

*A dabbler in Occultism,
pretentious, bombastic, and full
of audacious conceit, exposed.*



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Pretentious, bombastic, full of audacious conceit.

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SINCE THE FIRST APPEARANCE of *The Occult World*, the London *Spiritualist* undertook a series of regular weekly attacks upon it. On the ground that Mr. Sinnett had never himself seen Koot Hoomi, the existence of the latter was doubted. This doubt was followed by the arbitrary hypothesis that no one else ever had seen him. Then, when seven Theosophists (four natives of India and three Europeans) had declared over their own signatures that they *had* seen our Brother, a pretext for invalidating their testimony was immediately invented. An objection, loosely grounded upon the fallacious and not very delicate insinuation, that as no one in England knew whether the lives and characters of the witnesses entitled their evidence to be accepted without protest, a very small degree of confidence could be placed upon it. Besides that, it was urged that as neither [333] Mrs. A. Gordon, nor Colonel Olcott¹ had given their testimony — the latter, moreover, having never declared to have seen the “Brothers” — the claim would receive no attention. Both of the above-named persons have now sent in their evidence. It remains to be seen, whether in the first place their letters will be published; and if so, what attempt will be made to discredit them.

Meanwhile, for over a period of three months, and week after week, *The Spiritualist* never appeared without containing an attack or two of more or less doubtful literary refinement upon the Theosophists in general, the Founders of the Society in particular, and Koot Hoomi and Mme. Blavatsky — especially. At times, the epithets to their address, and the peculiar phraseology characterizing them, reached a degree of eminence that placed *The Spiritualist* — with its hitherto immaculate columns which ought to be solely devoted to the necrologies of distinguished disembodied angels — on a level with the cheapest political daily of America, during the Presidential elections. The editorial “passes” having been somewhat obstructed by the seven avalanches of the Theosophical witnesses, *The Spiritualist* bethought itself of another

¹ [Colonel Henry Steel Olcott, 1832–1907, American military officer, journalist, lawyer, co-founder and first President of the Theosophical Society.]

expedient. When Italy had fallen into impious doubt and infidelity, Pius IX resorted to the expedient of being protected by foreign hirelings, and a body of “Papal Zouaves” was duly organized. When the Editor of *The Spiritualist* saw himself in danger of being floored by the accumulated testimony to the existence of the “Brothers” — from India, he found out a “Kabbalist” and formed with him an alliance — offensive only; as, so far no one went to the trouble of attacking him. That *Spiritualist* “Zouave” was J.K., the mirific “adept” and a “widow’s son” to boot; a “Hiram Abiff,” reared up and raised by an illustrious grand master — a “Hierophant of Western origin” as J.K. himself introduced him.

So far, so good. The Kabbalistic arrows directed by J.K. against the Theosophists, shooting over their heads, hurt no one but *The Spiritualist*, whose columns were, for a time, filled with the pompous self-glorifications of the Occult “Sir Oracle.” These articles provoking Homeric fits of [334] laughter among those of the Anglo-Indians who read them, were rather a treat than a nuisance. Had J.K. proceeded in that strain, no one would have ever paid the slightest attention to his harmless diatribes and, as stated in the October *Theosophist*, that would have been the first and the last time that we would have noticed him in our columns. But the alleged “adept” has now resorted to personalities. Forgetting that the “Theosophists” of Bombay are private and *non-professional* characters who neither sell quack medicines for a livelihood, nor advertise “Magnetism classes at one guinea for the course, or 5s. a lesson,” he permits himself to speak of better people than himself in a deprecatory tone which, at best, might be assumed only by a regular proficient in the Occult art and knowledge, recognized as such the world over. To make use of such phrases as:

Madame Blavatsky — evidently knows nothing of *our* art [!?!], I [!?!] do not hesitate to state [of course, how should a Kabbalist of his “calibre” hesitate at anything?] that the voluminous work [*Isis Unveiled*] is a thoroughly misleading one . . . she has not grasped the right meaning. . . . etc., etc.,

the critic must have proved himself as great as Paracelsus or, at the least, as wise as the “Hierophant” who initiated him.

