

ANCIENT TEACHINGS, ADEPTS, AND YOGIS

Articles by H. P. Blavatsky

THE DENIALS AND THE MISTAKES OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

A SIGNAL OF DANGER

WAS CAGLIOSTRO A "CHARLATAN"?

APOLLONIUS TYANEUS AND SIMON MAGUS

PERTINENT QUESTIONS

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FOREWORD

IN “The Denials and the Mistakes of the Nineteenth Century,” published posthumously in *Lucifer* for June, 1892, H.P.B. once more exposes the habit of nineteenth-century scholars to consult their prejudices in preference to available facts. The article is a defense of the authentic wisdom and ancient origin of such works as the Hermetic Books and the Chaldean Oracles. The blighting cultural effects of special pleading in religion and scholarship are revealed in this review of skeptical writers and academicians, H.P.B. having to extricate from the Christian apologetics of Clement of Alexandria evidence of the antiquity of the Hermetic writings. Even the testimony of reputable archaeologists was largely ignored in those days. Yet the evidence exists, and while, as H.P.B. points out in *The Secret Doctrine*, most of the translations of the Hermetic works exhibit Christian bias, having been “smoothed in a monotheistic direction,” it is nonetheless possible to recognize in them the spirit of the Esoteric philosophy.

H.P.B.’s “A Signal of Danger” was written in French for the *Revue Theosophique* (April 21, 1889) to correct the definitions of “Initiate” and “Adept” given by an earlier contributor to that journal. Her discussion provides a helpful account of the origin and history of these terms, showing the different shades of meaning they have acquired through varying usage, over many centuries. (This article was translated for THEOSOPHY and printed in the January, 1957, issue.)

The insidious influence of prejudice and the ugly effects of calumny are demonstrated in H.P.B.’s article, “Was Cagliostro a ‘Charlatan’?”, which appeared in *Lucifer* for January, 1890. Even the fearless and honest Carlyle was taken in by the lies about Cagliostro, perpetuating for readers of English the great injustice done to a much misunderstood

man. While, fortunately, more than one writer of the twentieth century has gone back over the facts of Cagliostro's career (those that can be found out), revealing his extraordinary stature both as healer and as a reformer of Masonry, and freeing him of the charges of his enemies, this article by H.P.B. gives a light that could hardly be had from any other source.

"Apollonius Tyaneus and Simon Magus," from the *Theosophist* for June, 1881, seems largely made up of quotation from a review (in the *Banner of Light*) of a history dealing with these personages, with brief comment added by H.P.B. Her reason for printing this material becomes obvious, since the adept powers of Apollonius were dramatic illustrations of feats that had been described in *Isis Unveiled*, and would be further explained by her in years to come.

The article, "Pertinent Questions," printed in the *Theosophist* for June, 1883, in reply to questions by a reader, like "A Signal of Danger," is a valuable example of H.P.B.'s care in the definition and use of terms. Later, in *The Key to Theosophy*, she would speak of the need to be sure that the obscurity which may occur in Theosophical communications "is of the thought not of the language, is due to depth not to confusion."

Lucifer, June 1892

THE DENIALS AND THE MISTAKES OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

AT or near the beginning of the present century all the books called Hermetic were loudly proclaimed and set down as simply a *collection of tales, of fraudulent pretences and most absurd claims*, being, in the opinion of the average man of science, unworthy of serious attention. They "never existed before the Christian era," it was said; "they were all written with the triple object of speculation, deceit and pious fraud"; they were all, the best of them, silly *apocrypha*. In this respect, the nineteenth century proved a most worthy progeny of the eighteenth. For in the age of Voltaire, as well as in this, everything that did not emanate direct from the Royal Academy was false, superstitious and foolish, and belief in the wisdom of the Ancients was laughed to scorn, perhaps more even than it is now. The very thought of accepting as authentic the works and vagaries of a *false Hermes, a false Orpheus, a false Zoroaster, of false Oracles, false Sibyls*, and a thrice *false Mesmer* and his absurd "fluids," was tabooed all along the line. Thus all that had its genesis outside the learned and dogmatic precincts of Oxford and Cambridge,¹ or the Academy of France, was denounced in those days as "unscientific" and "ridiculously absurd." This tendency has survived to the present day.

¹ We think we see the sidereal phantom of the old philosopher and mystic, Henry More, once of Cambridge University, moving about in the astral mist, over the old moss-covered roofs of the ancient town from which he wrote his famous letter to Glanvil about "witches." The soul seems restless and indignant, as on that day, May the 5th, 1678, when the Doctor complained so bitterly to the author of *Sadducismus Triumphatus* of Scot, Adie and Webster: "Our new inspired saints," the soul is heard to mutter, "sworn advocates of the witches, who . . . against all sense and reason . . . will have even no Samuel in the scene but a confederate knave . . . these inblown buffoons, puffed up with . . . ignorance, vanity and stupid infidelity." (See *Letters to Glanvil*, quoted in *Isis Unveiled* I, p. 206.)

One feels dwarfed and humbled in reading what the great modern “Destroyer” of every religious belief, past, present and future—M. Renan—has to say of poor humanity and its powers of discernment. “Mankind,” he believes, “has but a very narrow mind; and the number of men capable of seizing acutely (*fine-merit*) the true analogy of things is quite imperceptible” (*Etudes Religieuses*). Upon comparing, however, this statement with another opinion expressed by the same author, namely, that “the mind of the true critic should yield, hands and feet bound, to facts, to be dragged by them wherever they may lead him” (*Etudes Historiques*),² one feels relieved. When, moreover, these two philosophical statements are strengthened by that third enunciation of the famous Academician, who declares that “tout parti pris *a priori* doit être banni de la science,” there remains little to fear. Unfortunately M. Renan is the first to break the golden rule.

The evidence of Herodotus, called, sarcastically no doubt, “the father of history,” since in every question upon which modern thought disagrees with him his testimony goes for naught; the sober and earnest assurances in the philosophical narratives of Plato and Thucydides, Polybius and Plutarch, and even certain statements of Aristotle himself; all these are invariably laid aside whenever they are involved with what modern criticism is pleased to regard as a *myth*. It is some time since Strauss proclaimed that “the presence of a supernatural element or miracle in a narrative is an *infallible sign of the presence in it of a myth*,” and such is the criterium adopted tacitly by every modern critic. But what is a myth—(*)—to begin with? Are we not told distinctly by the ancient classics that *mythus* is equivalent to the word *tradition*? Was not its Latin equivalent the term *fabula*, a fable, a synonym with the Romans of that which was *told*, as having happened in prehistoric time, and not necessarily an invention? Yet with such autocrats of criticism and despotic rulers as M. Renan in France, and most of the English and German Orientalists, there may be no end of surprises in store for us in the century to come—historical, geographical, ethnological and philological surprises—travesties in

2 Memolre read at the Academie des Inscriptions et des Belles Lettres, 1859.

philosophy having become so common of late that we can be startled by nothing in that direction. We have already been told by one learned speculator that Homer was simply a mythical personification of the Epopee,⁸ by another that Hippocrates, son of Esculapius “*could only be a chimera*,” that the Asclepiadse—their seven hundred years of duration notwithstanding—might after all prove simply *a fiction*; that the city of Troy—Dr. Schlietmann notwithstanding—“existed *only* on the maps,” etc., etc. Why should we not be invited after this to regard every hitherto historical character in days of old as a myth? Were not Alexander the Great needed by philology as a sledge-hammer to break the heads of Brahmanical chronological pretensions, he would have become long ago simply a symbol for annexation, or a genius of Conquest, as De Mirville neatly put it.

Blank denial is the only means left, the most secure refuge and asylum, to shelter for some little time to come the last of the sceptics. When one denies unconditionally it becomes unnecessary to go to the trouble of arguing, and, what is worse, of having to yield occasionally a point or two before the irrefutable arguments and facts of one’s opponent. Creuzer, greatest of the symbologists of his time, the most learned among the masses of erudite German mythologists, must have envied the placid self-confidence of certain sceptics, when he found himself forced in a moment of desperate perplexity to admit, “Decidedly and first of all we are compelled to return to the theories of trolls and genii, as they were understood by the ancients, a doctrine without which it is absolutely impossible to explain to oneself anything with regard to the mysteries.”⁴

Occultism, all over the globe, is intimately connected with Chaldean Wisdom, and its records show the forefathers of the Aryan Brahmans in the sacred offices of the Chaldees—an Adept caste (different from the Babylonian Chaldeans and *Caldees*)—at the head of the arts and sciences, of astronomers and seers, confabulating with the “stars,” and “receiving instructions from the brilliant sons of Ilu” (the *concealed* deity). Their sanctity of life and great learning—the latter

3 See Alfred Maury’s *Grece*, Vol. I, p. 248, and the speculations of Holymann.

4 Creuzer’s *Introduction des Mysteres*, Vol. III, p. 456.

passing to posterity—made the name for long ages a synonym of Science. Yes; they were indeed *mediators* between the people and the appointed messengers of heaven, *whose bodies* shine in the starry heavens, and they were the interpreters of their wills. But is this Astrolatry or Sabeian-ism? Have they worshipped *the stars we see*, or is it the modern (following in this the mediaeval) Roman Catholics, who, guilty of the same worship *to the letter*, and having borrowed it from the later Chaldees, the Lebanon Nabatheans and the baptized Sabeans (not from the learned Astronomers and Initiates of the days of old), would now veil it by anathematizing the source whence it came? Theology and Churchianism would fain trouble the clear spring that fed them from the first, to prevent posterity from looking into it and thus seeing their reflection. The Occultists, however, believe the time has come to give every one his due. As to our other opponents—the modern sceptic and the epicurean, the cynic and the Sadducee—they may find our answer to their denials in our earlier writings (see *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I, p. 535). We say now what we said then, in reply to the many unjust aspersions thrown on the ancient doctrines: “The thought of the present day commentator and critic as to the ancient learning is limited to and runs round the *exotericism* of the temples; his insight is either unwilling or unable to penetrate into the solemn adyta of old, where the hierophant instructed the neophyte to regard the public worship in its true light. No ancient sage would have taught that man is the king of creation, and that the starry heaven and our mother earth were created for his sake.”

