the Kabballa, 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 even dreamed of, and thrown a clear light upon passages which not even his best teachers had understood."

And now the great question: "Whence did she get this knowledge? That she had it, was unmistakable; whence did she get it? Not from her governess in Russia; not from any source known to her family or

most intimate friends; not on the steamships or railways she had been haunting in her world-rambles since her fifteenth year; not in any college or university, for she never matriculated at either; not in the huge libraries of the world. 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—if the term be admissible—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."

After mentioning some of the "scarcely one hundred books" to which she had access, the Colonel comes back again to the same question: "Then what books *did* she consult, and what library had she access to? . . . whence did H.P.B. draw the materials which compose *Isis*, and which cannot be traced to accessible literary sources of quotation?" And now he gives the answer, derived not from books but from his direct experience of the facts related: "From the *Astral Light*, and, by her soul-senses, from her Teachers—the 'Brothers', 'Adepts', 'Sages', 'Masters', as they have been variously 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 invisibly 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."

And there is much, much more that should be read if one is to understand not only the writing of the books themselves but more especially the work that the Society had to do for the world of her time and for the future. Let us conclude with the dedication with which H.P.B. introduces her work:

The Author
DEDICATES these VOLUMES
to the Theosophical Society
Which was founded at New York.
A.D. 1875

To study the subjects on
which they treat.

—I.H.H.

The Significance Of The Esoteric Philosophy

G. J. KIJFF

Introductory words to a study in the School for the Study and Promulgation of the Esoteric Philosophy, The Hague, Holland. Translated from *De Gouden Schakel (The Golden Chain)*.—Eds. Anyone who, at some moment in his life, decides to

develop his better nature will sooner or later inevitably come into contact with real Esoteric Philosophy, the essence of which lies deeply hidden in every human being. What that essence of man is, that 'something', the root of his consciousness, is very difficult to describe. Nevertheless, it urges the awakening spiritual soul to investigate the deeper aspects of his existence. He who has once set foot on the path of this development of consciousness will never be able to forget it again. Outward causes (karma) may force him to postpone this development of his spiritual consciousness for a while, but one day he will take up the thread again and pursue his way upwards.

What then is the significance of Esoteric Philosophy? Why does the awakening man desire this deeper knowledge? Because it is the highest part of every human being, the divine monad, which through the ages by means of his various vehicular forms tries to express his capacities and powers.

It is this urge of the indwelling divine root that makes the person at any moment what he really is. It is the application of the Esoteric Philosophy or Theosophia (divine wisdom) which leads man and, because it is universal, every being in the universe, to greater evolution.

It remains a fact that the only knowledge you can rely on does not lie in what you can outwardly see or feel, but exclusively in that which speaks to us from within. *That* we can only know. About other things we may have ideas of our own, or read thoughts which others have written or expressed. Everyone should realize that any really great discovery ever made, whether in science or in another aspect of human endeavor, has been made by men inspired by divine thought; and these discoveries, bestowed on the human race, have at the same time raised the race to a higher level. Every truly great thought or idea, arising from within man, is born from that divine source, from that upwards striving energy. Through that inner capacity we can know Truth; and to reach this we shall have to perform much work.

A Book To Read and Study

Review of G. de Purucker's *Man in Evolution**

HELEN TODD

We welcome the appearance of a new edition of G. de Purucker's *Man in Evolution*. The subject of man's evolutionary history in the light of the Ancient Wisdom is one that has received little attention even in most theosophical circles; and except for the excellent manual *Evolution: Who and What is Man?* by Henry T. Edge, issued by Point Loma Publications, Inc., there has been almost nothing on this important subject available to offer the inquiring student.

*Second edition, revised and edited by Grace F. Knoche, Theosophical University Press, Pasadena, California, 1977, Index and updated bibliography, 365 pp. paperback, \$5.00.

Man in Evolution was originally published at Point Loma, California, in 1941. This was over 35 years ago. Since then, as we are all aware, the thought life and consequent action in the world in many cases are characterized by alarming deviations and degradations. Science, it is true, has made brilliant achievements along the lines of technology, from astrophysics to biochemistry; but the *real nature of man* is still unknown, perhaps only intuited by a few advanced thinkers. People are searching for *something* which can convince them of the worthwhileness of life and living. They are yearning for a broader vision of man's potentialities and consequent responsibilities.

