



A Key to the Vitality of the Movement Theosophical Journals According to HPB's Masters

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From the viewpoint of outer reality, all the Letters which the Mahatmas wrote to Alfred P. Sinnett and other lay disciples in the 19th century are now documents belonging to History and limited to the past.

A closer look, though, will show us that this idea is rather false.

There is an unknown number of implicit lessons we do not understand yet in these Letters. Many of them refer to the theosophical movement itself and on the lay chelas' daily process of occult testing, training and learning. Many of these lessons may be enigmatically waiting for us, or for future generations, to decipher them.

Let's see an example. There is, in some cases, a vast difference between the editorial strategies of the theosophical periodicals between the years 1879-1891 and those of today. Since H. P. Blavatsky's death, some of the main theosophical periodicals have become rather conservative and cautious editorially. As that happened, the vitality of the movement seemed to loose inner strength.

Some leaders and editors see the idea of brotherhood as inseparable from uniformity of thought. That is in part reflected in the pages of our magazines and journals. Any discord in debates is perceived by these idealistic people as a

dangerous thing which should be avoided at any cost. Their theosophical journals and magazines are silent about polemical issues, and hence they utterly ignore all the obstacles and difficulties which challenge the theosophical movement right now. It was not so when the Mahatmas and H.P.B. worked in direct touch with the movement.

Both H.P.B. and H. S. Olcott were journalists — and so was their co-worker, Alfred Sinnett, the British editor of the important newspaper *Pioneer*, in India. HPB wrote regularly to Russian, American and European publications. As journalists, they could not be afraid of polemics or controversy. The three were directly involved in the experience of *The Theosophist*.

HPB had a clear vision of the fact that anyone who wants to inspire a movement must stimulate debate. You need to compare different viewpoints. A certain amount of *rajasic* debate will

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eliminate a great amount of *tamasic* inertia, and prepare room for a *satvic*, open-minded understanding of the inevitable presence of diversity, change and movement in life, on every level. The search for truth, easy or difficult, under whatever form it may be, constitutes an important part of the development and growth of the fifth or mental principle, towards the rebirth of the sixth or spiritual principle in human consciousness.

This is not an isolated process. It is part of a greater preparation for the future sixth sub race of the fifth race. The very foundation of the Theosophical Movement had a connection with this.

It was quite natural, then, that while it was directed by HPB, *The Theosophist* served as a forum for open, unlimited discussion. Only the open mind can be illumined by *buddhi*. The Mahatmas themselves wrote regularly for the magazine, but did absolutely nothing to avoid polemics in its columns. Thus, a Master writes in a letter to Sinnett, explaining the editorial policy of the magazine¹:

Besides the fact, that the Founders have (...) to try earnestly to be *all* to everyone and all things — since there is such a great variety of creeds, opinions and expectations to satisfy, they cannot possibly (...) satisfy all as they would like to. They try to be impartial, and never to refuse one what they may have accorded to another party. Thus they have repeatedly published criticisms upon Vedantism, Buddhism, and Hinduism in its various branches, upon the *Veda Bashya*² of Swami Dayanand — their staunchest and at that time most

¹ *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, transcribed by A. T. Barker, facsimile edition, Theosophical University Press, Pasadena, California, 1992, 493 pp., see letter LIV, p. 317.

² Commentaries on the Vedas.

valued ally; but, because such criticisms were all directed against *non-Christian* faiths, no one ever paid the slightest attention to it. For over a year and more, the journal came out regularly with an advertisement inimical to that of the *Veda Bashya* and was printed side by side with it to satisfy the Benares Vedantin. And now Mr. Hume comes out with his public castigation of the Founders and seeks to prohibit the advertisement of anti-Christian pamphlets. I want you, therefore, to please bear this in mind, and point out these facts to Col. Chesney, who seems to imagine that theosophy is *hostile* but to Christianity, whereas it is but impartial, and whatever the personal views of the two Founders, the journal of the Society has nothing to do with them, and *will* publish as willingly criticism directed against Lamaism as against Christianity.

And two pages later, in the same Letter, we find that:

M thinks that the *Supplement*³ ought to be enlarged if necessary, and made to furnish room for the expression of thought of every Branch, however diametrically opposed these may be. The *Theosophist* ought to be made to assume a distinct colour and become a unique specimen of its own. We are ready to furnish the necessary extra sums for it.” (p. 319-20)

In this Letter the Adept-Teacher gives Sinnett outlines for him to write an editorial article which should be published at the *Theosophist*. Sinnett did write it, and the text appeared in the magazine of November, 1882. There one reads, on page one of the Supplement:

... The recognition of the fact that all [religions] are fundamentally identical brings with it a realization of the sad truth that all are superficially erroneous. Absolutely pure theosophy must be antagonistic — within the limits of that

³ The Supplement of *The Theosophist*.

enlarged tolerance which its study inculcates — to every differentiated creed. Nor, in dealing practically with any special distortion of true philosophy which this or that organized religion may have been guilty of, is it always possible or desirable to wrap up such criticisms in elaborate phrases destined to flatter the sensibilities of people who may be wedded to the special distortion under notice. As far as this journal is concerned therefore, it will continue in the future, as it has in the past, to be honest and outspoken, whether in dealing with the subtle metaphysical delusions of Asiatic faiths, or with the cruder misconceptions of spiritual things which have been crystallized in the curious creed which modern European churches are pleased to call Christianity.

Several Masters wrote a number of texts for the *Theosophist* and caused many other articles to be written by their chelas and lay chelas. In Letter XLVII, for instance, one of the Masters defends HPB thus:

... But the 'Answers to Correspondents' in *Supplement* are written by *myself*. So do not blame her. I'm curious to know your frank opinion on them. Perchance you might think she might have done herself better.¹

A strong example of how far the Mahatmas did go in their editorial policy with regard to controversy is given by the incident of the letter written by Allan O. Hume with violent attacks to HPB, to the theosophical movement and the Mahatmas themselves, in 1882. HPB said she would not publish the text. It would make no sense. But the Maha-Chohan himself ordered the text to be published, and the attack by Hume appeared in the September edition of the *Theosophist*. It

1 The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett, T.U.P., p. 273.

was accompanied by "A Protest", a text signed by twelve disciples.²

Some years later HPB was the editor of *Lucifer* magazine and wrote in its issue for October 1889:

... It is our invariable rule to publish rather reproofs than laudation from our correspondents. If you want to know yourself ask your enemies, not your friends, to describe you; and however great the exaggerations, you will find more truth, and profit more by the opinion of the former than by that of those who love you."³

Of course, she was referring to decent enemies — not forgers, slanderers or those who help divulge their libels. We can always learn from those who think in a different way from us — but this has nothing to do with scoundrels like Vsevolod Solovyov and their allies, for instance.

Such a broad-minded editorial strategy can only be compared to the best possible editorial policies in the 21st century journalism. Few if any periodicals in the world nowadays have such an advanced editorial policy as *The Theosophist* and *Lucifer* did, under the direction of the "Old Lady".

That was not an editorial policy only. It was part of a greater vision of the theosophical movement. During the crisis of the London Lodge in 1883-1884 one Master wrote:

Not even the President-Founder has the right directly or indirectly to interfere with the freedom of thought of the humblest member, least of all to seek to influence his personal opinion. It is only in the absence of this generous consid-

2 See Damodar and the Pioneers of the Theosophical Movement, compiled and annotated by Sven Eek, TPH, India, 1978, pp. 286-288.