When we find such works as the *Rivers of Life* and *Phallicism* appearing in our day in print, under the auspices of Materialism, it is easy to see that the day for concealment and travesty has passed away. Science in philology, symbolism, and comparative religions has progressed too far to deny any longer, and the Church is too wise and cautious not to be now making the best of the situation. Meanwhile, the “rhombs of Hecate” and the “wheels of Lucifer,”⁵ daily exhumed on the site of Babylon, can no longer be used as a clear evidence of Satan-worship, since the same symbols are shown in the ritual of the

5 De Mirville's Pneumatologie, “Religion des Demons.”

Latin Church. The latter is too learned to be ignorant of the fact that even the later Chaldees, who had gradually fallen into dualism, reducing all things to two primal principles, had no more worshipped Satan or idols than have the Zoroastrians, who are now accused of the same, but that their religion was as highly philosophical as any; their dual and exoteric Theosophy became the heirloom of the Jews, who, in their turn, were forced to share it with the Christians. Parsis are charged to this day with heliolatry, and yet in the *Chaldean Oracles*, under the “Magical and Philosophical Precepts” of Zoroaster, the following is found:

Direct not thy mind to the vast measures of the earth;
For the plant of truth is not upon ground.
Nor measure the measures of the sun, collecting rules,
For he is carried by the eternal will of the Father, not for
your sake.
Dismiss the impetuous course of the moon;
For she runs always by the work of necessity.
The progression of the stars was not generated for your sake.⁶

There is a vast difference between the *true* worship taught to those who showed themselves worthy, and the state religions. The Magians are accused of all kinds of superstition, but the *Chaldean Oracle* proceeds:

The wide aerial flight of birds is not true,
Nor the dissections of the entrails of victims; they are all
mere toys,
If you would open the sacred paradise of piety,
Where virtue, wisdom, and equity are assembled.

Surely it is not those who warn people against “mercenary fraud” who can be accused of it; as said elsewhere: “If they accomplished acts which seem miraculous, who can with fairness presume to deny that it was done merely because they possessed a knowledge of natural philosophy and psychological science to a degree unknown to our schools.” The above-quoted stanzas form a rather strange teaching

6 Psellus, 4. See Cory's Ancient Fragments, p. 269, 2nd Ed.

to come from those who are universally believed to have worshipped the sun, and moon, and the starry host, as Gods. The sublime profundity of the Magian precepts being beyond the reach of modern materialistic thought, the Chaldean philosophers are accused, together with the ignorant masses, of Sabeanism and sun-worship, cults which were simply those of the uneducated masses.

Things of late have changed, true enough; the field of investigation has widened; old religions are a little better understood; and, since that memorable day when the Committee of the French Academy, headed by Benjamin Franklin, investigated Mesmer's phenomena but to proclaim them charlatanry and clever knavery, both "heathen philosophy" and mesmerism have acquired certain rights and privileges, and are now viewed from quite a different standpoint. Is full justice rendered them withal, and are they appreciated any better? We are afraid not. Human nature is the same now, as when Pope said of the force of prejudice, that:

The difference is as great between
The optics seeing, as the objects seen.
All manners take a tincture from our own.
Or some discolour'd through our passion shown,
Or fancy's beam enlarges, multiplies,
Contracts, inverts, and gives ten thousand dyes.

Thus, in the first decades of our century, Hermetic Philosophy was regarded by both Churchmen and men of science from two quite opposite points of view. The former called it sinful and devilish, the latter denied point-blank its authenticity, notwithstanding the evidence brought forward by the most erudite men of every age, including our own. The learned Father Kircher, for one, was not even noticed; and his assertion, that all the fragments known under the titles of works by Mercury Trismegistus, Berosus, Pherecydes of Syros, etc., were rolls escaped from the fire that devoured one hundred thousand volumes of the great Alexandrian Library, was simply laughed at. Nevertheless, the educated classes of Europe knew then, as they do now, that the famous Alexandrian Library—"the marvel of the ages"—was founded by Ptolemy Philadelphus; and that most of its

MSS. were carefully copied from hieratic texts and the oldest parchments, Chaldean, Phoenician, Persian, etc., these transliterations and copies amounting in their turn to another hundred thousand, as Josephus and Strabo assert.

Moreover, there is the additional evidence of Clemens Alexandrinus, that ought to be credited to some extent,⁷ and he testifies to the existence of thirty thousand additional volumes of the Books of Thoth, placed in the library of the tomb of Osymandias, over the entrance of which were inscribed the words, "A Cure for the Soul."

Since then, as everyone knows, entire texts out of the "apocryphal" works of the "false" Pymander, and the no less "false" Asclepiades, were found by Champollion inscribed within the most ancient monuments of Egypt. After having devoted their whole lives to the study of the records of the old Egyptian wisdom, both Champollion-Figeac and Champollion Junior, publicly declared, notwithstanding many biased judgments, hazarded by certain hasty and unwise critics, that the *Books of Hermes*:

Truly contain a mass of Egyptian traditions which are constantly corroborated by the most authentic records and monuments of the Egypt of the hoariest antiquity, and are only the faithful copies of what is found in those books.

None will question the merit of Champollion as an Egyptologist,

7 The forty-two Sacred Books of the Egyptians, mentioned by Clement of Alexandria, as having existed in his time, were but a portion of the Books of Hermes, lam-blichus, on the authority of the Egyptian priest Abammon, attributes twelve hundred, and Manetho thirty-six thousand, of such Books to Hermes. But the testimony of lam-blichus, as a Neo-Platonist and theurgist, is of course rejected by modern critics. Manetho, who is held by Bunsen in the highest consideration as a "purely historical personage," with whom "none of the later native historians can be compared" (see Egypte, i. p. 97), suddenly became a Pseudo-Manetho, as soon as the ideas propounded by him clashed with the scientific prejudices against Magic and the Occult knowledge claimed by the ancient priests. However, none of the archaeologists doubt for a moment the almost incredible antiquity of the Hermetic books. Champollion shows the greatest regard for their authenticity and truthfulness, corroborated as they are by many of the oldest monuments. And Bunsen brings irrefutable proofs of their age. From his researches, for instance, we learn that there was a line of sixty-one kings before the days of Moses, who preceded the Mosaic period by a clearly-traceable civilization of several thousand years. Thus we are warranted in believing that the works of Hermes Trismegistus were extant many ages before the birth of the Jewish law-giver: "Styli and inkstands were found on monuments of the Fourth Dynasty, the oldest in the world," says Bunsen. If the eminent Egyptologist rejects the period of 48,863 years before Alexander, to which Diogenes Laertius carries back the records of the priests, he is evidently more embarrassed with the ten thousand of astronomical observations, and remarks that "if they were actual observations, they must have extended over 10,000 years" (p. 14). "We learn, however," he adds, "from one of their own old chronological works . . . that the genuine Egyptian traditions concerning the mythological period, treated of myriads of years" (Egypte, i. p. 15).

and if he declares that everything demonstrates the accuracy of the writings of the mysterious Hermes Trismegistus, that their antiquity runs back into the night of time, and that they are corroborated in their minutest details, then indeed criticism ought to be fully satisfied. “These inscriptions,” says Champollion, “are only the faithful echo and expression of the most ancient verities.”⁸

Since this was written by him some of the *apocryphal* verses by the *mythical* Orpheus have also been found copied word for word in certain inscriptions of the Fourth Dynasty in hieroglyphics, addressed to various deities.

Finally, Creuzer discovered and pointed out the numerous passages borrowed from Orphic hymns by Hesiod and Homer; and Christians appealed, in their turn, to the testimony of iEschylus, as showing “prescience in at least one of the Sibyls of old,” says De Mirville.⁹

Thus gradually the ancient claims came to be vindicated, and modern criticism had to submit to evidence. Many are now the writers who confess that such kind of literature as the Hermetic works of Egypt can never be dated *too far* back into the prehistoric ages. It was also found that the texts of many of those ancient works—*Enoch* included—deemed and so loudly proclaimed apocryphal just at the beginning of this century, are now discovered and recognized in the most secret and sacred sanctuaries of Chaldea, India, Phoenicia, Egypt and Central Asia.