In this book we are offered a meticulous examination of the salient aspects of evolution from the scientific standpoint, such as transformism, Mendelism, Heredity, the Weismann theory, Man and Ape; but the author weaves into the discussion the theosophic viewpoint wherever it is appropriate. He concludes with three chapters on "Lost Pages of Evolutionary History", "Divinity the Source of All", and "The Hierarchical Structure of the Universe." This is truly a psychological feat by which we are led "out of the labyrinth of mere theory and hypotheses, into that still small path which the Hindu Upanishads speak of as leading directly to the Heart of the Universe."

Those familiar, however, with the first edition of this volume will regard as unfortunate the excising of the supportive Foreword of Dr. Edge who was a pupil of H. P. Blavatsky. They will also perhaps regretfully find that there has been what can only be called a grooming and tailoring of the text to meet transitory modern taste. Further, the author's intentionally colorful words or phrases have occasionally been deleted or replaced with more familiar expressions; and at those times when he speaks out in the more direct form of address this has been altered. "Test these teachings for yourselves," for example, becomes "We must test these teachings for ourselves"—not illogical, but such passages do tend to weaken the thrust and force of an injunction, and we are left with a dry professorial touch to the utterance.

These are, perhaps only irritating details which can be set aside with a smile. But to omit in the Appendix of the present edition inclusion of some of the intuitions of a few scientists of that earlier day who had broken away at times from the 'tether of science' and had dared to express so-called *unscientific* convictions—this is a matter open to more serious questioning. For instance we miss mention of the anthropologist Dr. Robert Broom, then (1941) President of the South African Association for the Advancement of Science, who had expressed, among other intuitive concepts his conviction of the existence of spiritual agencies behind the phenomenal world.

Earlier readers will also note that only a few paragraphs of the original chapter 2, titled "Religion, Philosophy, and Science", are here included. The bulk of that chapter, perhaps because regarded as occasionally repetitious, is omitted. But, it should be remembered,

repetition in this original chapter was deliberately intended. It was indeed Dr. de Purucker's method of teaching. He is hammering home here the bold assertion that whether we are contemplating religion, or philosophy, or science, we have to bear in mind that there should not be—in fact *cannot* be—any contradictions as among them, since they are but facets of the single jewel of Truth. Where we do find contradictions, it is due to ignorance of their real nature, or prejudice which builds up walls of separation. This should be self-evident, but we are aware that, in our modern way of thinking, the three exist in water-tight compartments, often at odds with each other.

However, having noted alterations and omissions of the original text, it should be stated in all fairness that, consistent with the editor's evident aims and intentions, this revision of *Man in Evolution* has been handled with skill and acumen.

The two Appendixes of the present edition should be of especial value to serious students. The first is a reprinting of a paper by Charles J. Ryan (written in 1941), "The Antiquity of Man and The Geological Ages" together with H. P. Blavatsky's Table of Geological Periods alongside the time-scales of contemporary science. The second Appendix is Blair Moffett's "Theosophy and the New Science" which assembles material on current findings in physics and the life sciences, supplying scientific data and comparing them with Dr. de Purucker's presentation of man's spiritual origin—an excellent supplement written with admirable scholarship. It is fully documented, representing extensive research and written with clarity and sensitivity to the role that Theosophy can play in the growing and developing of the new science.

Perusal of this survey by Blair Moffett brought to mind the compelling words of Dr. de Purucker in his chapter (original Point Loma edition), "Evolution and Modern Research": ". . . when modern biology and collateral branches of scientific research and thought shall admit the existence within the individuals of the different groups of evolving entities which inhabit the earth of a spiritual monad for each individual, expressing itself in the lower kingdoms through an astral vehicle, and in the higher kingdoms in a psycho-mental-astral vehicle—when this shall be admitted or commonly recognized by scientific thought, the Theosophist will then feel that science has become *de facto* his most powerful ally."