3 HPB's Collected Writings, TPH., 1973, Volume XI, p. 481.

eration, that even the faintest shadow of difference arms seekers after the same truth, otherwise earnest and sincere, with the scorpion-whip of hatred against their brothers, equally sincere and earnest. Deluded victims of distorted truth, they forget, or never knew, that discord is the harmony of the universe. Thus in the Theos. Society, each part, as in the glorious *fugues* of Mozart, ceaselessly chases the other in harmonious discord on the paths of Eternal progress (...)"¹

The periodicals edited by Helena Blavatsky were living examples of this strategy. And more than one century after the "Old Lady" ceased to be with us, copies of two of the first volumes of *The Theosophist* still can be obtained from Richard Robb, an independent researcher and publisher.²

A Master wrote about *The Theosophist* in those days³:

Neglect then not, my good Brother, the humble, the derided Journal of your Society, and mind not either its quaint, pretentious cover, nor the 'heaps of manure' contained in it — to repeat the charitable, and to yourself the too familiar remark used often in India. But let your attention be rather drawn to the few pearls of wisdom and *occult truths* to be occasionally discovered under that 'manure'.

And a few lines below:

Behold, its mystically bumptious clothing!, its numerous blemishes and literary defects, and with all that cover the most perfect symbol of its contents: the main portion of its original ground, thickly veiled, all smutty and as black as

¹ Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett, Letter LXXXV, T.U.P., p. 401.

² Richard Robb, Wizards Bookshelf, Box 6600, San Diego, CA 92166, USA.

³ Letter XLVIII, p. 278, Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett, Theosophical University Press, 1992.

night, through which peep out grey dots, and lines, and words, and even — sentences. To the truly wise those breaks of grey, may suggest an allegory full of meaning, such as the streaks of twilight, upon the Eastern sky, at morning's early dawn, after a night of intense darkness; the aurora of a more 'spiritually intellectual' cycle. And who knows, how many of those, who, undismayed by its unprepossessing appearance, the hideous intricacies of its style, and the other many failures of the unpopular *magazine* will keep on tearing its pages⁴, who may find themselves rewarded some day for their perseverance! Illuminated sentences may gleam out upon them, **at some time or other**, shedding a bright light upon some old puzzling problems. (...)

"At some time or other", the Mahatma wrote.

At the beginning of the 21st century, there is indeed more than one lesson to be learned from the old *Theosophist*.

Inspired by its absolutely unique and pioneer editorial line, it is likely that sooner or later other theosophical periodicals will follow HPB's example. By doing that, they may help international journals like *Fohat* (Canada), and *The Aquarian Theosophist* in the task of throwing a brighter light over some of the main challenges the esoteric movement has to face in the present century.

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⁴ "Tearing its pages", in order to read them. In the 19th century it was a common practice to send magazines (and books) uncut, without a final outer edge trim. Before reading the contents, subscribers had to cut all pages, whose outer edge was actually a fold. This was usually done with a letter-opener or pen-knife.

Book Review***Tsongkapa: The Principle Teachings of Buddhism***

Classics of Middle Asia, The Mahayana Sutra and Tantra Press, 112 West 2nd Street, Howell, New Jersey 07731 USA; 1998; \$6.95

Renunciation of the Self causes one to become an *Agent* rather than an actor in the Drama of the Good Law; one becomes a *medium*, an explicator or *Mediator* from the Above to the Below, from the universal to the particular — *never the reverse*.

The problem with a book — any book — is its shadowy nature. It is a silhouette of a silhouette. Being two removes away from *being*, one is apt to mistake the “Eureka” of comprehension for the *Heart-drum* of Being.

There are books and there are magic books. How does one know the one from the other? It may be that one has to have one foot in the *church of humanity* before there is much hope of recognizing a magic manuscript when it passes your way. Shri Ramakrishna put an interesting twist on the problem when he said in effect that people with an elevating moral influence on others are such not by their body or rank but by what they have been through. Being on the plane of *cause, effort* creates emanations in accordance with the root motive and that upon which the effort was expended. “To whatever place one would go, *that place one’s own self* becomes.” “When this Path is beheld . . . whether one sets out to the bloom of the east, or to the chambers of the west, *without moving*, O holder of the bow, *is the traveling in this road*.”¹

This book, on rare occasions, rises into the stratosphere of philosophy away from the platitudes of unadorned repetitions.

Ironically some of the best parts of the book are in the introduction when there is a relatively relaxed discussion of Tsongkapa. There Tibet is transmitted as a land alive with real people.

Many texts presuming to talk of Tsongkapa’s life are so reverential that one ends up with a “holy corpse” mummified by allegory and piety. However in the preface of this book the great founder of the Yellow Caps is treated as a human with a real history, a thinkable member of the *human tribe*.

I am reminded of the Dalai Lama’s instructions to a would-be historian of Tibet:

In the 1980s, concerned at the misrepresented, twisted and unreal history [of Tibet] like a bad smell penetrating everywhere,” His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama asked for someone with firsthand experience of important events of the past and present to “write them down, without exaggerating or underestimating them.”²

Geshe Lobsang Tharchin gives some amusing insights on the very un-monk-like activities of his early days. Tibetan monasteries had a freedom very different from any comparison their western counterparts in Christianity:

We young monks were not so noble. My house tutor would send us up the rock cliffs behind the monastery with buckets to fetch water from the spring there, and we would dawdle for hours. Sometimes we would tuck our feet into our maroon-colored robes and slide down the long boulders until the cloth was ripped to shreds, and again the housemaster would give us our lumps. Rock-throwing as a good way to waste time, and I remember once hitting a lizard, and killing him by accident, and feeling terrible regret. For we believe that all living creatures have feelings;

¹ Krishna to Arjuna in Dnyaneshvari. *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 14fn.

²

they seek to feel good and avoid pain the same way you and I do.

On our way back to the monastery, a favorite trick was to lay out tacks on the path leading into the front gate. Our country lay in sort of a pocket behind the Himalayas, and was not as cold as most people imagine the “Land of Snows” should be. Some of the monks enjoyed going barefoot, and we would stoop behind the wall near the gate, waiting for a victim. Our giggles would start breaking out even before his feet reached the tacks, and then we would race away, robes flapping and flying in the wind, before he could come and catch us. (Foreword, p. 2-3)

But not all are the pranks of youth, for we find Geshe Lobsang Tharchin saying a few pages later:

Over many centuries, Tibet has produced an extraordinary number of Buddhist saints and scholars; therefore it is rare for a lama’s teachings to become classics within his own lifetime, as did the works of... Je Tsongkapa, the author of the original verses of the *Three Principal Paths* in the present volume.

Lord Tsongkapa ... holds a unique position in our Tibetan Buddhist tradition. All in one he was the greatest philosopher, and most eloquent writer, and most successful organizer of Buddhism who ever lived in our land; as time continues to pass after the forced opening of our country’s doors, I feel sure he will come to be recognized throughout the world as one of the greatest thinkers in history.

He was born in 1357 in the Amdo area of northeast Tibet, in a district called Tsongka (hence his name which means “the one from Tsongka”). He was granted his first, basic vows at a tender age from one Chuje Karmapa Rolpay Dorje, and received the name Kunga Ny-ingpo. By the age of eight he had taken his vows as a Buddhist novice, and already received initiations into the secret

teachings of Buddhism. He excelled in his studies and on the advice of his teachers journeyed to central Tibet in his sixteenth year, to seek further instruction from the many sages there.

