

*Old doctrines vindicated
by new prophets*



First published in *The Theosophist*, Vol. II (No. 8), May 1881, pp. 183-84. Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (ANCIENT DOCTRINES VINDICATED BY MODERN PROPHETS) III pp. 147-51. Frontispiece by Igor Morski.

THE GERMAN PRESS HAS RECENTLY ATTEMPTED in numerous editorials to solve what seems a mystery to the ordinary and sceptical public. They feel that they are evidently betrayed by one of their own camp — a materialist of exact science. Treating at length of the new theories of Dr. Rudolf Falb¹ — the editor of the Leipzig “popular astronomical journal,” the *Sirius* — they are struck with the faultless accuracy of his scientific prognostications, or rather to be plain, his meteorological and cosmological predictions. The fact is, that the latter have been shown by the sequence of events, to be less scientific conjectures than infallible prophecies. Basing himself upon some peculiar combinations and upon a method of his own, which, as he says, he has worked out after long years of researches and labour, Dr. Falb is now enabled to foretell months and even years in advance every earthquake, remarkable storm, or inundation. Thus, for example, he foretold last year’s earthquake at Zagreb. At the beginning of 1868, he prophesied that an earthquake would occur on August 13th, in Peru, and it did take place on that very day. In May, 1869, he published a scientific work entitled *The Elementary Theory of Earthquakes and Volcanic Eruptions*,² in which, among other prophecies, he foretold violent earthquakes at Marseilles, at Utah, along the shores of the Austrian possessions in the Adriatic Sea, in Colombia and the Crimea, which five months later — in October — actually took place. In 1873, he predicted the earthquake in Northern Italy, at Belluno, which event occurred in the very presence of Dr. Falb, who had gone there to witness it himself, so sure was he of its taking place. In 1874, he notified to the world the then unforeseen and quite unexpected eruptions of Etna; and notwithstanding the chaff of his colleagues in science, who told him there was no reason to expect such a geological disturbance, he went to Sicily and was able to take his desired notes on the spot, when it did happen. He also prognosticated the violent storms and winds between the 23rd and the 26th of February, 1877, in Italy, and that prediction

¹ [Rudolf Falb (1838–1903) was an Austrian populariser of natural history who concerned himself with earthquakes, meteorology, astronomy and also with evolutionary linguistics. He developed the lunisolar flood hypothesis of earthquakes and volcanism, based on the concept of subterranean lava tides, which the academic community thoroughly refuted even during his lifetime; nevertheless he attained considerable popularity through apparently correct predictions of several seismic events. Falb’s lasting legacy is that he popularized the concept of extra-terrestrial influences of geophysical phenomena, even though his concepts regarding the origins of earthquakes were wrong.]

² [*Grundzüge zu einer Theorie der Erdbeben und Vulcanausbrüche, etc.*, Graz, 1869-71. 8vo. — Boris de Zirkoff.]

was also corroborated by fact. Soon after that, Dr. Falb went to Chile, to observe the volcanic eruptions in the Andes which he had expected and predicted two years before and — he did observe them. Immediately upon his return, in 1875, appeared his most remarkable work known as *Thoughts on, and Investigations of, the Causes of Volcanic Eruptions*¹ — and which was immediately translated into Spanish and published at Valparaiso in 1877. After the predicted event at Zagreb had taken place, Dr. Falb was immediately invited to lecture in that city, where he delivered several remarkable discourses in which he once more warned the inhabitants of other forthcoming smaller earthquakes which, as is well known, did take place. The fact is that as was recently remarked by the *Novoye Vremya*, he has really

. . . *worked out something, knows something additional* to what other people know, and is better acquainted with these mysterious phenomena of our globe than any other specialist the world over.