Dr. de Purucker's book, therefore, is urgently needed in these critical times, because it gives meaning to the term 'practical idealism', by offering a study of man's evolutionary history based on the truths of the Ancient Wisdom, which declares that the human race (as well as all life) is rooted in divinity; and that therefore all Life is One, Man himself sharing in the destiny of all; that man is by no means just a developed ape, but as a 'child of the universe' has within him "every potency, every force, every power, every capacity that the Macrocosm or Great Universe has." This conception is the root idea of the book under review.

REINCARNATION

A film actress, Marsha Mason, recently told a writer for the *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner* (Sept. 22, 1976) that although she personally accepted reincarnation she had been reluctant to say anything about it for fear of ridicule. Then, after some reading, and accepting a part in a movie about reincarnation, she felt free to describe her views:

"I believe everybody comes into your life because he's destined to. You choose this part of your life to work out certain rules. The lessons you have to learn are based on your past karma, so all good actions bear good fruit. You burn up bad karma with positive, loving, supporting thoughts."

While the idea of thinking your way out of karmic debts sounds a bit facile, there is an element of truth in it, and the common sense of karma and reincarnation is evident in even this brief statement. Reincarnation is now by no means a strange and unfamiliar doctrine. A great many people take it for granted, and while popular writers persist in speaking of it as part of the 'supernatural', the door is wide open to an understanding of the puzzling aspects of life on which reincarnation throws a clear light. This seems the chief significance of the new popularity of the idea. The prejudice against rebirth no longer has importance and those who have been deterred from considering it seriously by the denials of either religious tradition or scientific attitudes have opportunity to recognize the profound philosophy of life of which reincarnation is a part.

—'On the Lookout' in *Theosophy*,
(U.L.T., Los Angeles), Jan. 1977

2—How I Found Theosophy

FROM TRINIDAD TO POINT LOMA

IRENE R. PONSONBY

This is the second of the series that began with *Eclectic* No. 40. The author, a Theosophist since her earliest years, was, with her late husband Guy E. Ponsonby, resident at the Theosophical Headquarters, Point Loma, during the stirring years of Dr. G. de Purucker's regime; and before that, as she explains, a pupil in the Rāja Yoga School and Academy under Katherine Tingley. Her home now is in Los Angeles, California.—Eds.

As a child in Trinidad, the West Indies, at about the beginning of the century I began to wonder about religion.

Every Sunday with Mother and Grandmother my sister and I attended the Anglican (Episcopalian) morning service—Grandfather was an Anglican minister. In the early afternoon we went to Sunday School, and in the evening, with Father, we drove in a dogcart to a Presbyterian service conducted by the Canadian Mission to the East Indians—Hindu immigrant laborers from Southern India. Some of the hymns and prayers were sung and recited in Hindusthāni.

These influences aroused questions in my mind. Why did Jesus have to die for our sins? Why was he cruci-

fied? Wouldn't it have been better if he had lived and taught us not to sin? Thus childishly I questioned. I also knew the Hindus did not believe as we did. Unanswered questions filled my young mind.

Then two events coincided to change my life. We were at the age when European girls, for their physical well-being, should leave the tropics, and our parents were discussing where we should be sent. Just then rioting started in Port of Spain, the capital of the Island. The British authorities sent the battleship *H.M.S. Indefatigable* to Trinidad to protect the Government. The paymaster on the *Indefatigable* was a Commander Lecky, and his assistant was Mr. Philip A. Malpas. The Commander took charge of the keys to the vaults in the Red House, i.e., City Hall; and when rioters set fire to the building, he jumped from a balcony 25 or 30 feet to the ground. In his fall the large keys in his breast pocket injured the muscles of his heart. Father, who was a major in a volunteer Cavalry Regiment, happened to be patrolling in the vicinity and he picked the Commander up and took him to the hospital. When Commander Lecky was convalescent he and Mr. Malpas were invited to stay at our home in the country.

Mr. Malpas had an album of the early photographs of Lomaland (Point Loma, California). When my parents saw the pictures of the first four pupils in the School, the octagonal bungalows, and the view of the Pacific from the Greek Theatre, and heard what Mr. Malpas said about Katherine Tingley's Râja-Yoga system of education, they decided *that* was the place for my sister and me. So early in 1904 Mother took us to Point Loma, and there I celebrated my eleventh birthday.