[Despite a huge list of formal teaching, it] does not include all the teachings that Lord Tsongkapa is said to have received directly from enlightened beings through dreams, visions, and direct contact; we read for example that for many years he was tutored by the divine being Gentle Voice. At first one of his principal teachers, Lama Umapa, acted as sort of a translator; later on, Lord Tsongkapa was able to meet and learn from this being on his own

We should say a word here about these “divine beings.” We Buddhists believe that there are many Buddhas in the universe, and that they can each appear on one or more planets at the same time, if this will help the beings who live there. We believe that a Buddha is the ultimate evolution of all life; that he can know all things, but does not have all power: he did not create the universe, for example (this we have done by the force of our own past deeds, good and bad), nor can he take all our sufferings away from us by himself — these too we believe come from our own past actions, and must be stopped by ourselves. (p. 16-17)

As Buddhists, we Tibetans do not feel anger at the Chinese, only a deep sadness at the loss of our country and traditions, and the deaths of over million of our friends and relatives. In a way we have become more aware of how precious and short life is, and how we should practice religion while we are still alive to do so. Our loss too is perhaps the greater world’s gain, as teachings like the one you are about to read now reach the outer world for the first time. I pray that this little book will help us all, to defeat our real enemies — the emotions of like and dislike and ignorance within our own minds. (p.24-25)

While it is true that we need a teacher, it is not true that that Teacher has to be externally “known” to the practitioner. This puts the practitioner under the great danger of becoming a religious devotee rather than a servant of Humanity. As HPB once remarked of this problem, “he will be initiated by his Teacher, *or by his Higher Ego*. Initiation into a “conscious link” with some “unit” who is also a conscious co-worker with nature — and therefore an *Agent* of the World Soul — *Alaya* — is necessary. BUT since “inner” and “outer” are both “Mayas,” there is always a parallel event happening: BOTH INNER AND OUTER. This being the case, there is a vast hiatus between internal growth and external ceremony — of any kind. Problems of learning are quoted by Geshe Lobsang Tharchin *Blue Book*, a compilation of Geshe Potowa’s teachings:

To reach liberation, there’s is nothing more important than a lama. Even in simple things of this present life, with things that you can learn just by sitting down and watching someone, you can’t get anywhere without a person to show you. So how on earth are you going to get anywhere without a lama, when you want to go somewhere you’ve never gone before, and you’ve only just arrived from a journey through the lower births?

To ride the bicycle you need to fall off a few times and get your knees skinned, then you become more careful and learn *balance*.

A Similar problem occurs in the spiritual life *but with an added dimension*, which we almost always ignore when learning a mechanical skill — *yet the problem is there in a muted way and it will not disappear until faced and brought into the equation*.

WHY do we do anything? What is our root motive?

The Root Motive is our indispensable Lama. If we are loyal and

don’t flinch LIFE itself will bring the trials necessary to clean up our arrival from a string of lower births.

The word “Hotri” in ancient days meant “indispensable Agent.” For theosophical students the writings of Madame Blavatsky and William Q. Judge are the “Indispensable Agent” Mind you, agent is not the “traveling,” or if, in a certain sense, it can be called such, there is another kind of traveling required: “To whatever place one would go, *that place one’s own self* becomes.”

Back to our book. Geshe Lobsang Tharchin points to a critical need in each of us would-be “Treaders of the Path.” The WHY we are doing a thing might be pretty good, but the HOW in our efforts will be smelly an downward bent:

The border that separate spiritual practice from what is not, and the border that separates real spiritual practice from what is not, is this *attitude* of having given up on this life. Practice, in the form of reciting some lines, and the world may somewhere meet; but there is no way that practice in the form of giving up on this life will ever meet the world, in the form of happily participating in this life. There is no way you can keep the world, and still keep your practice.

This is what the previous preceptor, Drom Tonpa,¹ had in mind when he said to a certain monk, “It makes my heart glad, uncle, to see you walking around this holy place to pay your respects; how much gladder would I be, if you did something spiritual!” And he went on to say the same thing about making prostrations, and reciting prayers, and meditating, and everything else. So finally the monk couldn’t decide at all what was

¹ The Dalai Lama repeated this precept in his talk at the Santa Barbara ULT. He gave it with the emphasis that you must **BE** whatever you are doing. Again, it is that small but critical word, *Attitude!* — ED., A.T.

supposed to be spiritual practice and he asked Drom Tonpa, "Well then, how am I supposed to practice?" And the only answer he got was "Give up on this life!" — repeated three times, and loud. (p.62-63)

It doesn't do any good that the teaching is the holy and secret "Great Completion." The person himself has to become holy and secret, great complete. We see a whole pack of cases where the way a person describes his spiritual practice, it would buy a whole herd of horses — but the person himself isn't worth a dog. Religion that's all words and never gets put into daily practice is all the same as some talk a parrot's been taught to squawk; the person and the practice are miles apart; his mind and his religion never quite mix into one, there's lumps of flour that never dissolve in the batter. Babbling on about spiritual practice and never letting it sink in, leaving to bob around on the surface like some uncooperative vegetables in a soup, is missing the whole point of spiritual practice. I tell you all, what I teach as the crux of all practice is to give up on this life. (quoted from Yang Gonpa in his treatise on the secret practice of "great completion." (65-66)

INTERDEPENDENCE AND KARMIC LAW

First of all, good deeds lead to pleasure and bad deeds lead to pain; each cause is connected to its own result — it can never go wrong somehow and produce the other result. This invariable relationship comes from interdependence.

Once you understand the sense in which "interdependence" refers to lack of any natural existence, then you understand by implication that interdependence in the form of cause and effect is, in a merely conventional way, entirely proper or infallible. This then allows you to gain a total conviction towards the laws that govern all actions and consequences — whether they be those within the circle of life or those that are beyond it.

We can say then that, because it depends on some other group of things, no object can exist naturally. And the fact that nothing exists naturally is what makes cause and effect perfectly plausible. And the fact that nothing exists naturally is what makes cause and effect perfectly plausible. And the fact that all the workings of cause and effect are perfectly plausible is what allows seed to turn to sprouts, and sprouts to grains, and all the rest.

Suppose this were not the case, and seeds of barley or whatever existed naturally — then they could never turn into sprouts. Neither could children ever turn into adults, or anything of the life ever occur, if they all existed naturally. If the higher births existed naturally then it would be impossible for a person in a higher birth to all into the hells. If ordinary living beings existed naturally, then it would be impossible for such a being to become a Buddha, and so forth — the logical problems of being something "naturally" are many.

These two principles — cause and effect, or interdependence, and the fact that nothing exists naturally — go hand in hand, each supporting the other

Theosophists will recognize this as a statement of the *Anatma Doctrine*.

It omits the idea of the *Monad* and the *Monads*.¹ Tsongkhapa's graded path to enlightenment makes evident the incompleteness in the *Anatma Doctrine*,

¹ "Molecules, like ourselves, depend for their eternal existence on nothing but themselves. It does not make any difference whether we are talking of a galaxy or a molecule, it is its own court of last resort.

"The molecule's progress is contingent or dependent upon the range of its activity, just as is the progress of any other being. (*Point out the Way*, see p. 26, this issue.)