But even such proofs have failed to convince Materialism. The reason for it is very simple and self-evident. Those texts, studied and held in universal veneration at one time, copied and transcribed by every philosopher, and found in every temple; often mastered, whole lives of incessant mental labour having been devoted to them, by the greatest sages living, by statesmen and classic writers, kings and renowned Adepts—what were they? Treatises on *Magic* and *Occultism*, pure and simple; the now tabooed and derided Theosophy and Occult Sciences, laughed to scorn by modern Materialism. Were the people so simple and credulous in the days of Plato and Pythagoras?

⁸ Egypte, 143

⁹ Pneumatologie, vi. Section 2, Prometheus.”

Were the millions of Babylonia and Egypt, of India and Greece, during the periods of learning and civilization that preceded the year *One* of our era (giving birth but to the intellectual darkness of the fanaticism of the Middle Ages), so simple and credulous that so many, otherwise great, men should have devoted their lives to an illusion, a mere hallucination? It would seem so, had we to be content with the word and conclusions of our modern philosophers.

However, every art and science, whatever its intrinsic merit, must have had a discoverer, and subsequently proficient in it to teach it to others. What is the origin of Occultism? Who are its most renowned professors? and what is known of these, whether in history or legend? We find Clemens Alexandrinus, one of the most learned and intelligent of the early Church Fathers, putting these same questions and answering them. “If,” correctly argues that ex-pupil of the Neo-Platonic school and its philosophers, “if there is a science, there must necessarily be a professor of it”. And he goes on to say that Cleanthes had Zeno to teach him; Theophrastus, Aristotle; Metrodorus, Epicurus; Plato, Socrates, etc.; and that when he looked further back to Pythagoras, Phere-cydes and Thales, he had still to search and enquire who were their master and masters. The same for the Egyptians, the Indians, the Babylonians, and the Magi themselves. He would not cease questioning, he says, in order to learn who it was *they* all had for their masters. And when he should have forcibly brought down the enquiry to the very cradle of mankind, to the birth of the first man, he would reiterate once more his questioning, and ask him (Adam, no doubt) “who had been *his* professor?” Surely, argues Clemens, “his master would turn out no *man* this once,” and even when we should have reached as high as the angels, the same query would have to be offered to them: “who were *their* [meaning the *divine* and the *fallen* angels] masters and doctors of Sciences?”¹⁰

The aim of the good Father’s long argument is of course to discover *two* distinct Masters, one the preceptor of Biblical Patriarchs, the other, the teacher of the Gentiles. But the Secret Doctrine need go to no such trouble. *Her* professors are well aware who were the Masters

¹⁰ Strom., i. vi.

of their predecessors in Occult Sciences and Wisdom.

The two Professors are finally traced out by Clement, and they are, as might be expected, God, and His eternal and everlasting enemy and opponent, the Devil; the subject of Clement's enquiry relating to the dual aspect of the Hermetic Philosophy as cause and effect. Admitting the moral beauty and virtues preached in every Occult work he was acquainted with, Clement wants to know the cause of the apparent contradiction between doctrine and practice, good and bad Magic, and he comes to the conclusion that Magic has two origins—*divine* and *diabolical*. He perceives its bifurcation into two channels; hence his inference and deduction.

We perceive it too, without necessarily designating this bifurcation the "*left Path*"; we judge it as it issued from the hands of its founder. Otherwise, judging also by the effects of Clemens' own religion, and the walk in life of certain of its professors since the death of their Master, the Occultists would have a right to come to about the same conclusion, and say that while Christ, the Master of all *true* Christians, was in every way godly, those who resorted to the horrors of the Inquisition, to the extermination and torture of heretics, Jews, and Alchemists, the Protestant Calvin who burned Servetus, and the Catholic and Protestant persecuting successors, down to the whippers and burners of witches in America, must have had for *their* Master the Devil. But Occultists, not believing in the Devil, are precluded from retaliating in this way. Clemens' testimony, however, is valuable in so far as it shows (1) the enormous number of works on Occult Sciences extant in his day; and (2) the extraordinary powers acquired through those sciences by certain men.

He devotes the whole of his sixth volume of the *Stromateis* to this research of the first two "Masters" of the true and the false philosophies respectively, both preserved in the sanctuaries of Egypt. And thereupon he apostrophizes the Greeks, asking why they should not believe in the miracles of Moses when their own philosophers claim the same privileges. "It is yEacus," he says, "obtaining through his powers a marvellous rain; it is Aristaeus who causes the winds to

blow, Empedocles quieting the gale, and forcing it to cease,"¹¹ etc., etc.

The books of Mercurius Trismegistus attracted his attention the most. Their extreme wisdom, he remarks, ought always to be in everyone's mouth.¹² He is loud in his praise of Hystaspes (or Gushtasp), and of the Sibylline Books and even of astrology.

There have been use and abuse of Magic in all ages, as there are use and abuse of Mesmerism or Hypnotism in our own. The ancient world had its Apolloniuses and its Pherecydes, and intellectual people could discriminate between them, as they can now. While not one classic or pagan writer has ever found one word of blame for Apollonius of Tyana, for instance, it is not so with regard to Pherecydes. Hesychius of Miletus, Philo of Byblos and Eustathius charge him with having built his philosophy and science on demoniacal traditions. Cicero declares that Pherecydes is, *potius divinus quam medicus*, "rather a soothsayer than a physician"; and Diogenes Laertius gives a vast number of stories relating to his predictions. One day Pherecydes of Syros prophesies the shipwreck of a vessel hundreds of miles away from him; another time he predicts the capture of the Lacedaemonians by the Arcadians; finally, he foresees his own wretched end.¹³

Such imputations as these prove very little, except, perhaps, the presence of clairvoyance and prevision in every age. Had it not been for the evidence brought forward by his own co-religionists, that Pherecydes abused his powers, there would have been no proof at all against him, either of sorcery or of any other malpractice. Such evidence as is given by Christian writers is of no value. Baronius, for instance, and De Mirville find an unanswerable proof of demonology in the belief of a philosopher in the coeternity of matter with spirit. Says De Mirville:

¹¹ Therefore Empedocles is called (*)—"the dominator of the wind!"—Diogenes, L. 8. 60.

¹² See Stroma., I, vi. ch. iv.

¹³ Diogenes, L. i. i, § 146.

Pherecydes, postulating in principle the primordially of Zeus or Ether, and then admitting on the same plane another principle, coeternal and co-working with the first one, which he calls the fifth element, or *Ogenos*—thus confesses that he gets his powers from Satan . . . for *Ogenos* is *Hades*, and *Hades* is— our Christian Hell.

The first statement is “known to every school-boy” without De Mirville going to the trouble of explaining it; as to the deduction, every Occultist will deny it point-blank, and only smile at the folly. But now we come to the conclusion.

The *resume* of the views of the Latin Church—as given by various authors of the same type as the Marquis—is that the Hermetic Books—their wisdom notwithstanding, and this wisdom is fully admitted in Rome—are “the heirloom left by Cain, the accursed, to mankind.” It is “absolutely proven,” says a modern memorialist of “Satan in History,” “that immediately after the flood, Ham and his descendants had propagated anew the ancient teachings of the accursed Cainites and of the submerged Race.” This proves, at any rate, that Magic, or Sorcery as he calls it, is an Antediluvian Art, and thus one point is gained. For, as he says, “the evidence of Berosus is there” (*Antiq.* i. 3), and he shows Ham to be identical with the first Zoroaster(I), the famous founder of Bactria (!), and the first author of all the Magic Arts of Babylonia. Zoroaster, on the same authority, is the *Chemesenua* or Ham (Cham),¹⁴ the *infamous*,¹⁵ who left the faithful and loyal Noachians, the blessed, and he is the object of the adoration of the Egyptians, who after receiving from him their country’s name *Chemia* (chemistry?), built in his honour a town called *Chemmis*, or the “city of fire.”¹⁶ Ham adored fire, it is said, whence the name

¹⁴ The English-speaking people who spell the name of Noah’s disrespectful son “Ham,” have to be reminded that the right spelling is Kham, or Cham.

¹⁵ Black Magic, or Sorcery, is the evil result obtained in any shape or way through the practice of Occult Arts; hence it has to be judged only by its effects. The name of Ham or Cain, when pronounced, has never killed anyone; whereas, if we are to believe that same Clemens /Hexandrinus, who traces the professor of every Occultist, outside Christianity, to the Devil, the name of Jehovah (pronounced Jevo and in a peculiar way) had the effect of killing any man at a distance. The mysterious Schemhamphorasch were not always used for holy purposes by the Kabalists, especially on the Sabbath, or Saturday, sacred to Saturn or the evil Shani.

¹⁶ Chemmis, the prehistoric city, may or may not have been built by Noah’s son, but it was not his name that was given to the town, but that of the mystery goddess Khosmnu or Choemnis (Greek form), the deity that was created by the ardent fancy of the neophyte, who was thus tantalized during his “twelve labours” of probation before his final initiation. Her male counterpart is Khem; Chemmis or Khemmis (today Akhmim) was the chief seat of the god Khem. The Greeks, identifying Khem with Pan, called this city Panopolis.