What is then his wonderful theory and new combinations? To give an adequate idea of them would require a volume of comments and explanations. All we can add is, that Falb has said *all he could say* upon the subject in a huge work of his, called *Von den Umwälzungen im Weltall*, in three volumes. In Vol. I, he treats of the revolutions in the stellar world; in Vol. II, of the revolutions in the regions of clouds, or of the meteorological phenomena; and in Vol. III, of the revolutions in the bosom of the earth, or earthquakes. According to Dr. Falb's theory our *Universum* is neither limitless nor eternal, but is limited to a certain time and circumscribed within a certain space. He views the mechanical construction of our planetary system and its phenomena in quite a different light than the rest of the men of science. "He is very original, and very interesting (eccentric) in some respects, though we cannot trust him in everything" — seems the unanimous opinion of the press. Evidently, the doctor is too much of a man of science to be treated as a "visionary" or a "hallucinated enthusiast"; and so he is cautiously *chaffed*. Another less learned mortal would surely be, were he to expound the undeniably occult and Kabbalistic notions upon the Cosmos that he does. Therefore, while passing over his theories in silence as if to avoid being compromised in the propagation of his "heretical" views, the papers generally add: "We send the reader who may be curious to fathom the doctrines of Dr. Rudolf Falb to the latest work of this remarkable man and prophet." Some add to the information given the fact that Dr. Falb's theory carries back the "Universal" deluge to 4000 years BC, and presages another one for about the year 6,500 of the Christian era.

It appears that the theories and teaching of Dr. Falb are no new thing in this department of science, as two hundred years ago, the theory was propounded by a Peruvian named Jorie Baliri, and about a century ago by an Italian called Toaldo. We have, therefore, a certain right to infer that Dr. Falb's views are Kabbalistic, or rather those of the mediaeval Christian mystics and fire-philosophers, both Baliri and Toaldo having been practitioners of the "secret sciences." At the same time — though we have not yet been so fortunate as to have read his work — that calculation of his, in reference to the Noachian deluge and the period of 6,500 AD allotted for its recurrence, shows to us as plain as figures can speak that the learned doctor accepts for

¹ [*Gedanken und Studien über das Vulcanismus, etc.*, Graz, 1875. 8vo. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

our globe the “Heliacal” Great Year, or cycle of six *saros*, at the close and turning point of which our planet is always subjected to a thorough physical revolution. This teaching has been propounded from time immemorial and comes to us from Chaldæa through Berosus, an astrologer at the temple of Belus at Babylon. Chaldæa, as is well known, was the one universal centre of magic, from which radiated the rays of occult learning into every other country where the mysteries were enacted and taught. According to this teaching — believed in by Aristotle if we may credit Censorinus — the “great year” consists of 21,000 odd years (the latter varying) or six Chaldæan *saros* consisting of 3,500 years each. These two decimillenniums are naturally halved, the first period of 10,500 years bringing us to the top of the cycle and a minor cataclysm; the latter decimillennium to a terrible and universal geological convulsion. During these 21,000 years the polar and equatorial climates gradually exchange places,

. . . the former moving slowly towards the Line, and the tropical zone . . . replacing the forbidden wastes of the icy poles. This change of climate is necessarily attended by cataclysms, earthquakes, and other cosmical throes. As the beds of the ocean are displaced, at the end of every decimillennium and about one *naros* [600 years], a semi-universal deluge like the legendary Noachian flood is brought about.¹

It now remains to be seen how far Dr. Falb’s theory and the old antediluvian teaching mentioned by the author of *Isis Unveiled* agree. At all events, as the latter work antedated by three years, his *Von den Umwälzungen im Weltall* which was published in 1881 (but two months ago), the theory was not borrowed from the Leipzig astronomer’s work. We may add that the constant verification of such geological and meteorological predictions besides its scientific value is of the utmost philosophical importance to the student of theosophy. For it shows:

- That there are few secrets in nature absolutely inaccessible to man’s endeavours to snatch them from her bosom; and
- That Nature’s workshop is one vast clockwork guided by immutable laws in which there is no room for the caprices of *special providence*.

Yet he, who has fathomed the ultimate secrets of the Proteus-nature — which changes but is ever the same — can, without disturbing the LAW, avail himself of the yet unknown correlations of natural Force to produce *effects* which would seem miraculous and impossible, but to those who are unacquainted with their *causes*. “The law which moulds the tear also rounds the planet.” There exists a wealth of chemical force — in heat, light, electricity, and magnetism — the possibilities of whose mechanical motions are far from being *all* understood. Why then should the theosophist who believes in *natural* (though occult) *law* be regarded as either a charlatan or a credulous fool in his endeavours to fathom its secrets? Is it only because following the traditions of ancient men of science the methods he has chosen differ from those of modern learning?

¹ See *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I, pp. 30-31