This idea of the intelligent eternity of the ONE UNITY — the MONAD and the Monads — is often overlooked in exoteric Buddhism, but not so with esoteric teachings. For example see "An Unpublished Discourse of Buddha, *Collected Writings*, xiv, p.408) — Ed., A.T.

as also does the entry on “Karma” in the *Theosophical Glossary*:

Karma: (*Sk.*) Physically, action: metaphysically, the LAW OF RETRIBUTION, the Law of cause and effect or Ethical Causation. Nemesis, only in one sense, that of bad Karma. It is the eleventh *Nidana* in the concatenation of causes and effects in orthodox Buddhism; yet it is the power that controls all things, the resultant of moral action, the metaphysical *Samskâra*, or the moral effect of an act committed for the attainment of something which gratifies a personal desire. There is the Karma of merit and the Karma of demerit. Karma neither punishes nor rewards, it is simply *the one* Universal LAW which guides unerringly, and, so to say, blindly, all other laws productive of certain effects along the grooves of their respective causations. When Buddhism teaches that “Karma is that moral kernel (of any being) which alone survives death and continues in transmigration” or reincarnation, it simply means that there remains nought-after each Personality but the causes produced by it; causes which are undying, *i.e.*, which cannot be eliminated from the Universe until replaced by their legitimate effects, and wiped out by them, so to speak, and such causes—unless compensated (during the life of the person who produced their with adequate effects, will follow the reincarnated Ego, and reach it in its subsequent reincarnation until a harmony between effects and causes is fully reestablished. No “personality” — a mere bundle of material atoms and of instinctual and mental characteristics — can of course continue, as such, in the world of pure Spirit. Only that which is immortal in its very nature and divine in its essence, namely, the Ego, can exist for ever. And as it is that Ego which chooses the personality it will inform, after each Devachan, and which receives through these personalities the effects of the Karmic causes produced, it is therefore the Ego, that *self* which is the “**moral kernel**” referred to and embodied karma, “which alone survives death.” (pp. 173-74)



POINT OUT THE WAY

LXVIII

Chapter XVI

II—Modes of Seeing, Vibrations, Contact with Masters

Question: — What is the mode of sight employed when people see a mirage on a desert?

Answer: — Physically, the same mode as when we see a cinema—a layer of air of a different degree of opacity from the air below it serves as a mirror, like the cinema screen. A mirage is just as much a physical thing as our seeing each other right now.

Question: — Referring to p. 154 (p.145 Am.Ed.), where it speaks of three modes of sight, why is it necessary to impress the image, to see through the inner sense?

Answer: — Let us state it by analogy: When we talk over the telephone—speaking strictly within the terms of our intellectual sight—what happens is that our thought, will and feeling set our vocal organs to work, and then, under that impulsion and control, we make sounds, which means only that we set the air in

vibration. The vibration of the air sets up a corresponding vibration in the tympanum of the telephone, and that sets up a corresponding electrical vibration, which to all intents and purposes is instantly transmitted to any distance. At the other end of the line, the process by which we have talked into the telephone is precisely reversed; the electrical vibration sets up a vibration in the tympanum of the telephone; the tympanum of the telephone sets up a vibration in the air; that sets up a vibration in our tympanum; and that vibration is transmitted through its channel our brain, where it sets up a vibration with thought, will and feeling in us.

Take another illustration—a simple cinema. How was the film obtained, in the first place? By the transmission of light images from without, through a lens, on to a recording substance. When we see the cinema, what happens? The recording substance with the images impressed on it is not seen by us, but is thrown outward over the lens — projected, they call it — and we see the projection. That's exactly what happens with us here. Certain vibrations from outside enter us through five senses and we call those vibrations our sense-impressions; then they set up a vibration in another portion of our nature, and these other vibrations, we call thought, will, feeling, memory and imagination. They in turn arouse our will, our attitude and our action, and then the process is reversed. This process goes on everywhere and all the time.

Now, would it be possible on this theory for a man of his own knowledge, of his own perception, of his own will, to create a given form in what some call Spirit-Matter? If so, that form would be visible on the plane of Thought-Matter—call it the psychic plane. Suppose one knew how to hold it there or concentrate it there that is, instead of magnifying the strip, as the cinema projector does, to

reverse it, just as the photographic instrument reduces a large thing to small dimensions. So the spirit-image would be reduced to the compass of thought and fixed. Then, the thought image would instantly be visible and audible in astral substance. Suppose it were there held, and condensed still further? The astral image would then become internally visible to the living man. How? By being projected from his brain through the optic nerve into his eye from within.

Anything that is done consciously and with knowledge can also happen “accidentally”—that is, unconsciously—through a concatenation produced internally by the various organs. Any number of people “see things.” Remember the 10th Proposition of Isis Unveiled about the movements of the wandering astral form? Neither time nor space offer any obstacle to them. A thaumaturgist and practical occultist can cause his astral body to assume protean appearances — that is, take on the shape of anything in Nature, big or little, and in no matter what kingdom. He can not only cause his astral body to assume protean appearances, but also can make it visible or invisible to another by an act of his will. He can also impress pictures formed in his own mind on the mind of another without the latter's being aware of it.

Those who have seen such an imposed picture are ready to stake their lives on the reality of what they have seen — when the whole thing was but an illusion, a phantasmagoria produced by the irresistible will of the Adept. Probably everyone has “seen things”; he saw them and, a moment after, looked again and there was nothing there for him to see, physically. How did he see? He saw astrally, that is, externally and astrally; an astral image was projected not from without inward, but from within outward.

Question: — Would that apply to sound also—to “hearing things”?

Answer: — Precisely, and also to smell and touch and taste. This is the power that all the bright advertising men are using unconsciously, just as the Christian Scientists are using another kind of power unconsciously. They don't recognize it for what it is, and they give it false names, for in both cases they aren't using it for the sake of the public—they are using it for their own sake, or for the sake of their own interests.

Question: — On p. 149 (p.140 Am. Ed.), referring to the misuse of powers, Mr. Judge says that if a man persists in such misuse, these powers are taken from him. If they can be taken away, the implication is that they can be conferred. Yet on p.144 (p. 136 Am. Ed.) it says that man, held by the Masters of Wisdom to be the highest product of the whole system of evolution, mirrors in himself every power, however wonderful or terrible, of Nature; by the very fact of being such a mirror he is man. Isn't, then, that power inherent, rather than conferred? The two statements seem to conflict.

Answer: — Underscore the word “mirrors.” We mirror in ourselves every power in nature, but we are not able to exercise those powers because we haven't the knowledge to make that reflection anything but an image. We haven't the knowledge, and we haven't the will to make images objective. How easy it is for us to agree with the Golden Rule, and how very difficult it is for us to practise it. Why? The Golden Rule is an astral or psychic or mental image. Living it is fixing it, in terms of three dimensions. Do we find that easy?

Question: — In regard to the third mode of sight, is this power to project an image from without within, or from within without, the secret of the fakirs who make

great numbers of people see what isn't there?

Answer: — Yes, surely; that's an occult power. Have you ever thought that there must be certain terrible secrets working on us all the time, not on any one of us picked out as a victim, but on all humanity? Look at the readiness with which people can believe what isn't so, and give their lives for it. They have accepted such-and-such ideas. Having accepted them, although those ideas may be totally false, they appear to the believer as absolutely true, and he is ready to be burned at the stake, and to burn others at the stake, for the sake of those ideas.

What kind of occult, left-hand power is being exercised on human minds? We know how very hard it is, even with the aid of Theosophy, to qualify our perceptions, so that we are able to label the ideas we find in our own minds as sound and true, or false. And even after having so labeled them, what tremendous difficulty we have to disembarass our-selves, to get free from the force and influence, of what, for convenience sake, we may call bad habits, bad memories, bad thoughts, bad inner pictures. Although we want to be rid of them, we can't. What terrible influence is behind all that?

Reversing it, the opposite is just as true. What divine influence is there somewhere in space, in time, in consciousness, which causes many men to long for the good, the beautiful and the true, even in the midst of the opposite in the world? Behind all human life is magic, white and black, and human beings are subject to the influence of both.

Certainly humanity is in Kali Yuga because it is far more open to black influences than to white — this is what makes Kali Yuga.