My initial knowledge and understanding of the teachings of Universal Brotherhood, the duality of human nature, reincarnation and karma, that were the basis of Râja-Yoga, were as cool water to a famished traveler and meant everything to me because they solved my many problems. Understanding of those teachings has grown with every year of my life, to be climaxed in later years by twelve years of study of technical Theosophy under Dr. G. de Purucker.

(*Note about Philip A. Malpas:* After he left the British Navy he spent some years at Point Loma, helping in the Boys' Department, teaching horticulture and Nature Studies. He was a regular contributor to the weekly magazine *The Century Path*, official organ of the T.S. published at Point Loma. Later he returned to England where much of his time was devoted to scholarly research, the product of some of which appeared serially through the years in *The Theosophical Path* and *The Theosophical Forum*. These included his studies on Saint Germain, Cagliostro, and Julian, the Apostle (a 4th Century History); and later studies of the Theosophists of Alexandria and Athens, and other studies. Mr. Malpas' last years were spent in Germany where he was of invaluable assistance to Miss Mary Linné and Miss Emmi Haerter in their long labors of translation of the theosophical classics into German.—Eds.

Send In Your Questions

Question—As a Sanskrit student at UC Santa Cruz I have been puzzled over the Sanskrit form of the Theosophical motto on the cover of J. Tyberg's *Sanskrit Keys*. Why *Satyân* when it should be the dative case of the neuter noun *Satya* or *Satyât*? I have just discovered that it is correctly given in the title page of Theosophical University Press verbatim edition of *The Secret Doctrine*. I suggest you correct the error in *Sanskrit Keys* (if it is one) or let me know why your version is correct.—A.F.D.

Judith Tyberg—This student has evidently covered only some of the rules in Sanskrit. Here is an explanation. *Satyât* is the ablative form of (*than Truth*) *satya* (not the dative) used in comparing. *Nâsti* (*na + asti*) *a + a = â*—not is. *Paro* (*parah* changes to *o* before soft consonant *dh*)—higher. *Dharmah* (nominative case) *Law*. So we have: *There is no law higher than Truth*.

Now, as regards the word *Satyân*: there is a Samdhi Rule that when a word ends in hard consonant with the next beginning with a soft consonant, the hard final consonant must become soft, so more correctly the *t* must change to an *n*. So in most texts you will find this change. Many times for beginners or in simpler presentations of Sanskrit these intricate rules are not carried out.

If the inquirer asks her Sanskrit professor about this she will find he or she will understand the difference. The Indian ear is very sensitive to the harmonious flow of one sound into the other. Neither form is wrong, but a scholar would prefer the word *Satyân* as used in *Sanskrit Keys* as more correct when following the Samdhi rules.

Question—Is the theory of Black Holes in space similar to the Theosophical teaching about Laya Centers?

L. Gordon Plummer—The term 'Black Holes' is a figure of speech, descriptive of the fact that certain stars, once of great magnitude, have come to the end of their lives and what remains are cores of matter which have collapsed to inconceivable density; the gravitational field is so intense that not even light can escape—thus the descriptive term 'black holes' is used.

In fact, science does not regard them as literally 'holes', rather as vortices of intense energy through which matter is believed to leave this universe, to appear in some other dimension.

There is a similarity between these 'black holes' of science and the laya centers of theosophical teaching. Many years ago Sir James Jeans proposed the existence of what he called 'singular points', describing these as gateways through which matter might leave—or possibly enter—our universe. Through more research science has postulated that a 'singularity' may exist at the center of the black hole, having the same function as Sir James' singular points.