Chammaim, given to the pyramids; which, in their turn, having become vulgarized, passed on their name to our modern “chimney” (cheminee).¹⁷

This statement is entirely wrong. Egypt was the cradle of chemistry and its birthplace—this is pretty well known by this time. Kenrick and others show the root of the word to be *chemi* or *chem*, which is not *Cham* or *Ham*, but *Khem*, the Egyptian Phallic God of the Mysteries.

But this is not all. De Mirville is bent upon finding a Satanic origin even for the now innocent Tarot.

As to the means for the propagation of this Magic—the bad, diabolical Magic—tradition points it out to us in certain Runic characters traced on metallic plates [or leaves, *des lames*], which escaped destruction in the deluge.¹⁸ This might have been regarded as legendary had not subsequent discoveries shown it far from being so. Plates were found with other such Runic and Satanic characters traced upon them, and these being exhumed, were recognized [?]. They were covered with queer signs, utterly indecipherable and of undeniable antiquity, to which the Hamites [Sorcerers—with the author] attribute marvellous and terrible powers.¹⁹

We may leave the pious Marquis to his own orthodox beliefs, as he, at any rate, seems quite sincere in his views; nevertheless, his able arguments will have to be sapped at their foundation, for it must be shown on mathematical grounds *who*, or rather *what*, Cain and Ham really were. De Mirville is only the faithful son of his Church, interested in keeping Cain in his anthropomorphic character and present place in Holy Writ. The student of Occultism, on the other hand, is solely interested in the truth. But the age has to follow the natural course of its evolution. As I said in *Isis*:

We are at the bottom of a cycle and evidently in a transitory state. Plato divides the intellectual progress of the universe during every cycle into

¹⁷ Pneumatologie, Vol. II, p. 210. This looks more like pious vengeance than phil. ology. The picture, however, is incomplete, as the author ought to have added to the “chimney” a witch flying out of it on a broomstick.

¹⁸ How could they escape from the deluge—unless God so willed it?

¹⁹ There is a curious work in Russia, written in the Slavonian Sacerdotal language, by the famous Archbishop Peter, on Mogela (the tomb). It is a book of Exorcisms (and, at the same time, Evocations) against the dark powers that trouble the monks and nuns in preference to all. Some who had the good fortune to get it—for its sale is strictly forbidden and kept secret—tried to read it aloud for the purposes of exorcising these powers. Some became lunatics; others died at the sight of what took place. A lady got it by paying two thousand roubles for an incomplete copy. She used it once, and then threw it into the fire the same day, thereafter becoming deadly pale whenever the book was mentioned.

fertile and barren periods. In the sublunary regions, the spheres of the various elements remain eternally in perfect harmony with the divine nature, he says; “but their parts,” owing to a too close proximity to earth, and their commingling with the *earthly* (which is matter, and therefore the realm of evil), “are sometimes according, and sometimes contrary to (divine) nature.” When those circulations—which Eliphas Levi calls “currents of the astral light”—in the universal ether which contains in itself every element, take place in harmony with the divine spirit, our earth and everything pertaining to it enjoys a fertile period. The occult powers of plants, animals, and minerals magically sympathize with the “superior natures,” and the divine soul of man is in perfect intelligence with these “inferior” ones. But during the barren periods, the latter lose their magic sympathy, and the spiritual sight of the majority of mankind is so blinded as to lose every notion of the superior powers of its own divine spirit. We are in a barren period; the eighteenth century, during which the malignant fever of scepticism broke out so irrepressibly, has entailed unbelief as an hereditary disease upon the nineteenth. The divine intellect is veiled in man; his animal brain alone *philosophizes*.

H.P.B.

Revue Theosophique, April 21, 1889

A SIGNAL OF DANGER

Initiates are sure to come into the company of the gods.

—SOCRATES IN THE *PHAEDO*

IN the first number of the *Revue Theosophique* in the initial portion of the fine lecture of our brother and colleague, the erudite Correspondent-Secretary of the T.S. *Hermes*, we read in the footnote (fn. 2, p. 23):

We designate under the term *Initiate* every seeker in the possession of the elementary principles of the Occult Science. One must beware lest he confuse this term with that of *Adept*, which indicates the highest degree of elevation to which the initiate may attain. We have in Europe many Initiates. I do not think that there exist any adepts as in the Orient.

Foreign to the genius of the French language, not even having at hand a dictionary of etymology, it is impossible for me to say if this double definition is authorized in French except in the terminology of the Free-Masons. But in English, as in the sense that usage has sanctioned among Theosophists and occultists in India, these two terms have a sense absolutely different from the one given by the author. I mean to say that the definition as given by M. Papus to the word *Adept* is the one which applies to the word *Initiate* and *vice-versa*.

I would never have thought of correcting this error—in the eyes of Theosophists at least—if it had not threatened in my opinion to throw into the minds of the subscribers to our *Revue*, a very regrettable confusion in the future.

As I was the first one to employ these two adjectives (*qualificatifs*) in a sense entirely opposed to the meaning lent to them by Masons and M. Papus there would certainly result some *equivocations* (*quiproquos*) which must be avoided at all costs. Let us understand

ourselves first if we want to be understood by our readers.

Let us halt at a fixed and invariable definition of the terms which we employ in Theosophy; because otherwise instead of order and clarity, we would only bring a greater confusion into the already existing chaos of the ideas of the profane world.

Not being cognizant of the reasons which caused our wise brother to use said terms in the manner that he uses them, I take to task the “Sons of the Widow” who use the terms in a sense entirely the reverse of the true sense.

Everybody knows that the word “Adept” comes from the Latin *Adeptus*. This term is derived from the two words, *ad* “of” and *Apisci* “to pursue” (Sanskrit *ap*)

An *Adept* would then be a person versed in a certain art or science acquired in one manner or another. It follows that this qualification can be applied as well to an adept in astronomy as to an adept in the art of making pates de foies gras (chopped liver); a shoemaker as a perfumer, the one versed in the art of making boots, the other in the art of chemistry—are “adepts.”

As to the term *Initiate*, it is quite another matter. Every *Initiate* must be an adept in occultism; he must become one before being initiated in the Great Mysteries. But every adept is not always an *Initiate*. It is true that the *Illuminati* used the term *Adeptus* in speaking of themselves, but they did so in a general sense—*e.g.*, in the seventh degree of the order of the Rite of Zimmendorf. Thus were used the terms *Adeptatus*, *Adeptus Cor-onatus* in the seventh degree of the Swedish rite; and *Adeptus Exemptus* in the seventh degree of the Rosie-Cross. This is an innovation of the Middle Ages. But no real *Initiate* of The Great (or even the Lesser) Mysteries, is called in the classical works *Adeptus*, but *Initiatus* in Latin, and *Epopte* in Greek. These same *Illuminati* treated as *Initiates* only those of their brothers who were more instructed than the others in the mysteries of their Society. It was only the less instructed among them who had the name *Mystes* and *Adeptes* inasmuch as they were as yet only admitted to the inferior degrees.

Let us pass now to the term “initiate.”

Let us first say that there is a great difference between the verb and the substantive (*substantif*) of this word. A professor initiates his pupil into the first elements of a certain science, a science in which the student may become adept, that is, versed in its speciality. On the other hand, an adept in occultism is first *instructed* in the religious mysteries, after which, if he is lucky enough not to succumb during the terrible trials of initiation, he becomes an *INITIATE*. The best classical translators invariably render the Greek by this phrase: “Initiated in the Great Mysteries”; for this term is synonymous with *Hierophant*, “*he who explains the sacred mysteries.*” *Initiatus* among the Romans was equivalent to the term *Mystagogus* and both were absolutely reserved for the one who in the Temple initiated others into the highest mysteries. He represented, therefore, figuratively, the Universal Creator. None dared pronounce this name before the profane. The place of the “*Initiatus*” was to the Orient, where he was seated, a globe about or suspended from his neck. The Free-Masons tried to imitate the *Hierophant-Initiatus* in the person of their “Venerables” and *Grand Masters* of the Lodges.

But does the cowl make the monk?

It is to be regretted that they did not content themselves with this sole profanation.

The substantive French (and English) “initiation” being derived from the Latin word *initium*, commencement, the Masons with more respect for the dead letter *that kills* than for the spirit which gives life have applied the term “initiate” to all their neophytes or candidates—to the beginners—in all the Masonic degrees—the highest as well as the lowest.

Yet they knew better than anyone that the term *Initiatus* pertained to the 5th and to the highest degree of the order of the Templars; that the title *Initiate in the mysteries* was the 21st degree of the metropolitan chapter in France; in the same manner as that of the *Initiate in the profound mysteries* indicated the 62nd degree of the same chapter. Knowing all this, they nevertheless applied this title, sacred and sanctified by its antiquity, to their simple candidates—the infants (*bambins*), among the “Sons of the Widow.” But because the

passion for innovations and modifications of all kinds accomplished for the Masons what an occultist of the Orient regards as a veritable sacrilege, is this a reason for the Theosophists to accept their terminology?

We, disciples of the Masters of the Orient, have naught to do with modern Masonry. The real secrets of symbolical Masonry are lost—as Ragon so well proves. The keystone (*clef de voute*), the central stone of the arch built by the first royal dynasties of the Initiates—ten times prehistorical—found itself shaken since the abolition of the last mysteries. The work of destruction, or rather of strangling and choking commenced by the Caesars, was finally achieved in Europe, by the Church Fathers. Imported once more, since, from the sanctuaries of the Far East, the sacred stone was cracked and finally broken into a thousand pieces.