Question: — It is stated that the Adept has the power to read others' thoughts in strictly authorized cases. Now, what determines such authorization?

Answer: — Well, we might think behind the meaning of Chelaship, and perhaps that will open our eyes to some things. Here we have, as a body, some kind of a relation with the Masters of Wisdom, haven't we? We are interested in the same Cause that They labour for in full, continuous consciousness. We are struggling to travel in the same direction; that is, we are trying to study and to apply the same teaching that guides Their lives. So, we have a relation with Them as a mass, as a body, having a common aim and a common purpose and a common teaching. However remote that relation is, it is a contact. Suppose a man, an individual here and there, realizes that? Just as the sense of touch, when more concentrated, becomes the sense of hearing without the sense of touch being lost, and the sense of hearing, when more concentrated, becomes the sense of sight without either hearing or touch being lost — if there are Masters of Wisdom, if there are such Beings and They do labour for all men, They must take a special interest in those men and women who are striving to fit themselves in every way open to them to become the better able to help and teach others. Any one individual can take to heart H.P.B.'s statement in the Fourth Message to the American Theosophists:

After all, every wish and thought I can utter are summed up in this one sentence, the never—dormant wish of my heart, "Be Theosophists, work for Theosophy!"

Suppose, as the result of a year or seven years or a lifetime or seven lifetimes of soul growth — because that kind of growth, being spiritual, is never lost — someone comes back into incarnation, and comes into contact with

Theosophy. It touches his heart before it touches his head — he only knows that it is so. He hasn't studied it, hasn't read it, hasn't listened to the arguments for and against Karma, Reincarnation, the seven planetary states and all the rest of it — he just knows that it is so. "How do you know it is so?" he is asked. "I feel it," he replies.

This is another kind of touch isn't it? With this feeling in his heart, he goes to work to inform his head, educate his head. Actually, he begins to make his brain capable of taking pictures; he begins to make a film out of his brain that will take pictures on the other side. Then what? As he gets head and heart to work together, something else must happen. How far off are the Masters from us, in terms of space? 'Why, They are out of sight that's all. How far are They from us in terms of intelligence? They are out of sound that's all. How far off are They from us in matter — not necessarily this kind of matter? Why, They are beyond our touch.

But, suppose we cultivated our touch, our hearing, our sight in the same direction in which They are looking and listening. They are open to the least vibration of a searching soul — wouldn't it follow that our inner senses would begin to wake up? What is it that develops the inner senses? Well, what has made our outer senses possible? Do we ever think of that? When we descended into incarnation, we had no physical senses — we had only spiritual and psychic senses. We had no physical senses at all; that is why we had to incarnate, to work here.

Who is the parent of the physical senses? The principle of desire. Who is the parent of the inner senses? Thought, will and feeling. As we turned outward and downward, thought, will and feeling became a simple film for sense pictures,

because, turned toward desire, the film will take impressions only from below; but suppose we turned our thought, will and feeling in the other direction? Our physical senses would still be here to report. It's just like a telephone bell ringing, or a newspaper dropped at the door; we don't have to answer the telephone because it rings, or to read the scandal sheets merely because we take the newspaper. Suppose, then, we turned our thought, will and feeling in the direction of the spiritual and intellectual world where the Masters live and work — a world which has no limits, so far as our understanding of space is concerned. Wouldn't all the rest follow, until finally we could come into something more than mere heart feeling or head feeling?

Question: — This communication of thought without a word, does it produce sound?

Answer: — Sound is a vibration in the air here. You cannot make a motion of consciousness of any kind without producing a vibration in what ever state of life you are acting in. So, on the plane of Manas, if we think of each other — to use an expression — we are setting up a vibration, aren't we? That would correspond on that plane to sound on this plane. Here's a curious thing: perhaps many have had a dream of meeting an Indian, or a Chinaman, or someone who lived thousands of years ago, and upon waking up they remember that he talked English to them. It's the familiar story of the man who was asked to learn Greek so as to be sure to get the New Testament straight. He said, "If English is the language Jesus Christ used, it's good enough for me." So, Thought communication produces a series of vibrations, on various planes, and these are translated by the mind according to the plane on which the consciousness is awake.

Question: — Do molecules depend on Life for existence?

Answer: — Molecules, like ourselves, depend for their eternal existence on nothing but themselves. It does not make any difference whether we are talking of a personal god or a molecule, it is its own court of last resort.

If we speak of the molecule in the sense of the Second Fundamental, whatever happiness or unhappiness may enter or depart from the life that we call a molecule, is due to its interaction and interrelation with all other forms of life. The molecule's progress is contingent or dependent upon the range of its activity, just as is the progress of any other being.

There is an old, old story that if a peasant and a jeweler both found a diamond of exactly the same size and quality, the jeweler's diamond would be worth far more to him than the peasant's diamond would be to him. Why? Because the jeweler would better understand and appreciate the value of the stone. The same thing is true of every class of life and of every form of action.

How is it that some chance word, some passing glance, may for a given individual be the sudden flinging wide of the doors of all the mysteries of life, while for another man, countless books, countless associations, countless incarnations, mean no more to him than the day-to-day round? None of us can tell about these things. It is something like the unborn child. Grant that there is an indwelling consciousness of the unborn babe — not dwelling in the body, but in the body of the Ego. Now, does it have any consciousness that birth is nine months away, that birth is eight months, or six months, or five minutes away? Not a particle.

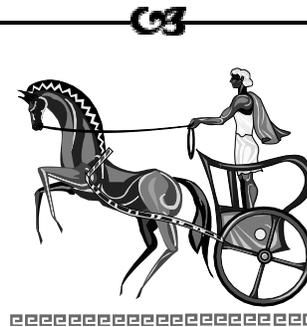
Consider the consciousness of death. Any one of us may die in the next five minutes. Yet death is the opening of a door of exit from this life, the opening of a door of entrance into another life, whether consciously or unconsciously. In the same way, every circumstance of life is a door that closes and says, "No farther in this direction" — or it might be a door that opens into something higher, deeper. What makes the actual perception, the actual "door"? It is ourselves, our motive, our intent, our purpose; and the same law operates on a molecule as on the greatest being we can imagine.

Think of a pregnant phrase of H.P.B.'s: Every atom — and she means by that any particle of what we call substance anywhere, in no matter what state — every atom is endowed with memory, will and sensation. In other words, it is a living being, a centre of life, a centre of force, a centre of energy; therefore a centre of action and a centre of experience. But the range may be extremely limited. We need to remember that what is an atom on this plane is an angel on another.

If we remember that, we can see that the same contrast which to us seems irremediable and impassable exists in Nature objectively, just as it exists in man subjectively — that is, the contrast of waking and sleeping. Here is a man asleep; he has no more intelligence on this plane than a vegetable has. He has not become a vegetable, however, for he is wide-awake in another state when he is asleep here. The more wide-awake we are here, the more asleep we are in some other state. Consciousness, in other words, cannot be centered upon two objects or in two states or two planes at the same time, and that is just as true of a molecule and an atom as it is of a human being.

We often speak of the first three races as the mindless races. Do you know what H.P.B. calls them? The three angel races; that is, three purely spiritual races. They were on earth, the astral earth, but their consciousness was no more here than is that of a man asleep. They were awake on the plane of Spirit, not the plane of matter, and when they awoke on the plane of matter, they went to sleep on the plane of Spirit. That is the story of the Second Fundamental — the alternation of states, which is ceaseless. That alternation with us is unconscious; with the Mahatmas it is fully conscious, and is under the control of their will. The whole story of Life, then, is a study of self-consciousness and the pursuit of self-knowledge.