Instead of that, what do we find? Who is that J.K. who like his *En-Soph* is ever “speaking of himself, to himself, and through himself”? Since he did not hesitate to name Mme. Blavatsky and tried to show her *so inferior* to himself, we do not see why we should feel the slightest scruple to lift up the “brazen mask” which shrouds the face of the Kabbalistic *beau domino*. We declare then in our turn, proofs in hand, that Mr. Julius Kohn is a very conceited, vain, young gentleman, who, hardly weaned from the A.B.C. of Occultism, puts on the airs of a mysterious grand adept — *dextro tempore*,¹ writes pretentious articles under the safe cover of two initials, and so obtains a public hearing under false pretences.² There is no Kabbalistic organ, and even the third-class London *Weeklies*, but would throw his articles in the waste basket, had he offered them. What better opportunity, then, taking advantage of the ill-feeling of the [335] Spiritualists toward the Theosophists to get room in a journal

¹ [at the right time]

² [J.K. published an article in *The Spiritualist Newspaper*, 8th July 1881, pp. 20-22, entitled “Information for Theosophists from an Adept,” lashing out at the Trans-Himalayan Masters and the Theosophical Society.]

wherein to ventilate his vagaries? Hence his articles in *The Spiritualist*, and the declarations that there are no spirits in nature other than *human* spirits; and the magisterial, ridiculous verdict “if the Theosophists study the elementals, they study only *undeveloped human* spirits.”

Read verses 24-25, chapter x of *Matthew*:

The disciple is not above his master . . . it is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord.

Hence Julius Kohn has either to abide by his “Lord and Master’s” decision, or maintain that he is above his “hierophant,” adding, moreover that his Initiator of “Western origin” (so designated by him, we suppose, in contradistinction to his own which is Eastern) does not know what he is talking about. Whatever our “adept” may say in his excuse in the future, that is the interesting information that the said Master (whose full name, if he would like to see it published, we are as ready to give, as we gave his own) — says of his disciple, of whom otherwise, Mr. W * * * * seems to be very proud. He tells a friend:

Mr. Kohn has been under my direct guidance for several years and went on reading in all languages every Kabbalistical work to be purchased here and in Germany . . . but he does not go in for Astrology to any extent. *He has not yet made his entrance into the adytum*; but his *intuitions* are working up and he gets very lucid glimpses of things *by times*. His *dreams* are getting very interestingly spiritual. . . . But he eschews mediumship. Although he has not yet confronted the “Red Elixir,” (*i.e.*, made the perfect junction of the soul with the spirit) . . . *yet he is on the fair way* of it, for “of that day and hour knoweth no man” . . .

Quite so. No one knoweth of it, no more the master than the disciple, we see. We have good reasons to believe that the former will not take the risk of denying his own words, so religiously quoted by us, as in the contrary case, we might add to it some other trifling particulars, which we will abstain from mentioning at present. We do not know that gentleman personally, and we might have perchance more respect for him, if we did have that honour, [336] than we are likely to ever entertain for his pupil. We have proved the essential points, and that suffices for our purposes. On the authority of the person, more likely to exaggerate the achievements of his disciple than to lower them in the world’s estimation, we are informed,

- 1 That J.K. “has not yet made his entrance into the adytum” — which amounts to confessing before anyone who knows anything of Hermetic phraseology, that his pupil knows NOTHING yet of the essential, final, and higher mysteries, evolving, meanwhile, his “involitional soul” out of the allegorical interpretations of his “interesting *dreams*,” during the *non-lucid* interludes between his “intuitional” lucid glimpses of things;
- 2 That J.K. “eschews mediumship,” having, as we were told in one of his articles, his own notions about “spirits,” *i.e.*, in every case as *heretical* as those of the theosophists, only perchance, less correct (N.B., the Editor of *The Spiritualist* thus seeming to be warming a viper in his bosom);

- 3 And not having yet “confronted the Red Elixir,” namely, having never succeeded so far, in uniting his *spirit* with his *soul*, which alone makes the adept for a time a divine being existing in the region of absolute wisdom, J. Kohn is but an humble *chela*¹ in the school of magic, and *no* “adept” at all, as he would like to have us believe.