On whom shall the blame for this crime fall ?

Shall it be on the Free-Masons, the Templars especially—persecuted, assassinated and violently divested of their annals and written statutes ? Shall it be on the Church, which having appropriated the dogmas and rituals of primitive Masonry, passed them off as its own travestied rites, as the sole TRUTH and resolved to smother the latter ?

Be that as it may, it is no longer the Masons who have all of the truth whether we place the blame on Rome or the insect *Shermah*¹ of the famous temple of Solomon which modern Masonry vindicates as base and origin of its order.

For decades of thousands of years the genealogical tree of the sacred science which the peoples possessed in common, was the same—for the temple of this science is ONE and is built on the unshakeable rock of primitive truths. But the Masons of the last two centuries preferred to divorce themselves from it. Once more, and

¹ From a Jewish tradition, the stones that served to build the temple of Solomon (an allegorical symbol taken literally of which an actual edifice was made) were not cut and polished by hand of man but by a worm named Samis created by God for this purpose. These stones were miraculously transported on the spot where the temple was to rise and cemented henceforth by the angels who raised the Temple of Solomon. The Masons have introduced the Worm Samis in their legendary history and call it the "insect Shermah."

applying this time the practice to the allegory, they have broken the cube which divided itself into twelve parts. They have rejected the real stone for the false, and whatever they did with the first—their *angular stone*—it was certainly not according to the spirit that gives life but *according to the dead letter that kills*.

Is it again the Worm Samis (alias the "insect *Shermah*") of which the traces on the rejected stone had already led into error the "builders of the Temple" that gnawed the same lines? But this time what was done was done with full knowledge. The builders must have known the total² by heart to judge by the *thirteen* lines or *five* surfaces.

No matter! We faithful disciples of the East prefer to all these stones a stone that has naught to do with all the other mummeries of the Masonic degrees.

We will adhere to the *Eben Shatijah* (having another name in Sanskrit), the perfect cube which while containing the *delta* or triangle, replaces the name of the Tetragrammaton of the Kabal-ists, by the symbol of the incommunicable name.

We willingly leave to the Masons their "insect"; while hoping for them that modern symbology which marches at such rapid pace, will never discover the identity of the Worm *Shermah-Samis* with Hiram Abif—which would be embarrassing enough.

However, and upon reflection, the discovery would not be without its useful side and not lacking in great charm. The idea of a worm that would be at the head of the Masonic genealogy and of the Architect of the first temple of the Masons, would also make of this worm the "father Adam" of the Masons, and could only render the "Sons of the Widow" the dearer to the Darwinists. This would re-approach them to modern Science, which only looks for proofs of Nature to fortify the theory of Haeckelian evolution. What would it matter to them, after all, once they have lost the secret of their true origin?

No one need decry this assertion which is a well attested fact. I

² This total is composed of a bisected isosceles triangle—three lines—the side of the cube being the base; two squares diagonally bisected having each a perpendicular line toward the center—six lines; two straight lines at right angles; and a diagonally bisected square—two lines; total thirteen lines or five surfaces of the cube.

allow myself to remind Messrs. the Masons who might read this, that as regards *esoteric* Masonry almost all the secrets have disappeared since Elias Ashmole, and his immediate successors. If they seek to contradict us, we will, like Job, tell them, “Thine own mouth condemneth thee, and not I: yea, thine own *books* testify against thee.” (XV, 6).

Our greatest secrets once upon a time were taught in Masonic Lodges, the world over. But their Grand Masters and *Gurus* perished one after the other; and all that remained written in secret manuscripts—like the one of Nicholas Stone, for instance, destroyed in 1720 by some scrupulous brothers—was put to the fire and annihilated between the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries, in England, as well as on the Continent.

Why this destruction?

Certain brothers in England whisper to each other that this destruction was the consequence of a shameful pact entered into by certain Masons and the Church. An aged “brother,” great kabalist, has just died here, whose grandfather, a celebrated Mason, was the intimate friend of Count St. Germain, when the latter was sent, it is said, by Louis XV, to England in 1760, to negotiate peace between the two countries. Count St. Germain left in the hands of this Mason certain documents concerning the history of Masonry and containing the keys of more than one incomprehensible mystery. He did this under the condition that these documents would become the secret inheritance of all his descendents who became Masons. These papers profited two Masons, the father and the son, the one who just died, and will profit no one else in Europe. Before his death, the precious documents were entrusted to an Oriental (a Hindu) whose mission it was to deliver them to a certain person who would come to fetch them at Amritsa, city of Immortality. It is also secretly said that the celebrated founder of the Lodge of the Trinosophes, J. M. Ragon, was also initiated into many mysteries in Belgium by an Oriental—and there are some who assert that he knew in his youth Count St. Germain. This explains, perhaps, why the author of the “*Tuileur General De La Maconnerie*,” or *Manual of the Initiate*, asserted that Elias Ashmole was the real founder of modern Masonry. Nobody knew

better than Ragon the extent of the loss of Masonic secrets, as he himself well says: “It is of the essence and nature of the Mason to search for the light wherever he thinks he can find it,” announces the *circular* of the Grand Orient of France. “In the meanwhile,” he adds, “the Mason is given the glorious title of Child of Light and is left enveloped in obscurity.” (*Cours Philosophique*, etc., p. 60J)

Thus, if as we think, M. Papus has followed the Masons in his definition of the terms *Adept* and *Initiate*, he was wrong, for one does not turn towards “obscurity” when one is himself in a ray of light. Theosophy has invented naught, said nothing new, only faithfully repeating the lessons of the highest antiquity. The terminology, introduced fifteen years ago in the T.S., is the true one, for in each case its terms are a faithful translation of their Sanskrit equivalents, almost as old as the last human race. This terminology could not be modified, at this hour, without the risk of introducing in Theosophical teachings a chaos as deplorable as it is dangerous for their clarity.

Let us remind ourselves especially of these words so true of Ragon:

Initiation had India for a cradle. She has preceded the civilization of Asia and Greece, and in polishing the spirit and the customs of the peoples, she has served as a base for all the laws, civil, political and religious.

The word *Initiate* is the same as *dwija*, the “twice-born” Brahman. That is to say that initiation was considered as birth into a new life or as Apulius says, “it is the ‘resurrection into a new life’, ‘*novam vitam inibaf.*’”

Aside from this, M. Papus’ lecture on the Seal of the Theosophical Society is admirable, and the erudition that he displays is most remarkable. The members of our Fraternity owe him sincere thanks for explanations that are as clear and just as they are interesting.

Lucifer January, 1890

WAS CAGLIOSTRO A "CHARLATAN"?

To send the injured unredressed away,
 How great soe'er the offender, and the
 wrong'd
 Howe'er obscure, is wicked, weak and vile—
 Degrades, defiles, and should dethrone a
 king.

—SMOLLETT

THE mention of Cagliostro's name produces a two-fold effect. With the one party, a whole sequence of marvellous events emerges from the shadowy past; with others the modern progeny of a too realistic age, the name of Alexander, Count Cagliostro, provokes wonder, if not contempt. People are unable to understand that this "enchanter and magician" (read "Charlatan") could ever legitimately produce such an impression as he did on his contemporaries. This gives the key to the posthumous reputation of the Sicilian known as Joseph Balsamo, that reputation which made a believer in him, a brother Mason, say, that (like Prince Bismarck and some Theosophists) "Cagliostro might well be said to be the best abused and most hated man in Europe." Nevertheless, and notwithstanding the fashion of loading him with opprobrious names, none should forget that Schiller and Goethe were among his great admirers, and remained so to their deaths. Goethe while travelling in Sicily devoted much labour and time to collecting information about "Giuseppe Balsamo" in his supposed native land; and it was from these copious notes that the author of Faust wrote his play "The Great Kophta."

Why this wonderful man is receiving so little honour in England, is due to Carlyle. The most fearlessly truthful historian of his age—he,

who abominated falsehood under whatever appearance—has stamped with the *imprimatur* of his honest and famous name, and thus sanctified the most iniquitous of historical injustices ever perpetrated by prejudice and bigotry. This owing to false reports which almost to the last emanated from a class he disliked no less than he hated untruth, namely the Jesuits, or— lie incarnate.

The very name of Giuseppe Balsamo, which, when rendered by cabalistic methods, means "He who was sent," or "The Given," also "Lord of the Sun," shows that such was not his real patronymic. As Kenneth R. H. Mackenzie, F.T.S., remarks, toward the end of the last century it became the fashion with certain theosophical professors of the time to transliterate into Oriental form every name provided by Occult Fraternities for disciples destined to work in the world. Whosoever then, may have been Cagliostro's parents, their name was not "Balsamo." So much is certain, at any rate. Moreover, as all know that in his youth he lived with, and was instructed by, a man named, as is supposed, Althotas, "a great Hermetic Eastern Sage" or in other words an Adept, it is not difficult to accept the tradition that it was the latter who gave him his symbolical name. But that which is known with still more certainty is the extreme esteem in which he was held by some of the most scientific and honoured men of his day. In France we find Cagliostro—having before served as a confidential friend and assistant chemist in the laboratory of Pinto, the Grand Master of the Knights of Malta—becoming the friend and *protege* of the Prince Cardinal de Rohan. A high born Sicilian Prince honoured him with his support and friendship, as did many other noblemen. "Is it possible, then," pertinently asks Mackenzie, "that a man of such engaging manners could have been the lying impostor his enemies endeavoured to prove him?"