[TO BE CONTINUED]



DNYANESHVARI

LXVII

[The *Dnyaneshvari* is mentioned many times by Madame Blavatsky, always in glowing terms. The following rendition is extracted from Manu Subedar's translation. The great Sage, Dnaneshwara Maharaj sang this work to his people when he was quite young. He did it in their native language, Marathi, about 700 years ago. It is his commentary on the *Bhagavad-Gita*.]

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Krishna says to Arjuna: Wisdom (Dnyana) is that by which all troublesome activities melt away. The seer and the seen are united in one, and the self (Jiva)

ascends the throne of Brahman. No more powerful means of attaining Brahman is known.

Knowledge of Self is the highest path. Seekers after wisdom subordinate everything else to this search. Complete affection in whatever is liked very much and the mind never ceases to dwell on this. Such is the compelling power of love. Hence, the seeker, who has no the strength of actual experience is led along this path by his spontaneous desire for attaining wisdom. He finds out how to do it and then makes the attempt with increasing intensity. But there are difficulties that prevent the dawn of wisdom, and which drag a person into error when wisdom has actually dawned. These have been enumerated, along with other factors that assist one along this path. They also need enumeration of divine wealth (Daivi Sampad). These are the possessions that enable one to attain wisdom. They help on the path of liberation. They shed the light of duty (Dharma) in the darkness of delusion. Wealth does not consist of just one thing. It consists of many things that help us, and conjointly constitutes wealth. Similarly, qualities that increase the happiness of self, are collectively called divine wealth, because each of them is divine.

In these divine qualities, that which stands foremost is non-fear (Abhaya). He who does not jump in the floods need not be afraid of drowning. He who observes rules of health will remain healthy. Similarly, he who on all occasions of activity and non-activity will not entertain the sense of "I" (Ahankar), need have no fear in this world. Thus when the sense of unity has dawned and when everyone else appears as part of Self, how can the feeling of fear arise? When salt is put in the water it becomes water. So with unity there can survive no antagonism.

The true symptom of fearlessness is, that where there is fearlessness there is wisdom. The next is purity of intelligence (Satva Buddhi). This is like ashes that can neither burn nor be extinguished. It is like that form of the moon in which no-moon day has gone and the new moon day has not yet begun. It is like the river Ganges flowing clearly at the end of summer before the rainy season begins. Similarly that intelligence is pure where there is neither desire nor regret. Also the attributes of activity and of darkness have been subordinated, and this is absorbed in the contemplation of Self. The senses may convey to the mind objectively a positive or negative sensation, but the mind will receive it with equanimity. The mind is indifferent to any immediate loss or gain as is the mind of a chaste woman whose husband has gone abroad. The true mark, therefore, of purity of intelligence is that the mind is directed towards the true form (of Self) and the intelligence has no other purpose except this.

The third attribute is "Dnyana (wisdom) Yoga," in which a man in order to attain his true Self pursues either the path of wisdom or the path of Yoga. On either of these paths he directs his heart towards this purpose, just as the final offering is given into fire at the end of a sacrifice, or as having bestowed his daughter on a bridegroom of a good family, the father is free from anxiety, or just as Lakshmi, the goddess, is devoted to Vishnu. Without entertaining any doubts to pursue the path of wisdom or of Yoga (activity) is the third attribute. The next is "charity." Never refuse even an enemy who comes as a supplicant, but give through the body, speech and mind as much as you can. Like the tree that gives leaves, flowers, shade, fruits and roots without distinction, give to him who needs with a cheerful heart. This is true charity. This is what would bring nearer

the means of liberation. "Self-control" (Dama) is that in which, as an enemy is cut down by means of a weapon, so every tendency towards objects of sense is repressed. The senses should be tied up and kept in check, and even the slightest wafting of the objects of sense should not be allowed to reach their door. All internal promptings should be cut out and should be burnt away in the fire of renunciation at the ten gates of the senses. The man who possesses true self-control is not slack at any moment, either day or night, in carrying out the discipline. This discipline, which is more difficult than the discipline of controlling the breath (Yoga), is the true performance of duty.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

HPB DEFENSE FUND REPORT



\$10,000.00 FUND RAISING EFFORT FOR PUBLISHING AND AUTHENTIC VOLUME I OF HPB's Letters.

Cumulative gifts as of September 20, 2005

ER	500.00
Anonymous	50.00
DLJ	50.00
EPB	200.00
MRJ	50.00
DLJ	100.00
RD	250.00
Anonymous	50.00
PHX	500.00
Anonymous	20.00
Anonymous	20.00
Anonymous	500.00
RD	500.00
GR	1,248.00
CR	50.00
EPB	300.00
Anonymous	20.00

James & Sally Colbert	50.00
Anonymous	100.00
Anonymous	25.00
TOTAL AS OF September 20, 2005	4,583.00

The HPB Defense Fund is specifically dedicated to the publication of an authentic Volume I of Madame Blavatsky's letters. The proposed volume will have the fraudulent letters in the current Adyar edition removed and also take note of other authors who follow the practice of mixing lies side by side with truth as if they were *equally relevant*. It is our intent to equip the student and inquirer with eyes to *discriminate* the authentic from the fraudulent, the clean from the corrupt.

A good companion volume for a historical overview of the life of Madame Blavatsky. Is already in print: *The Extraordinary Life and Influence of Helena Blavatsky.*" (600+ pages). This volume is by far the most readable and best documented work available. — ED., A.T.¹

"She has no need of any man's praise; but even she has need of Justice."
William Q. Judge

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Jerome,

Please remove my name from the mailing list of "The Aquarian Theosophist." I will not stand by and silently support your personal vendetta against John Algeo. Defense of H.P.B. is one thing — willful malice towards a fellow theosophist is another.

John has made (and continues to make) great personal sacrifices on behalf of Theosophy and has done much to further interest in H.P.B.'s work. He is in no wise a "destroyer of the messenger"!

You can expect a formal letter from me shortly.

Sincerely,

(name withheld as a courtesy)

¹ It is offered at a discount to subscribers: \$20 for the hardback version; \$15 for the softback; and is also available online at www.theosociety.org/pasadena/tup/-onl.htm



Dear Friend,

All of us choose by our thoughts and deeds whatever road we wish to tread. What we give our attention to we gradually become.

When the disintegrating forces of nature seek to render innocuous¹ a spiritual transmission they invariably attack the *integrity of the Messenger*. Why? Because calling attention to the Message only highlight its intrinsic power, its innate and divine common-sense; its purifying power for those who assimilate it.

William Q. Judge defended Madame Blavatsky's integrity against the onslaughts of Col. Olcott and Annie Besant.

An Initiated Messenger of the Masters cannot be real on Monday and a Fraud on Wednesday. If the "flaws" or "errors" become too dangerous they call upon the bearer an event similar to that of Subba Row who tried to divert the stream of teaching back into a Brahmanical groove. Nature was moving West with no concern for Caste, Sex, color, social position etc. It was he who spread the rumor that HPB had been taken over by elementals. Master KH destroyed that myth in his last letter to Colonel Olcott.

What does all this have to do with John Algeo in 2005? He chose to insert 20 bogus letters in a so-called Volume I of HPB's *Letters* and has the audacity to consider it part of her *Collected Works*.

He only admits that one of the 20 is questionable and **even that one he included anyway. He declares it**

¹ Which, in terms of a *transmission* is equivalent to *death*.