It is this dabbler in occultism, who, in his pretentious, bombastic style, so full of audacious conceit, speaks of such adepts as were the old Indian *Rishis*, of the authors of such philosophies as the *Vedas*, the *Vedanta* and the *Sāṅkhya*, of such men as our Brother Koot Hoomi, as if they knew nothing worth knowing! To show his own ignorance Oh, shadows of Kapila and Patañjali! — J.K. calls “Ākāśa” — a FIGMENT!! If readers would only believe him:

Taking erroneously some esoteric sentences from Paracelsus in their literal wording, the late Abbé Alphonse Louis Constant (Éliphas Lévi), or the man who wrote his books on Magic, invented [?!] out of the sidereal influence of Paracelsus an objective astral light, and theorised thereon that the great [337] work of adeptship is to subjugate and direct this force. Combine therewith a practice of bullying the elementals in all the four kingdoms, and you are, according to Éliphas Lévi, an accomplished master magician.

Combine with ignorance, a practice of bullying all those who differ from you, especially those who refuse to recognize in Mr. Julius Kohn anything higher than a “figment-adept” and you are, according to J.K., “an accomplished master magician.”

And now to the truthfulness and reliability of his criticisms upon *Isis*. “In Paracelsus,” he says, “as in all other Kabbalists, the letter is for the uninitiated, the spirit for the initiated. *The mediæval adepts were, by the age they lived in, compelled to hide their knowledge from the church.*” (What wondrous news. The first revelation of a truth which every school boy knows.) “They used, therefore, a veiled language, and physical symbols stood for purely spiritual things. The author of *Isis* seems to have overlooked this,” adds our learned adversary. Well, the “author of *Isis*” did nothing of the kind, however. On the other hand, the author of “The Adeptship of Jesus Christ” must have never done more than skip *Isis*, if he overlooked the fact that both its volumes are full of references and explanations as to the “veiled language” of the Kabbalists, Christian as well as Pagan — the former dreading to divulge their meaning on account of the persecution of the Church, the latter owing to the terror of the “initiation oath” pronounced during the “mysteries.” That J.K. only pretends to have overlooked the fact is still more likely. However it may be, the whole work is an exposition of that which the London “adept” tries to teach, but makes a sad mess of. Nor was the author of *Isis* ever unaware of the well-known fact, that most (not all) of the physical symbols stand “for purely spiritual things.” Whoever has read *Isis* will see how reliable are J.K.’s criticisms.

¹ The disciple of a *Yogi*.

Goes on to perorate the critic:

Elemental spirits are not creatures evolved in earth, air, fire or water. There are no doubt spirits who prefer to dwell in one of the said elements, *but they are human*. [!] The method ordinarily [338] resorted to for entering into communication with Elementals by offering them some favourite food, shows that they are simply not very advanced human spirits.

The last argument is charmingly *logical*, and worthy of the “literary calibre” of a great “adept.” Just as if only *human* beings ate food, and men and their spirits alone could be offered “some favourite food”! The Elementals are all “human,” he maintains. And what are the “Shedim” of his Jewish Kabbalists? What of Robert Fludd — the grand master of the mediæval “Fire” philosophers, who were the greatest Kabbalists living — who says that as there are an infinity of visible human creatures, so there is an endless variety of *non-human* beings among the spirits of the elements? And what of the endless variety of the “Demons” of Proclus, Porphyry, Iamblichus, and of the “Nature Spirits”? . . . Verily, it requires a very small amount of intelligence in a critic to write — “let ‘The Church,’ so-called, go to the Devil of her own creation,”¹ or again — “Theosophy is Diabolosophy . . . which gets but the Sophistries of His Satanic Majesty”; but it requires a good deal of wisdom which cannot be imparted by any “Hierophant” to understand *true* Theosophy. It is as easy for a cabman as for Mr. Kohn, to utter words of abuse; and the former is as free to point out the Royal Society as a gin shop, adding that all its Fellows assemble there but to get drunk with liquor, as for the adept to call Theosophy “Diabolosophy.” Both can do so with perfect impunity. For, no more than the said cabman will ever get admitted within the sacred precincts of learning, can a man using such a language hope of ever entering within the circle of *true* Theosophy, or — “confront the Red Elixir.”

