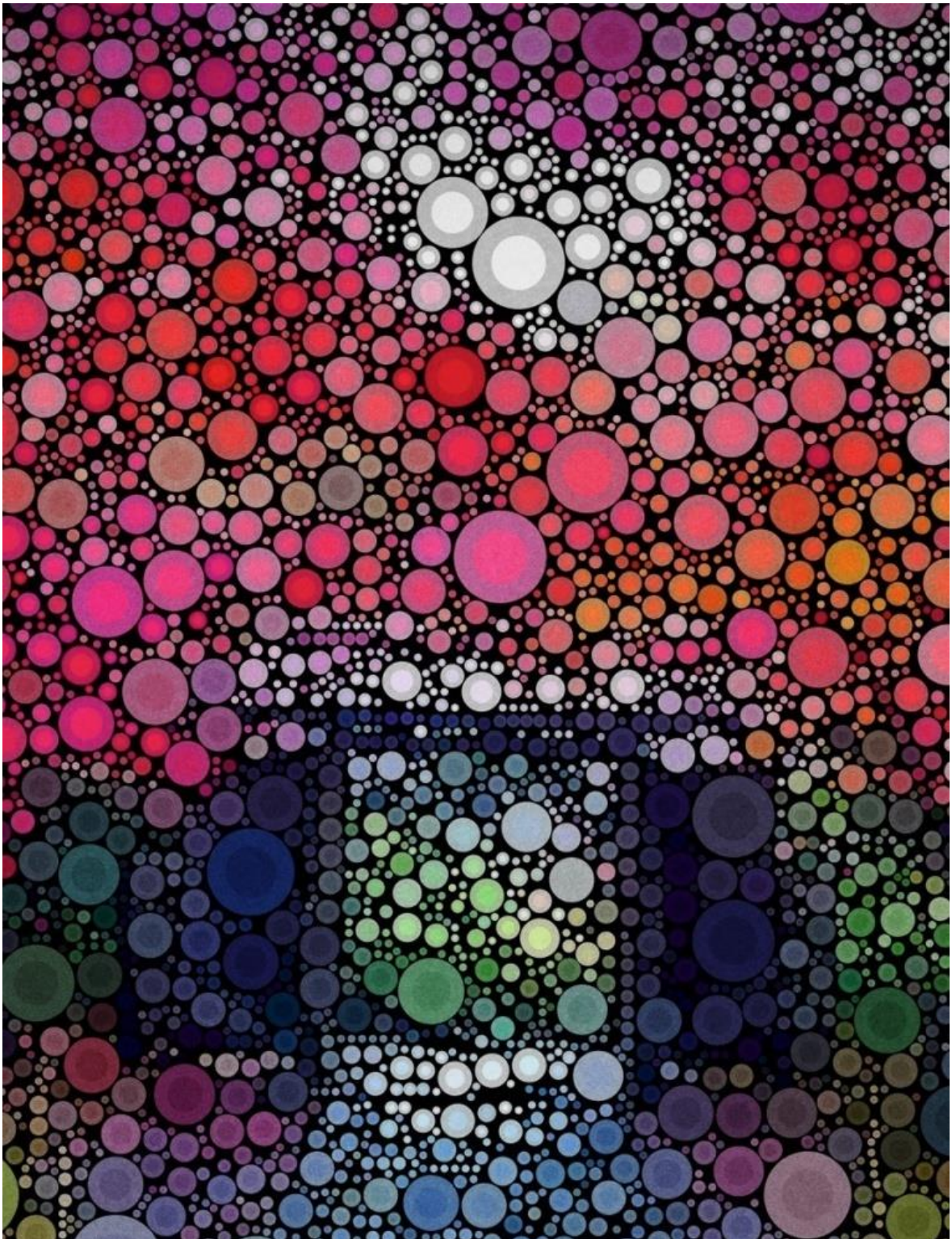


# *The Truth of Hermetic Science*



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Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (THE HERMETIC BRETHERN) IV pp. 3-4.<sup>1</sup>

“ . . . We of the secret knowledge do wrap ourselves in mystery, to avoid the objurgation and importunity or violence of those who conceive that we cannot be philosophers unless we put our knowledge to some ordinary worldly use. There is scarcely one who thinks about us who does not believe that our society has no existence; because, as he truly declares, he never met any of us . . . We do not come, as he assuredly expects, to that conspicuous stage upon which, like himself, as he desires the gaze of the vulgar, every fool may enter; winning wonder, if the man’s appetite be that empty way; and when he has obtained it, crying out: ‘Lo, this is also vanity!’”