"probably true." So, in the words of our ex-subscriber, "We cannot stand by silent"² while Brother Algeo edits, publishes and defends a volume calculated **to destroy the integrity of the Messenger**. To satisfy yourself of the **truth** of this statement, see what Elinor Roos and Karin Smith say about this volume:

Probably³ many Theosophists, myself included, had been looking forward to see[ing] the first volume of *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky* published. Not only on account of our interest in her life, but also because her Collected Writings would not have been complete without her large correspondence. So I ordered my copy with great expectations and with very little preparation to be disappointed. Some of the letters were just what we expected of H.P.B., however there were many others that surprised me considerably and left me wondering if I had understood them correctly. Also, scattered here and there among her letters were statements so foreign to everything we know about H.P.B. that one could not help doubting their authenticity. Even Mr. Algeo, the editor of this book, mentions, specifically with reference to Letter 7, that the genuineness of this letter has been questioned by a number of researchers. Several attempts to obtain a photocopy of the original, in order to compare the handwriting, have not been successful (p.23).

But since — regardless of this fact — Mr. Algeo decided to publish this Letter, we must conclude that he personally did not much question its authenticity and

² "And if the limbs have to defend the head and heart of their body, then why not also the disciples their Teachers as representing the *SCIENCE* of Theosophy which contains and includes the 'head' of their privilege, the 'heart' of their spiritual Growth?"

³ These two letters originally appeared in the Fall 2004 issue of *Fohat*

that its contents must not have disturbed him. This is a rather alarming situation, for there are still more volumes of *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky* pending, and one wonders what other questionable letters — even more discreditable to H.P.B. than this one — might he not be tempted to publish.

In my opinion Letter 7 must have been fabricated and should never have been published. It is the most offensive of the 136 letters included in this volume, and unless we deny H.P.B. consistency in her way of acting, teaching and writing, such dishonourable thoughts as are revealed in this letter could hardly have been the outcome of her pen. Regretfully this infamous letter will now only serve to perpetuate the calumnies against H.P.B. and give her enemies a new weapon of attack.

It is not enough, however, to state how I personally feel about the authenticity of this letter (and of others in this volume too). I will also have to provide some arguments to uphold my feelings, and if factual evidence is lacking there is still internal evidence to support us. Upon analyzing the letter one finds that its purpose is clearly political. It even specifically states that her "aim is not profit" (p.27). But then the letter contradicts itself when it alleges that H.P.B. had accepted a payment of 2000 francs for some service she had rendered to a Russian military man (p.28) and "5 thousand francs from the Papal envoy for the time spent with him" discussing affairs related to the Papal Government to whom she made many promises for the future which she never intended to fulfill (p.26). In short, if we are to believe in the authenticity of Letter 7, then we have also to believe that H.P.B. had accepted bribes and had offered her services for the rest of her life to work as a Russian spy by taking advantage of her occult powers in séances that were often frequented by high government officials. She is shown as

boasting that she "can find out everything through spirits and by other means, and can extract the truth from the most secretive person" (p. 27), by which she meant government officials who carried state secrets, thereby being able to render great service to her country. This letter, of which there is *no original*, is addressed to the Director of the Third Department, a Russian secret police of the mid 19th century responsible for political security, and is dated December 26, 1872. Its source is the Central State Archive of the October Revolution. I now intend to quote a few more of its spurious declarations and disprove them with H.P.B.'s own words.

On page 24 of *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky* it states — in the alleged words of H.P.B. — that "I have been living abroad almost continuously. During those 20 years . . . I zealously watched current politics ..."; on page 25 she is said to have written that while in Cairo, and availing herself of "spirits," "I found out about the secret acquisition of a huge quantity of arms left behind by the Turkish Government; I found out about all the intrigues of Nubar-Pasha [a Turkish prime minister], and of his talks with the German Consul General . . ."; and again on page 28 H.P.B. supposedly said that "love of struggle and perhaps for intrigues is in my [H.P.B.'s] character." And so in a similar vein she keeps on boasting in that Letter of all her political knowledge, abilities and cunning.

Now, what has H.P.B. to say about politics in her writings? In *C.W.* Vol. X, p.-294, she writes:

...it so happens that I have never meddled in politics, am innocent of any knowledge of political intrigues, never bothered myself with this special science at any time of my long life,...

And on p. 293 of Vol. x, she declares:

I have never written in all my life on politics, of which I know nothing. I take no interest in political intrigues, regarding them as the greatest nuisance and a bore, the most false of all systems in the code of ethics. I feel the sincerest pity for those diplomats who, being honorable men, are nevertheless obliged to deceive all their lives, and to embody a living, walking LIE.

These quotations refer specifically to H.P.B.'s personal feelings about politics, but there are in addition the policies of the Theosophical Society and its Journals. In C.W. X, p.82 H.P.B. writes that "politics does not enter into the programme of our magazine's activity." Then in C.W. IV, p. 454 she adds:

...feeling an innate and holy horror for everything connected with it [i.e., politics], we have avoided the subject most strenuously.

In *The Key to Theosophy*, pages 231-32, it is stated that:—

the whole present system of politics is built on the oblivion of such rights [as justice, kindness, consideration or mercy], and [on] the most fierce assertion of national selfishness.

Also that the Theosophical Society is not a political organization and "as a society it takes absolutely no part in any national or party politics." And finally on the same page she expresses the worthlessness of meddling in politics because "no lasting political reform can be ever achieved with the same selfish men at the head of affairs as of old."

If such statements as these, together with the whole arsenal of Ethical teachings given to us by H.P.B. in her writings do not convince Mr. Algeo that such contemptible Letter as number 7 could never have been written by H.P.B., then I really do not know what will!

Out of 136 letters published in this volume, 19 of them have no Russian

original available and were thus translated by Boris de Zirkoff from Solovyov's book on H.P.B. entitled *Souvremennaya zhritza Isidi*. Concerning the latter Sylvia Cranston writes in her biography of H.P.B., page 298:

Solovyov's version of his association with H.P.B. was first recorded in a series of articles in *Russky Vvestnik* in 1892 and was published as a book the following year. In 1895 an edited English translation by Walter Leaf was published on behalf of the Society for Psychical Research in London under the title *A Modern Priestess of Isis*.

Both of these versions, the Russian and the English, were meant to expose H.P.B. as a "charlatan" and to offer "some explanation of the remarkable success of her imposture" (Cranston, 299). However, according to Sylvia Cranston, when carefully analyzed "most of Solovyov's facts turned out to be fiction" (Cranston, 301).

If we only consider the following three facts, namely:

1. that this book was requested by the Society for Psychical Research which was already totally prejudiced against H.P.B.;
2. that from a great admirer and "friend" of H.P.B. Solovyov "became her bitter enemy," the reasons being that H.P.B. refused to teach him practical occultism and that "all his prayers to be taken as a Chela were utterly rejected" by her (Cranston, 307), and lastly,
3. that Solovyov wrote these articles *after* her death when H.P.B. no longer could defend herself, then we may rightfully ask how trustworthy such source of information can possibly be? How authentic are these 19 letters in this volume of *The Letters of H.P. Blavatsky*?

Much more could be refuted in these Letters, but it would take a volume to do

so. Hopefully the few examples given above will serve as a warning sign to all Theosophists who have acquired this book, or intend to do so in the near future.¹ But even more importantly, let us trust that Mr. Algeo will use a little more understanding of H.P.B.'s nature in his subsequent volumes of *The Letters of H.P. Blavatsky*, and take to heart the wise words of Mahatma K.H. when He stated that "so long as one has not developed a perfect sense of justice, he should prefer to err rather on the side of mercy than commit the slightest act of injustice." (*Letters from the Masters of Wisdom*, 11-143.)