In general, this idea approaches the theosophical teaching of the laya center, the chief difference being that the scientific view is entirely mechanistic and deals

with energy and matter, this being nevertheless only on the physical plane. On the other hand, the concept of the laya center concerns itself with living monads and life-atoms as they peregrinate from one plane of consciousness to another. The energies which are the life-stream of these monads enter through the appropriate laya centers, and using the materials which the Earth provides, they expand into the forms they are destined to assume. In this sense, the acorn may be said to expand into the oak tree. Similarly a human being 'expands' from the original fertilized cell, which contained as a laya center all the potentialities of the human to be.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE PYTHAGOREAN TRIANGLE of *The Science of Numbers*, by Rev. G. Oliver, D.D. Photocopy of 1875 edition, republished by Wizards Book Shelf in *The Secret Doctrine* Reference Series, 1975. Hardbinding, 237 pages, no index. Rev. G. Oliver was a 33° Mason of note in the early 19th century and author of numerous and popular books on freemasonry. *Secret Doctrine* references: I, 113, 613, 616; II, 599, 640. (Original edition)

In Rev. G. Oliver's own words: "This book is a scientific analysis of the doctrines and references enunciated in the Pythagorean Triangle; these result from a minute consideration of the Science of Numbers. An investigation into the abstruse arcana of Masonic Numbers." The "Pythagorean Triangle" referred to here is the triangular array of ten dots usually called the tetractys; the "Science of Numbers" indicates the text is on arithromancy, or the significance of numbers; and the "abstruse arcana of Masonic Numbers" implies that the digital correspondences are occult and of Masonic significance. Furthermore it is to be noted that in Oliver's conception, everything Masonic is of value and everything else is spurious.

Much of Oliver's book is given to demonstrations to the public of the high ethical value of Masonry. Typical of such statements are passages found in the chapters on the hexad and the decad. In reference to the sixth and last epoch of human evolution he states: "The Freemasons spread over the face of every country where the religion of Jesus was professed, the proudest specimens of human taste and genius which have distinguished any age or nation since the world was made." This is an interesting contrast to some of HPB's opinions.

Aside from apologetics, the text is filled with methods of divination, notes on Pythagorean music theory, and correspondences of the ten digits. Several misprints are to be noted: p. 64, amidst a long list of biblical dualities and pairs used in Jewish sacrifices "two turtles" should read "two turtle doves". The Hebrew quotations on pp. 103 and 117 have the usual misprints.

Blavatsky mentioned several passages from this book in *The Secret Doctrine*, most probably because of the popularity of the author, not due to the unbiased nature of its contents. Typical of Oliver's prejudices is

one found concluding a very fine collection of septenary correspondences. Among the sets of sevens given are the seven gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, the seven works of mercy yielding a reward, the seven virtues and the seven deadly sins. Magnanimously he includes the theosophic (followers of Paracelsus were theosophists) "seven properties of man as given by Cagliostro, Mesmer, Peuvret and other charlatans."

In conclusion no better summary can be given than that of H.P.B. herself quoted from *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 613: ". . . even those clergymen who would be philosophers and who were Masons have, in their arbitrary interpretations, fathered upon the ancient sages the queer idea that the 'Monad represented the throne of the Omnipotent Deity, placed in the center of the Empyrean to indicate TGAOTU' The Great Architect Of The Universe. A curious explanation this, more Masonic than strictly Pythagorean." Be that as it may, the reverend Mason has compiled an amazing reference to the ten digits from the world's philosophies, religions and superstitions.

—JOHN DRAIS

THE PEOPLING OF THE EARTH, by Geoffrey Barborka. Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Illinois, 233 pp. cloth, \$10.00.

This book acts as a commentary on the second group of Stanzas given in *The Secret Doctrine*, which deal with anthropogenesis, the birth of man. In fact, only the first four Stanzas are considered as it is these which cover the beginnings of human life on this globe in this, the fourth round. Thus Mr. Barborka has, in his usual thorough, competent fashion, covered the initial questions such as: where the human monads come from, how the human physical form was evolved, and how the spark of intelligence was awakened in man.

In exploring these fields the author brings forward copious references from *The Secret Doctrine* and investigates many areas which touch indirectly on his main theme. Other topics examined include the Seven Sacred Planets, the Planetary Regents and even the source of the Ageless Wisdom. This work is an intelligible commentary on an area which for many has long been shrouded in mystery, and as such it is a very significant contribution to theosophical literature.