The real gist, the pith of the stuff of which all J.K.’s articles are made up, is explained by the following: Notwithstanding all his self-glorification of “adeptship” neither the “adept” nor even his “hierophant,” whom we know better than both may imagine, would be able to produce the slightest phenomenon *at will*; even of that kind which incipient mediums and sensitive children often produce, [339] say, raps upon the table without contact. Hence his diatribes against the phenomena described in *The Occult World*; his bombastic and long-winded prattle about the powers of adeptship being “only purely spiritual.” It is so easy and it offers such secure ground to assume “powers” which have to remain, on the said principle, for ever theoretical. But it becomes rather more dangerous for him to declare that:

. . . when Koot Hoomi is alleged to say repeatedly:

“The adept is the rare efflorescence of a generation of enquirers,”

he ventilates this idea purely to bring recruits to the Theosophical Society.

It is dangerous, we say, for besides being a glaring falsehood and a calumny, the disciples of Koot Hoomi might easily retort to Mr. Julius Kohn and ask: And what may be the secret meaning of this sentence of yours which directly follows the preceding?

¹ J.K.’s article, “The Adeptship of Jesus Christ,” in *Medium and Daybreak*, September 2nd, 1881, p. 556

Whoever attempts to arrive at Divine power *by diabolic means* labours is a most deplorable delusion. Anæsthetic and drugs should never be experimented with. Also with the practice of organic mesmerism must be united great care not to abuse the power, combined with an uncompromisingly pure life.

If the “adept” refuses to inform the readers of the real occult meaning of the above, we will. Combined with other, very frequent allusions in his verbose articles — we may just call them *sub rosa*¹ advertisements² — it is meant to call the attention of the reader to certain wonderful books on mesmerism, in close relation with professional “classes of magnetism” at 3 and 1 guinea the course. The said occult meaning is simply “to bring recruits” within the fold of the [340] happy magneto-Kabbalistic *Trimūrti*; that triad we mean well known to the Theosophists in London, which under three different names represents in reality but two, if not one, and ought to bear in any case the name of the “Hierophant” though it does sail under a triple compound name which is no longer its own. We are sorry to say, even so much, of persons with whom we are not in the least concerned. But we sincerely think it a kindness to Mr. W * * * * , the “Hierophant,” [who] as we are told, is a man of sense and learning, [to let him know] that his pupil is sorely compromising him. Let him then use his occult powers to force upon his too indiscreet disciple:

- That he who lives in a glass house ought never to throw stones at that of his neighbour; and
- That he should not exhibit his ignorance in such a flagrant manner, by speaking of the doctrines of Gautama Buddha, as if he knew, or *could know* anything of HIS esoteric doctrines!

Hear him jabbering about Śākya-Muni, and dogmatizing right and left in the following strain:

Whatever the sapient critics and bookmakers do not understand, they label with a false name and think that thereby they have explained it.

Just Mr. J. Kohn’s position, who pretends to explain all that he knows nothing about:

If the books of Philo and John are productions of Neo-Platonists, then the teachings of Gautama Buddha, which contain the same doctrine, only in other wording, must also be Neo-Platonism.³

¹ [Under the rose, *i.e.*, in secret, for one of the many meanings of the rose is secrecy. *Note to Students*: Rose is an anagram of Eros. Reflect! — ED. PHIL.]

² Such advertisements, for instance, as this one we find inserted in his article upon “The Adeptship of Jesus Christ”:

“The following extracts from the third edition of Miss Chandos Leigh Hunt’s excellent and most valuable *Private Instructions on Organic Magnetism*, will give a scientific description of the Soul-Power, and the means to attain thereto”:

follows the “scientific description” in which Jesus Christ is honoured with the title of “Red magician.” Further on, J.K. recommends once more:

“ . . . the ACQUISITION OF THE INVALUABLE WORK just quoted, *while those who are by locality favoured, should not fail to GET PERSONAL INSTRUCTION.*”

Now this we call searching for “recruits” with an unparalleled zeal.