Elinor Roos
Victoria, British Columbia,
Canada

And now to Karin Smith's letter:

I have read the latest compilation of the Letters of H.P.B., volume 1, and have had some doubts as to the truth in some of those letters. I am aware that perhaps nothing can be proven, and I would say that, most likely, that is a fact. But my question is, shouldn't the editors be more faithful to H.P.B., and not include those letters where their truth and authenticity is doubtful?

Boris de Zirkoff translated the letters from Solovyov's works, and I truly wonder how much one can trust Solovyov since he became such a bitter enemy of H.P.B. We can compare what those letters say, to most of the others and see some discrepancies in her character:

I would have my fortune secured if I wasn't carrying unfortunately my accursed name of Blavatsky. ... These are the bitter fruits

¹ The HPB Defense Fund was established specifically for the purpose of offering a choice to serious students, so that all of us can acquire an honest volume without the Solovyov series and infamous Russian Spy letter. The Fund is well on its way to reaching the halfway point of its fundraising goal, so you should not have long to wait. — ED., A.T.

of my youth devoted to Satan, his pomps and works! (Letter 12, p. 49)

And then on page 194:

I am ready to sell my soul for spiritualism, but nobody will buy it, and I am living from hand to mouth and earning from \$10 to \$15 when necessity arises.

Compare it to a previous letter (#37):

I am ready to give my life for the spread of the sacred truth. (p. 143)

These are not only discrepancies, but exactly two totally opposite views. In let. 11 she quotes from something Aksakoff said to A.J. Davis:

I have heard of Madame Blavatsky from one of her parents, who spoke of her as a rather strong medium. Unfortunately her communications reflect her morals, *which have not been very strict.* (p. 44)

Isn't it strange that it is in those letters taken out of Solovyov's work where HPB specifically speaks about her lack of morals, her sins, etc. and her materialistic views?² Is there anything anywhere which supports that she actually did write those letters, and if not, shouldn't the reader be warned of their probable inauthenticity, or even better not include them at all?³

Quoting Boris de Zirkoff, Collected Writings XII, p. 334, he says:

V.S. Solovyov (1853-1900), who reviewed H.P.B.'s *The Key to Theosophy*, was an outstanding Russian philosopher and writer, most of whose writings have never yet been translated into English. He was the brother of Vsevolod S. Solovyov, the novelist, who, after a brief association

² Emphasis added. Where is the honesty? Where is the discrimination?! — ED., A.T.

³ Emphasis added. The lack of common-sense employed in assembling this volume is remarkable. The two letters exhibit research and comparison. Why did not the editors do likewise? — ED., A.T.

with H.P.B. and the Theosophical Movement, became a bitter enemy.

What did this "outstanding" philosopher do, when he reviewed *The Key*? In the words of HPB:

The review by Mr. [Vladimir] Solovyov is no review at all, and not even ordinary criticism, but simply a wholesale distortion of the book from the first paragraph to the last, as much of its entirety as of the few and skillfully chosen points which have appeared to the critic as "especially curious." (Cw XII, p. 335 "Neo-Buddhism")

Obviously the two brothers were against her.

In Sylvia Cranston's book, *The Extraordinary Life and Influence of Helena Blavatsky*, [she] quotes the following paragraph from a letter of V.S. Solovyov:

This absolute blindness on the part of people who were perfectly rational in everything but the question of "Madame's" impeccability, forced me finally to adhere to my original plan. Whatever came I would collect such proofs of all these deceptions as should be sufficient not only for me but for all these blind dupes. I would no longer give way to the involuntary sympathy and pity, which in spite of everything, still attracted me to Helena Petrovna. I would in the first place deal only with Madame Blavatsky, the thief of souls, who was trying to steal my soul too. She was duping me under the veil of personal friendship and devotion; she was trying to entangle and exploit me; and so my hands were free. (pp. 304-305)

Mrs. Cranston's accounts on Solovyov are extant, and show rather clearly the type of man he was. There will be many who upon reading these letters will be ignorant as to who the Solovyov brothers were. I truly hope that

John Algeo¹ and the editors will be more careful in their choice of material especially when they come to the era of the Coulombs.

In letter #7, the editor did write that "the genuineness of this letter has been questioned by a number of researchers," and we still can question it. No one who has read the life of H.P.B. can imagine her setting traps on people to elicit their secrets, hopes and plans for the so called good of Mother Russia. This goes completely against her character and morals, for she was, decidedly, not a deceitful person. Here we are told that the original is in the Central State Archive of the October Revolution, but it also seems that no one has read it. Are we to believe that she was using her "powers" to obtain secrets? Is this the same woman who worked for truth all her life?

Quoting from Jean O. Fuller's book *Blavatsky and her Teachers*, she says: "In it [i.e. *A Modern Priestess of Isis*], Solovioff claims it was Madame Blavatsky who offered him her services as a spy for Russia" (p. 187), while previous to this, Ms. Fuller quotes from a letter of Sinnett saying what HPB told him:

Solovioff is either crazy or acts so because having compromised himself with his *offer of espionage* to me he is now afraid I should speak and compromise him at St. Petersburg . . . Solovioff will not forgive me for rejecting his proposition. (British Museum, Additional MSS.45287, LXXX; *Letters*, p. 193) (p. 186)

Here we have again further discrepancies between what allegedly H.P.B. wrote according to Solovyov, and those of other people, including herself to Sinnett.

Perhaps we will never know the truth, but what do we, as Theosophists, gain in

¹ Dear Brother Algeo, considering all the evidence that appears in these two carefully written, unemotional letters, can you honestly say that the person who edited this *spurious* volume was not trying to **destroy the integrity of the Messenger?**

bringing out the dirt and lies promoted by others to bring down H.P.B. and possibly the movement? Don't we have a duty to our readers and fellow Theosophists to search for the truth, and if not available, then to ignore those letters, consider them inauthentic, and therefore not include them in HER collected letters? There is already so much controversy about these letters, that I feel one shouldn't add any more.

Karin D. Smith
Toronto, Ontario, Canada



Academia has a problem of blindness when anything with spiritual overtones is considered. They are so-to-speak, "true believers" in the data furnished by the five senses. This incessant gathering and interpreting of data, leads into that most abject of slaveries: OPINION. Therefore the idea that the best test of the Integrity of a Messenger is to study and Assimilate their message is overlooked. The Upper Path of the Student involves a study of *consciousness* and initiation:

If it is true that "the whole universe is an aggregate of states of consciousness," it would seem to follow that the real difference between one who is an initiate and one who is not lies in the fact that the former looks at all things from a totally different standpoint to the majority of men. It is not that he has acquired certain items of knowledge that others do not possess, such as the way to manipulate the hidden forces of nature, but that he is on a higher plane of consciousness altogether. If such a higher plane has been attained, it will follow that his whole range of ideas will differ from that of others and he will be sensible of the operation of causes of a more far-reaching character than those cognized by others. He will be as it were in the possession of higher and superior information and so will be able to form more

just conclusions and this fact alone will give him enormous power.

The action of the entire universe is but a detailed manifestation and example of the action of mind on matter, governed at the highest point by the action of the universal mind. Between the finite human mind of the ordinary uninitiated individual and this universal mind lie an infinite number of gradually ascending degrees, and the higher the plane of consciousness the nearer is the approach to the universal mind which is, at it were, the mainspring of the whole. Although there are no hard and fast lines in nature yet these various grades may be marked off into great main divisions; and it is the successive attainment of these, one after the other that is represented by the degrees of initiation. When one plane of experience has been exhausted, there is needed, as it were, a fresh impulse to enable us to go on higher and this it is that is supplied at the time of initiation.

Theosophist, June, 1886

ALPHA