The chief cause of his life-troubles was his marriage with Lorenza Feliciani, a tool of the Jesuits; and two minor causes his extreme good nature, and the blind confidence he placed in his friends—some of whom became traitors and his bitterest enemies. Neither of the crimes of which he is unjustly accused could lead to the destruction of his honour and *posthumous* reputation; but all was due to his weakness

for an unworthy woman, and the possession of certain secrets of nature, which he would not divulge to the Church. Being a native of Sicily, Cagliostro was naturally born in a family of Roman Catholics, no matter what their name, and was brought up by monks of the “Good Brotherhood of Castiglione,” as his biographers tell us; thus, for the sake of dear life he had to outwardly profess belief in and respect for a Church, whose traditional policy has ever been, “he who is not *with us* is *against us*,” and forthwith to crush the enemy in the bud. And yet, just for this, is Cagliostro even to-day accused of having served the Jesuits as their spy; and this by Masons who ought to be the last to bring such a charge against a learned Brother who was persecuted by the Vatican even more as a Mason than as an Occultist. Had it been so, would these same Jesuits even to this day vilify his name? Had he served them, would he not have proved himself useful to their ends, as a man of such undeniable intellectual gifts could not have blundered or disregarded *the orders of those whom he served* But instead of this, what do we see? Cagliostro charged with being the most cunning and successful impostor and charlatan of his age; accused of belonging to the Jesuit Chapter of Clermont in France; of appearing (as a proof of his affiliation to the Jesuits) in clerical dress at Rome. Yet, this “cunning impostor” is tried and condemned—by the exertions of those same Jesuits—to an ignominious death, which was changed only subsequently to life-long imprisonment, owing to a mysterious interference or influence brought to bear on the Pope!

Would it not be more charitable and consistent with truth to say that it was his connection with Eastern Occult Science, his knowledge of many secrets—deadly to the Church of Rome—that brought upon Cagliostro first the persecution of the Jesuits, and finally the rigour of the Church? It was his own honesty, which blinded him to the defects of those whom he cared for, and led him to trust two such rascals as the Marquis Agliato and Ottavio Nicastro, that is at the bottom of all the accusations of fraud and imposture now lavished upon him. And it is the sins of these two worthies—subsequently executed for gigantic swindles and murder—which are now made to fall on Cagliostro.

Nevertheless it is known that he and his wife (in 1770) were both left destitute by the flight of Agliato with all their funds, so that they had to beg their way through Piedmont and Geneva. Kenneth Mackenzie has well proven that Cagliostro had never mixed himself up with political intrigue—the very soul of the activities of the Jesuits. “He was most certainly unknown in that capacity to those who have jealously guarded the preparatory archives of the Revolution, and his appearance as an advocate of revolutionary principles has no basis in fact.” He was simply an Occultist and a Mason, and as such he was allowed to suffer at the hands of those who, adding insult to injury, first tried to kill him by life-long imprisonment and then spread the rumour that he had been their ignoble agent. This cunning device was in its infernal craft well worthy of its primal originators.

There are many landmarks in Cagliostro’s biographies to show that he taught the Eastern doctrine of the “principles” in man, of “God” dwelling in man—as a potentiality *in actu* (the “Higher Self”)—and in every living thing and even atom—as a potentiality *in posse*, and that he served the Masters of a Fraternity he *would not* name because on account of his pledge *he could not*. His letter to the new mystical but rather motley Brotherhood the (Lodge of) Philalethes, is a proof in point. The Philalethes, as all Masons know, was a rite founded in Paris in 1773 in the *Loge des Amis Reunis*, based on the principles of Martinism,¹ and whose members made a special study of the Occult Sciences. The Mother Lodge was a philosophical and *theosophical* Lodge, and therefore Cagliostro was right in desiring to purify its progeny, the Lodge of Philalethes. This is what the *Royal Masonic Cyclopaedia* says on the subject:

On the 15 February 1785 the Lodge of Philalethes in solemn Section, with Lavalette de Langes, royal treasurer; Tassin, the banker; and Tassin, an officer in the royal service; opened a Fraternal Convention, at Paris . . . Princes (Russian, Austrian, and others), fathers of the Church, councillors, knights, financiers, barristers, barons, Theosophists, canons, colonels, professors of Magic, engineers, literary men, doctors, merchants, postmasters, dukes, ambassadors, surgeons, teachers of languages, receivers-

¹ The Martinists were Mystics and Theosophists who claimed to have the secret of communicating with (Elemental and Planetary) Spirits of the ultramundane Spheres. Some of them were practical Occultists.

general, and notably two London names—Boosie, a merchant, and Brooks of London—compose this Convention, to whom may be added M. le Count de Cagliostro, and Mesmer “the inventor” as Thory describes him (*Acta Latomorum*, vol. ii. p. 95), “of the doctrine of magnetism!” Surely such an able set of men to set the world to rights, as France never saw before or since!

The grievance of the Lodge was that Cagliostro, who had first promised to take charge of it, withdrew his offers, as the “Convention” would not adopt the Constitutions of the Egyptian Rite, nor would the *Philalethes* consent to have its archives consigned to the flames, which were his conditions *sine qua non*. It is strange that his answer to that Lodge should be regarded by Brother K. R. H. Mackenzie and other Masons as emanating “from a Jesuit source.” The very style is Oriental, and no European Mason—least of all a Jesuit—would write in such a manner. This is how the answer runs

∴ . . . The unknown grand Master of true Masonry has cast his eyes upon the Philaletheans. . . . Touched by the sincere avowal of their desires, he deigns to extend his hand over them, and consents to give a ray of light into the darkness of their temple. It is the wish of the Unknown Great Master, to prove to them the existence of one God—the basis of their faith; the original dignity of man; his powers and destiny. . . . It is by deeds and facts, by the testimony of the senses, that they will know GOD, MAN and the intermediary spiritual beings (principles) existing between them; of which true Masonry gives the symbols and indicates the real road. Let then, the Phil-aethes embrace the doctrines of this real Masonry, submit to the rules of its supreme chief, and adopt its constitutions. But above all let the Sanctuary be purified, let the Philalethes know that light can only descend into the Temple of Faith (based on knowledge), “not into that of Scepticism. Let them devote to the flames that vain accumulation of their archives; for it is only on the ruins of the Tower of Confusion that the Temple of Truth can be erected.

In the Occult phraseology of certain Occultists “Father, Son and Angels” stood for the compound symbol of physical, and astro-Spiritual MAN.² John G. Gichtel (end of XVIIthcent.), the ardent lover of Boehme, the Seer of whom St. Martin relates that he was married “to the heavenly Sophia,” the Divine Wisdom—made use of this term. Therefore, it is easy to see what Cagliostro meant by proving to

2 See the Three Principles and the Seven Forms of Nature by Boehme and fathom their Occult significance, to assure yourself of this.

the Philalethes on the testimony of their “senses,” “God, man and the intermediary Spiritual beings,” that exist between God (*Atma*), and Man (*the Ego*). Nor is it more difficult to understand his true meaning when he reproaches the Brethren in his parting letter which says: “We have offered you the truth; you have disdained it. We have offered it for the sake of itself, and you have refused it *in consequence of a love of forms*. . . Can you elevate yourselves to (*your*) God and the *knowledge of yourselves* by the assistance of a Secretary and a Convocation?” etc.³

Many are the absurd and entirely contradictory statements about Joseph Balsamo, Count de Cagliostro, so-called, several of which were incorporated by Alexander Dumas in his *Memoires (Tun Medicin*, with those prolific variations of truth and fact which so characterize Dumas *peres* romances. But though the world is in possession of a most miscellaneous and varied mass of information concerning that remarkable and unfortunate man during most of his life, yet of the last ten years and of his death, nothing certain is known, save Only the legend that he died in the prison of the Inquisition. True, some fragments published recently by the Italian *savant*, Giovanni Sforza, from the private correspondence of Lorenzo Prospero Bottini, the Roman ambassador of the Republic of Lucca at the end of the last century, have somewhat filled this wide gap. This correspondence with Pietro Calandrini, the Great Chancellor of the said Republic, begins from 1784, but the really interesting information commences only in 1789, in a letter dated June 6, of that year, and even then we do not learn much.