Dr. Edmund Dickinson, physician to King Charles the Second, a professed seeker of the hermetic knowledge, produced a book entitled, *De Quintessentia Philosophorum*: which was printed at Oxford in 1686, and a second time in 1705. . . . In correspondence with a French adept, the latter explains the reasons why the Brothers of the Rosy Cross concealed themselves. As to the universal medicine, *Elixir Vitae*, or potable form of the preternatural *menstruum*, he positively asserts that it is in the hands of the “Illuminated,” but that, by the time they discover it, they have ceased to desire its uses, being far above them; and as to life for centuries, being wishful for other things, they decline availing themselves of it. He adds, that the adepts are obliged to conceal themselves for the sake of safety, because they would be abandoned in the consolations of the intercourse of this world (if they were not, indeed, exposed to worse risks) supposing that their gifts were proven to the conviction of the bystanders as more than human; when they would become simply intolerable and abhorrent. Thus, there are excellent reasons for their conduct, they proceed with the utmost caution, and instead of making a display of their powers, as vainglory is the least distinguishing characteristic of these great men, they studiously evade the idea that they possess any extraordinary or separate knowledge. They live simply as mere spectators in the world, and they desire to make no disciples, converts, nor confidants. They submit to the obligations of life, and to relationships<sup>2</sup> — enjoying the fellowship of none, admiring none, following none, but themselves. They obey all codes, are excellent citizens, and only preserve silence in regard to their own private convictions, giving the world the benefit of their acquirements up to a certain point: seeking only sympathy at some angles of their

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<sup>1</sup> Extracted from *The Rosicrucians* by Hargrave Jennings, pp. 34-35 (John Camden Hotten, Piccadilly, W. London.) Further on, we give a review by this able writer of Mr. Sinnett’s *The Occult World*. These passages, as the author tells us,

“ . . . occur in a letter published by some anonymous members of the Rose-Croix, and are adduced in a translation from the Latin by one of the most famous men of the order, who addressed from the University of Oxford about the period of Oliver Cromwell; to which University the great English Rosicrucian, Robertus De Fluctibus (Robert Flood) also belonged, in the time of James the First and Charles the First.”

<sup>2</sup> Not at all in every instance: it depends upon the degree of their advancement, their earthly ties snapping one after the other as their new spiritual ones are formed. [H.P. Blavatsky]

multiform character, but shutting out curiosity wholly where they do not wish its imperative eyes.

This is the reason that the Rosicrucians pass through the world mostly unnoticed, and that people generally disbelieve that there ever were such persons or believe that, if there were, their pretensions are an imposition. It is easy to discredit things which we do not understand. . . .

We came across the above, the other day, in the course of reading, and copy it to show that the difficulty which our sceptical public feels in crediting the existence of the *trans*-Himalayan recluses is no new thing. The jeering pleasantry of Archdeacon Baly, who told the Church Missionary Convention that “Theosophy was a new religion based on juggling tricks” is but the echo of the sneers of the generations in which Thomas Vaughan, Robert Fludd, Count de Saint-Germain, Theophrastus Paracelsus and other “Hermetic” philosophers lived and studied. Our Theosophical Society pays the penalty of its reaffirmation of the Truth of Hermetic Science, not merely in receiving the world’s ridicule, but also in having it try to ignore a deal of honest work of the practical sort, which we have done, and are doing.

It is cheering, therefore, to find a bit of sound sense in, at least, one Indian paper. Says our excellent *Amrita Bazaar Patrika*:

We hail the appearance of the January number of *The Theosophist* with more than ordinary pleasure. It is as usual replete with interesting matter, but the chief interest of the number is cantered in an account of the doings of Colonel Olcott in Ceylon published in the *Supplement*. We are sorry we have not space enough to record all that he has done there, but this we say, that the Colonel may fairly claim that, whether there be “Himalayan Brothers” or not, there is at least one white man who is acting like a brother to the Sinhalese and will, as occasion permits it, act similarly to the Hindus. If it be not asking too much, we would request the Colonel to come to the city of Palaces and enlighten the Calcutta public on subjects with which he is so familiar and which are calculated to do so much good to the Hindu nation — subjects of which most of our educated young men are so lamentably ignorant.

Let this be our sufficient answer to the silly though, as alleged, “mostly inspirational” article by the author of *Life beyond the Grave* entitled “Spiritual Selfishness.”<sup>1</sup> The writer affirms that the “Himalayan Brothers . . . wrap themselves in mystery and *pretend* to have a mission to perform, but they make no sign of accomplishing it” and further that “Madame Blavatsky . . . cannot show that any practical good comes of being a Theosophist. We have not heard that she has benefitted humanity by being a Theosophist.” . . . Perhaps, some members of our various Branches throughout India and Ceylon, who have participated in our practical work, may also feel “inspired” to correct the rather unfortunate “inspiration” of the author of *Life beyond the Grave*.



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<sup>1</sup> *Spiritualist* of January 13<sup>th</sup>