The final chapter deals with the vexed question of chronology, but far from settling the question, it will only add confusion. The author cites an article purportedly written by H. P. Blavatsky, not published in her lifetime, but presented by Boris de Zirkoff in *The Theosophist* in March 1958 (not 1938 as the book says). In this article specific time periods are put forward for the rounds, the globes in the fourth round, and the races on this, the fourth globe. These latter figures indicate that the first race began 18 million years ago. This is in direct contradiction to statements in *The Secret Doctrine* which asserts that the figure of 18 million years applies from the time of the fifth sub-race of the third race. It is surprising, and not a little disturbing, that Mr. Barborka makes no attempt to ex-

plain the new figures, nor even to suggest that there is any discrepancy. It would seem, from de Zirkoff's introduction to this article, that two distinct handwritings are used, only one of which is H.P.B.'s, but no indication is given as to which passages are written in which hand. Furthermore, the article is unfinished and incomplete in the sense that some pages are missing. The reality of this article has seriously to be questioned.

—ADAM WARCUP, *The Theosophical Journal*,
March-April 1977

ITEMS of INTEREST

INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR THEOSOPHICAL STUDIES AND RESEARCH, ADYAR, INDIA.

The first Term of these studies is over, and we gather from reports received that it has been most successful, evoking appreciation of its need and enthusiasm for what it hopes in the future to accomplish for the welfare of the whole Theosophical Movement. (See *Eclectic*, November 1976 for preliminary announcement.) From Dr. J. H. Dubbink, of Bilthoven, Holland, who had been invited to Adyar to join the teaching staff for the winter session, we quote the following report:

"The name, *International Center for Theosophical Studies*, expresses adequately the aims of the institute. Formerly it was called 'The School of (the) Wisdom', implying that there were some people authorized to 'teach', and others destined to listen and take down. The present name indicates that all, students and teachers of whatsoever age, are intrinsically students of Theosophy, doing research to get more knowledge. Though many Hindu students still expect to be taught by a sort of guru, the Director and the acting 'professors' try to change that attitude and to promote a critical way of thinking and co-operation in the course of the studies. Everyone has to read at least one paper on a subject connected with the ideas studied in the 'term' one attends. Personally I tried to read Plato in translation, and it was quite a new world which opened before the eyes of the Hindus. They never even suspected that such a degree of beauty and wisdom was to be found in the dialogues of Plato.

"The subjects treated in the term of January/March 1977 were: Ancient Mysteries—Prof. Mullik, who is preparing a digest of *Isis Unveiled*. He conducted lecture-and-discussion two times a week on this subject, the basis of the work, of course, being the work of H.P.B. Prof. Kannan, chemist by profession, spoke about the book *Intelligence Came First*, pointing to what degree science has already accepted one of the fundamentals of *The Secret Doctrine*, namely that 'Mahat' precedes every cosmic formation as a cosmic ideation. The book *Intelligence Came First* was a contribution of a group of English scientists to the centenary of the T.S. "Plato in the Light of the Theosophy of H. P. Blavatsky" was the subject of the third speaker (Prof. J. H. Dubbink). Selected passages of some dialogues of Plato were read, and explained on the basis of hints given by H.P.B. and in *The Mahatma*

Letters. This 'injection' given by a western professor made all those attending and taking part acutely aware of the necessity of new ways of 'teaching' and 'studying', especially stressing the Western traditions.

"Besides the scheduled program there were casual lectures by specialists, as, for example, a young nuclear physicist who had come to a theory about Space as a 'Void' independently of any contact with a theosophical writer.

"The students were part elder Hindu Theosophists, but also visitors from Australia, U.S.A., and Europe."

Conventions in Europe

May and June are Convention month in Holland, Germany and England, of Point Loma representatives, and the annual gathering of the School for the Study and Promulgation of the Esoteric Philosophy (The Hague and Arnhem) was held, we are informed by Mr. Jan v.d. Sluis, in Oosterbeek, hotel De Bilderberg. "In the morning session Joop van Beukering spoke on the meaning of 'Tradition', Frans Fonhof (from Groningen) led us on 'hidden paths unfathomed', Pauline Bosch van Rosenthal made pertinent comment on an Egyptian symposium, in the afternoon our artist-painter Wim Schute, who made the artistic covers of the programs, spoke on the 'Beauty of Egyptian Art', and last, but not least, Mr. Jan Venema brought to our attention the ever attractive Stranger of "The Third Floor Back!"