It speaks of the “celebrated Count di Cagliostro, who has recently arrived with his wife from Trent *via* Turin to Rome. People say he is a native of Sicily and extremely wealthy, but no one knows whence that wealth. He has a letter of introduction from the Bishop of Trent to Albani. . . . So far his daily walk in life as well as his private and

3 The statement on the authority of Beswick that Cagliostro was connected with The Loge des Amis Reunis under the name of Count Grabionka is not proven. There was a Polish Count of that name at that time in France, a mystic mentioned in Madame de Krudner’s letters which are with the writer’s family, and one who belonged, as Beswick says, together with Mesmer and Count St. Germain, to the Lodge of the Philalethes. Where are Lavalette de Langes’ Manuscripts and documents left by him after his death to the Philosophic Scottish Rite? Lost?

public status are above reproach. Many are those seeking an interview with him, to hear from his own lips the corroboration of what is being said of him.” From another letter we learn that Rome had proven an ungrateful soil for Cagliostro. He had the intention of settling at Naples, but the plan could not be realised. The Vatican authorities who had hitherto left the Count undisturbed, suddenly laid their heavy hand upon him. In a letter dated 2 January, 1790, just a year after Cagliostro’s arrival, it is stated that: “last Sunday secret and extraordinary debates in council took place at the Vatican.” It (the council) consisted of the State Secretary and Antonelli, Pillotta and Campanelli, Monsignor Figgerenti performing the duty of Secretary. The object of that Secret Council remains unknown, but public rumour asserts that it was called forth owing to the sudden arrest on the night between Saturday and Sunday, of the Count di Cagliostro, his wife, and a Capuchin, Fra Giuseppe Maurijio. The Count is incarcerated in Fort St. Angelo, the Countess in the Convent of St. Apollonia, and the monk in the prison of Araceli. That monk, who calls himself “Father Swiz-zero,” is regarded as a confederate of the famous magician. In the number of the crimes he is accused of is included that of the circulation of a book by an unknown author, condemned to public burning and entitled, “The Three Sisters.” The object of this work is “to pulverize certain three high-born individuals.”

The real meaning of this most extraordinary misinterpretation is easy to guess. It was a work on Alchemy; the “three sisters” standing symbolically for the three “Principles” in their duplex symbolism. On the plane of occult chemistry they “pulverize” the triple ingredient used in the process of the transmutation of metals; on the plane of Spirituality they reduce to a state of pulverization the three “lower” *personal* “principles” in man, an explanation that every Theosophist is bound to understand.

The trial of Cagliostro lasted for a long time. In a letter of March the 17th, Bottini writes to his Lucca correspondent that the famous “wizard” has finally appeared before the Holy Inquisition. The real cause of the slowness of the proceedings was that the Inquisition, with all its dexterity at fabricating proofs, could find no weighty

evidence to prove the guilt of Cagliostro. Nevertheless, on April the 7th, 1791, he was condemned to death. He was accused of various and many crimes, the chiefest of which were his being a Mason and an “Illuminate,” an “Enchanter” occupied with unlawful studies; he was also accused of deriding the *holy* Faith, of doing harm to society, of possessing himself by *means unknown* of large sums of money, and of inciting others, sex, age and social standing notwithstanding, to do the same. In short, we find the unfortunate Occultist condemned to an ignominious death for deeds committed, the like of which are daily and publicly committed now-a-days, by more than one Grand Master of the Masons, as also by hundreds of thousands of Kabbalists and Masons, mystically inclined. After this verdict the “arch heretic’s” documents, diplomas from foreign Courts and Societies, Masonic regalias and *family relics* were solemnly burned by the public hangmen in the *Piazza della Minerva*, before enormous crowds of people. First his books and instruments were consumed. Among these was the MS. on the *Maconnerie Egyptienne*, which thus can no longer serve as a witness *in favour* of the reviled man. And now the condemned Occultist had to be passed over to the hands of the civil Tribunal, when a mysterious event happened.

A stranger, never seen by any one before or after in the Vatican, appeared and demanded a private audience of the Pope, sending him by the Cardinal Secretary a *word* instead of a name. He was immediately received, but only stopped with the Pope for a few minutes. No sooner was he gone than his Holiness gave orders to commute the death sentence of the Count to that of imprisonment for life, in the fortress called the Castle of St. Leo, and that the whole transaction should be conducted in great secrecy. The monk Swizzero was condemned to ten years’ imprisonment; and the Countess Cagliostro was set at liberty, but only to be confined on a new charge of heresy in a convent.

But what was the Castle of St. Leo? It now stands on the frontiers of Tuscany and was then in the Papal States, in the Duchy of Urbino. It is built on the top of an enormous rock, almost perpendicular on all sides; to get into the “Castle” in those days, one had to enter a kind of

open basket which was hoisted up by ropes and pulleys. As to the criminal, he was placed in a special box, after which the jailors pulled him up “with the rapidity of the wind.” On April 23rd, 1792, Giuseppe Balsamo—if so we must call him—ascended *heavenward* in the criminal’s box, incarcerated in that living tomb for life. Giuseppe Balsamo is mentioned for the last time in the Bottini correspondence in a letter dated March 10th, 1792. The ambassador speaks of a marvel produced by Cagliostro in his prison during his leisure hours. A long rusty nail taken by the prisoner out of the floor was transformed by him without the help of any instrument into a sharp triangular *stiletto*, as smooth, brilliant and sharp as if it were made of the finest steel. It was recognized for an old nail only by its head, left by the prisoner to serve as a handle. The State Secretary gave orders to have it taken away from Cagliostro, and brought to Rome, and to double the watch over him.

And now comes the last kick of the jackass at the dying or dead lion. Luiggi Angiolini, a Tuscan diplomat, writes as follows: “At last, that same Cagliostro, who made so many believe that he had been a contemporary of Julius Caesar, who reached such fame and so many friends, died from apoplexy, August 26, 1795. Semironi had him buried in a wood-barn below, whence peasants used to pilfer constantly the crown property. The crafty chaplain reckoned very justly that the man who had inspired the world with such superstitious fear while living, would inspire people with the same feelings after his death, and thus keep the thieves at bay “

But yet—a query! Was Cagliostro dead and buried indeed in 1792, at St. Leo? And if so, why should the custodians at the Castle of St. Angelo, of Rome show innocent tourists the little square hole in which Cagliostro is said to have been confined and “died”? Why such uncertainty or—imposition, and such disagreement in the legend? Then there are Masons who to this day tell strange stories in Italy. Some say that Cagliostro escaped in an unaccountable way from his aerial prison, and thus forced his jailors to spread the news of his death and burial. Others maintain that he not only escaped, but, thanks to the

Elixir of Life, still lives on, though over twice three score and ten years old!

“Why,” asks Bottini, “if he really possessed the powers he claimed, has he not indeed vanished from his jailors, and thus escaped the degrading punishment altogether?”

We have heard of another prisoner, greater in every respect than Cagliostro ever claimed to be. Of that prisoner too, it was said in mocking tones, “He saved others; himself he cannot save. let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe. . . .”

How long shall charitable people build the biographies of the living and ruin the reputations of the dead, with such incomparable unconcern, by means of idle and often entirely false gossip of people, and these generally the slaves of prejudice!

So long, we are forced to think, as they remain ignorant of the Law of Karma and its iron justice.

H.P.B.

Theosophist, June 1881

APOLLONIUS TYANEUS AND SIMON MAGUS

IN the "History of the Christian Religion to the year two hundred/' by Charles B. Waite, A.M., announced and reviewed in the *Banner of Light* (Boston), we find portions of the work relating to the great thaumaturgist of the second century A.D.—Apollonius of Tyana, the rival of whom had never appeared in the Roman Empire.

"The time of which this volume takes special cognizance is divided into six periods, during the second of which, A.D. 80 to A.D. 120, is included the 'Age of Miracles,' the history of which will prove of interest to Spiritualists as a means of comparing the manifestations of unseen intelligences in our time with similar events of the days immediately following the introduction of Christianity. Apollonius Tyaneus was the most remarkable character of that period, and witnessed the reign of a dozen Roman emperors. Before his birth, Proteus, an Egyptian god, appeared to his mother and announced that he was to be incarnated in the coming child. Following the directions given her in a dream, she went to a meadow to gather flowers. While there, a flock of swans formed a chorus around her, and, clapping their wings, sung in unison. While they were thus engaged, and the air was being fanned by a gentle zephyr, Apollonius was born."

This is a *legend* which in days of old made of every remarkable character a "son of God" miraculously born of a virgin. And what follows is *history*. "In his youth he was a marvel of mental power and personal beauty, and found his greatest happiness in conversations with the disciples of Plato, Chrysippus and Aristotle. He ate nothing that had life, lived on fruits and the products of the earth; was an enthusiastic admirer and follower of Pythagoras, and as such maintained silence for five years. Wherever he went he reformed

religious worship and performed wonderful acts. At feasts he astonished the guests by causing bread, fruits, vegetables and various dainties to appear at his bidding. Statues became animated with life, and bronze figures advanced from their pedestals, took the position and performed the labors of servants. By the exercise of the same power dematerialization occurred; gold and silver vessels, with their contents, disappeared; even the attendants vanished in an instant from sight.

"At Rome, Apollonius was accused of treason. Brought to examination, the accuser came forward, unfolded his roll on which the accusation had been written, and was astounded to find it a perfect blank.

"Meeting a funeral procession he said to the attendants, 'Set down the bier, and I will dry up the tears you are shedding for the maid.' He touched the young woman, uttered a few words, and the dead came to life. Being at Smyrna, a plague raged at Ephesus, and he was called thither. 'The journey must not be delayed,' he said, and had no sooner spoken the words than he was at Ephesus.