We hope to report other Conventions and reunions in our next issue.

"Man in Evolution"

Theosophical University Press of Pasadena, California has issued a second and revised edition of G. de Purucker's *Man in Evolution*, 377 pages, Appendixes, Index, soft cover, \$5.00. Readers are referred to an excellent review of this by W.T.S. Thackara in *Sunrise* (Post Office Bin C, Pasadena, California 91109), May 1977.

Blavatsky and Judge Booklets from U.L.T.

These valuable booklets issued by The Theosophy Co., 245 West 33rd St., Los Angeles, California, continue to pour out with monthly regularity. A recent one with articles by H.P.B. includes her famous essay "My Books"; also "Mistaken Notions on *The Secret Doctrine*"; "Seeming 'Discrepancies'"; "*Isis Unveiled* and *The Theosophist* on Reincarnation"; "It's the Cat!" (Dedicated to those Members of the T.S. whom the cap may fit.); "The Year is Dead, Long Live the Year!"

Another, under the title "Transcendental Theosophy", presents H.P.B.'s famous article "Le Phare de L'Inconnu" ("The Beacon of the Unknown"), and her less well known articles "World-Improvement or World-Deliverance" and "What Shall We Do For Our Fellow-men?". Instructive "Forewords" by the *Theosophy* editors introduce these booklets and should prove interesting and helpful to all students.

A recent Judge booklet No. 14, has the following under the name of W. Q. Judge or one of his several pseudonyms: An Allegory; Spiritual Gifts and their Attainment; Hit the Mark; Mechanical Theosophy; Practical Theosophy; Am I my Brother's Keeper?;

Papyrus—the Gem; The Dweller of the Threshold; Musings on the True Theosophist's Path; Papyrus. (The two first named articles are signed "Hieronymum" and "Dies Non"; the two about "Papyrus" are signed "Rameses". We have hitherto had no definite knowledge that these were pen-names of W.Q.J.).

Both booklets sell for 50c each.

The Point Loma Community in California 1897-1942

This book by Emmett A. Greenwalt (now Professor Emeritus at Cal State University, Los Angeles) was published in 1955 by the University Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles. Pending final arrangements with the author, Point Loma Publications, Inc. hopes to issue a revised edition later this year.

Book Wanted: A subscriber in Berlin is eager to obtain a copy of *Five Years of Theosophy*. If any reader has a copy he or she is willing to part with, please advise Point Loma Publications, Inc., P.O. Box 9966, San Diego, Calif., U.S.A. 92109, and the selling price.

JAN H. VENEMA

As we go to press a cable from The Hague, Holland, informs us of the passing of Jan H. Venema on June 26th at 11 o'clock in the morning. In reply, members of the Board of Point Loma Publications sent the following cable message: "A warrior-soul has gone Home. In the glow of the Summer Solstice dear Jan has entered the Light. Our hearts and highest thoughts are with you and all loyal friends in Holland."

Mr. Venema was associated with the Theosophical Society (Point Loma) from his earliest years when he became a member of the Boys Brotherhood Club in Groningen, Holland. Later, and for many years, he was National President of the Dutch Section, T.S. A tireless worker for the Cause he served with unswerving dedication, he gave his full time and energies in the later years to forwarding these theosophical objectives through the work of the School for the Study and Promulgation of the Esoteric Philosophy, at The Hague.

CONTRIBUTIONS

The following contributions have been received since our May report, and are her acknowledged with deep appreciation: B. de Z., \$4.75; J.V.C., \$20.00; J.N.S., \$15.00; D.J.P.K., \$6.00; C.L., \$20.00; R.K., \$37.00; Anon. \$45.25; H.J.C., \$4.00; R.H., \$15.00; J.N.S., \$6.00; D.L.G., \$15.00; E.M.G., \$300.00.

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