"When nearly one hundred years old, he was brought before the Emperor at Rome, accused of being an enchanter. He was taken to prison. While there he was asked when he would be at liberty? 'Tomorrow, if it depends on the judge; this instant, if it depends on myself.' Saying this, he drew his leg out of the fetters, and said, 'You see the liberty I enjoy.' He then replaced it in the fetters.

"At the tribunal he was asked: 'Why do men call you a god?'

" 'Because,' said he, 'every man that is good is entitled to the appellation.'

" 'How could you foretell the plague at Ephesus?'

"He replied: 'By living on a lighter diet than other men.'

"His answers to these and other questions by his accusers exhibited such strength that the Emperor was much affected, and declared him acquitted of crime; but said he should detain him in order to hold a private conversation. He replied: 'You can detain my body, but not my soul; and, I will add, not even my body.' Having uttered these

words he vanished from the tribunal, and that same day met his friends at Puteoli, three days' journey from Rome.

“The writings of Apollonius show him to have been a man of learning, with a consummate knowledge of human nature, imbued with noble sentiments and the principles of a profound philosophy. In an epistle to Valerius he says:

“ ‘There is no death of anything except in appearance; and so, also, there is no birth of anything except in appearance. That which passes over from essence into nature seems to be birth, and that which passes over from nature into essence seems, in like manner, to be death; though nothing really is originated, and nothing ever perishes; but only now comes into sight, and now vanishes. It appears by reason of the density of matter, and disappears by reason of the tenuity of essence; but is always the same, differing only in motion and condition.’

“The highest tribute paid to Apollonius was by the Emperor Titus. The philosopher having written to him, soon after his accession, counselling moderation in his government, Titus replied:

“ ‘In my own name and in the name of my country I give you thanks, and will be mindful of those things. I have, indeed, taken Jerusalem, but you have captured me.’

“The wonderful things done by Apollonius, thought to be miraculous, the source and producing cause of which Modern Spiritualism clearly reveals, were extensively believed in, in the second century, and hundreds of years subsequent; and by Christians as well as others. Simon Magus was another prominent miracle-worker of the second century, and no one denied his power. Even Christians were forced to admit that he performed miracles. Allusion is made to him in the Acts of the Apostles, viii: 9-10. His fame was world-wide, his followers in every nation, and in Rome a statue was erected in his honor. He had frequent contests with Peter, what we in this day would call miracle-matches in order to determine which had the greater power. It is stated in ‘The Acts of Peter and Paul’ that Simon made a brazen serpent to move, stone statues to laugh, and himself to rise in

the air; to which is added: ‘as a set-off to this, Peter healed the sick by a word, caused the blind to see, &c.’ Simon, being brought before Nero, changed his form: suddenly he became a child, then an old man; at other times a young man. ‘And Nero, beholding this, supposed him to be the Son of God.’

“In ‘Recognitions,’ a Petrine work of the early ages, an account is given of a public discussion between Peter and Simon Magus, which is reproduced in this volume.

“Accounts of many other miracle-workers are given, showing most conclusively that the power by which they wrought was not confined to any one or to any number of persons, as the Christian world teaches, but that mediumistic gifts were then, as now, possessed by many. Statements quoted from the writers of the first two centuries of what took place will severely tax the credulity of the most credulous to believe, even in this era of marvels. Many of those accounts may be greatly exaggerated, but it is not reasonable to suppose that they are all sheer fabrications, with not a moiety of truth for their foundation; far less so with the reveal-ments made to men since the advent of Modern Spiritualism. Some idea of the thoroughness with which every subject is dealt with in this volume may be formed when we state that in the index there are two hundred and thirteen references to passages relating to ‘Jesus Christ’; from which, also, it may be justly inferred that what is given must be of great value to those seeking information that will enable them to determine whether Jesus was ‘Man, Myth, or God.’ ‘The Origin and History of Christian Doctrines,* also ‘The Origin and Establishment of the Authority of the Church of Rome over other Churches,’ are fully shown, and much light thrown upon many obscure and disputed questions. In a word, it is impossible for us, without far exceeding the limits prescribed for this article, to render full justice to this very instructive book; but we think enough has been said to convince our readers that it is one of more than ordinary interest, and a desirable acquisition to the literature of this progressive age.”¹

¹ Second Edition, 1 vol., 8vo., pp. 455. Chicago: C.V. Waite & Co. Thomas J. Whitehead & Co., agents for New England, 5 Court Square, Room 9, Boston.

Some writers tried to make Apollonius appear a legendary character, while pious Christians will persist in calling him an *impostor*. Were the existence of Jesus of Nazareth as well attested by history and he himself half as known to classical writers as was Apollonius no sceptic could doubt to-day the very being of such a man as the Son of Mary and Joseph. Apollonius of Tyana was the friend and correspondent of a Roman Empress and several Emperors, while of Jesus no more remained on the pages of history than as if his life had been written on the desert sands. His letter to Agbarus, the prince of Edessa, the authenticity of which is vouchsafed for by Eusebius alone—the Baron Munchausen of the patristic hierarchy—is called in the *Evidences of Christianity* “an attempt at forgery” even by Paley himself, whose robust faith accepts the most incredible stories. Apollonius, then, is a historical personage; while many even of the Apostolic Fathers themselves, placed before the scrutinizing eye of historical criticism, begin to flicker and many of them fade out and disappear like the “will o’-the-wisp” or the *ignis fatuus*.

Theosophist, June 1883

PERTINENT QUESTIONS

Will you or any of your readers enlighten me on the following points :

1. What is a Yogi?
2. Can he be classed with a Mahatma ?
3. Can Visvamitra, Valmiki, Vasistha and other Rishis be classed with the Yogis and the Mahatmas ?
4. Or with the Mahatmas only ?
5. Or with the Yogis only ?
6. Did the Yogis know Occult Science ?
7. Is vegetarianism necessary for the study and development of Occult Science ?
8. Did our Rishis know Occult sciences ?

By throwing some light on the above questions you will oblige.

YOURS TRULY,

H. N. VAKIL

BOMBAY, 30TH APRIL 1883

161, Malabar Hill.

WE REPLY

1. A Yogi in India is a very elastic word. It now serves generally to designate a very dirty, dung-covered and naked individual, who never cuts nor combs his hair, covers himself from forehead to heels with wet ashes, performs *Pranayam*, without realizing its true

meaning, and lives upon alms. It is only occasionally that the name is applied to one who is worthy of the appellation. The real meaning however, of the word when analysed etymologically, will show that its root is “yug”—*to join*— and thus will yield its real significance. A real Yogi is a person who, having entirely divorced himself from the world, its attractions and pleasures, has succeeded after a more or less long period of training, to re-unite his soul with the “Universal Soul” or to “join” with Parabrahm. If by the word “Yogi” our correspondent means the latter individual, viz., one who has linked his 7th and 6th principles or Atman and Buddhi and placed thereby his lower principles or Manas (the animal soul and the *personal* ego) *en rapport* with the Universal Principle, then—

2. He may be classed with the Mahatmas, since this word means simply a “great soul.” Therefore query—3—is an idle question to make. The Rishis—at any rate those who can be proved to have actually lived (since many of those who are mentioned under the above designation are more or less mythical) were of course “Mahatmas,” in the broad sense of the word. The three Rishis named by our questioner were historical personages and were very high adepts entitled to be called Mahatmas.

4. They may be *Mahatmas* (whenever worthy of the appellation), and whether married or celibates, while they can be called—

5. “Yogis”—only when remaining single, viz., after devoting their lives to religious contemplation, asceticism and—celibacy.

6. Theoretically every *real* Yogi knows more or less the Occult sciences; that is to say, he must understand the secret and symbolical meaning of every prescribed rite, as the correct significance of the allegories contained in the *Vedas* and other sacred books. Practically, now-a-days very few, if any, of those Yogis whom one meets with occasionally are familiar with occultism. It depends upon their degree of intellectual development and religious bigotry. A very saintly, sincere, yet ignorantly pious ascetic, who has not penetrated far beyond the husks of his philosophical doctrine would tell you that no one in *Kali-Yug* is permitted to become a *practical* occultist; while an initiated Yogi has to be an occultist; at any rate, he has to be sufficiently powerful

to produce all the *minor* phenomena (the ignorant would still call even such *minor* manifestation—“miracles”) of adeptship. The real Yogis, the heirs to the wisdom of the Aryan Rishis, are not to be met, however, in the world mixing with the profane and allowing themselves to be known as Yogis. Happy are they to whom the whole world is open, and who know it from their inaccessible *ashrams*; while the world (with the exception of a very few) knowing them not, denies their very existence. But, it really is not a matter of great concern with them whether people at large believe in, or even know of them.

7. The exposition of “Occultism” in these columns has been clear enough to show that it is the Science by the study and practice of which the student can become a MAHATMA. The articles “The Elixir of Life” and the *Hints on Esoteric Theosophy* are clear enough on this point. They also explain scientifically the necessity of being a vegetarian for the purposes of psychic development. Read and study, and you will find why Vegetarianism, Celibacy, and especially total abstinence from wine and spirituous drink are strictly necessary for “the development of Occult knowledge”—see “Hints on Esoteric Theosophy,” No. 2. Question 8th being unnecessary in view of the aforesaid, we close the explanation.

(*) Greek type not being available, the Greek wards have been omitted.