³ “The Adeptship of Jesus Christ”

So immeasurably arrogant and vain of his supposed learning is Mr. J. Kohn that he actually insinuates in the above his thorough knowledge of the secret meaning of the doctrines taught by Gautama Buddha! We advise him to limit his *revelations* to the Jewish Kabbalah, as his superficial comprehension of it may yet throw, with an appearance of some reason, glamour in the eyes of the too confiding reader innocent of any great proficiency in the Kabbalistic lore. But will he have the additional effrontery of maintaining or even of insinuating that he understands better the Buddhistic “Rahat” doctrine than the most learned Buddhist priests, of whom we have such a number among [341] the Fellows of the Theosophical Society at Ceylon, Burma and Tibet? We would not wonder. The too Kabbalistic “J.K.” winds up the article under review with the following words of wisdom:

The errors here set forth appear in the text-books of the Theosophists. If I have said hard things of the Theosophical Society, I *mean the Society exclusive of the Western members* who I *believe are all INTELLIGENT and AMIABLE* individuals; as such I esteem them, but not as Theosophists. . . .

How occult and pompous, yet how transparently clear. Let Mr. Julius Kohn give up, however, the sweet illusion that he, or any adept of *his* sort, is capable of saying “hard things” whether of the Theosophical Society or of its members. He has ventilated quite a number of “impertinent” things, but this affords rather merriment than inflicts pain upon those who know how far he deserves the self-imposed title of “adeptship.” By “the Society, *exclusive of the Western members*,” he means the Parent Society, now in India, of course; and, he is kind enough to believe our “Western members . . . intelligent and amiable individuals” — (read enthusiastic but amiable fools) — and thus closes his denunciatory article with another untruth. For, we happen also to know, how his “dreams” and occasional “glimpses of things” bring him to see intuitively through the fallacies of such writers as “one of the most prominent of the British Theosophists, who will remain unnamed.” And, we are also aware of the contempt with which he speaks of many of these “intelligent and amiable individuals.” If he flatters them in his article at all, it is because these individuals, living in London and some of them receiving him at their houses, he has sense enough to avoid irritating them too unnecessarily. At the same time the “Eastern” Theosophists are far away in India, and, as he thinks, can know nothing of him, his “spiritual dreams” having failed to reveal to him that they did know something — Mr. J. Kohn’s “adeptship” as will be seen, excluding neither cunning, nor yet an eye to business.

Nevertheless, we owe him a debt of gratitude, for enlightening us as to the various *colours* of the many various [342] kinds of magicians. “The *White Magician*,” he writes, quoting enthusiastically from a “gifted Lady magnetist’s” work (the legitimate wife, we are told, of his “Hierophant-Initiator,” though we never heard yet of a *practicing* Hierophant Magician who was *married*) — “the *White Magician* is a high form of Adeptship, and few there are who reach it; fewer still who become *Red Magicians*. The difference between the former and the latter is, that the senses and the world possess certain temptations for the *White Magician*, which he sees and feels though he conquers. But nothing can tempt the *Red Magician* to evil any more than God can be tempted. The passive *White Magician* is to be found in the *Religieuse*” (?!! nuns?) . . . and “Black Magic is (in part) the art of applying the science of Magnetism to the

obtaining of worldly riches, and to the influencing of persons to obey your Will, with results injurious to themselves. This part of the art I do not teach.”

We should say not. Even in this our century of scepticism it would not be quite safe to advertise “classes” for imparting the *Black Art*. However, although modestly withholding from his reader’s knowledge his own particular shade, we suggest the hypothesis of a colour that might be correctly termed — “chameleonic.” His published lucubrations warranting, and his alleged abstinence from wine¹ forbidding us to accept the theory offered by one of our French Occultists who, writing about “J.K.” says of him — “*Le magicien est gris,*” we can find no better *nuance* for him [343] than the indefinite iridescence of the chameleon, that pretty animal reflecting every colour it approaches.

And now to close. The Theosophists “exclusive of the Western members,” hope that their learned critic will henceforth direct his sole attention to the grand revelation he gives the world upon the “Adeptship of Jesus Christ” — the *Red Magician*, and leave the Theosophists — Western and Eastern — strictly alone. For, although the amount of incomprehensible metaphysical twaddle and quite *unhistorical* statements² contained in it, almost preclude the possibility of anything like an elaborate criticism upon it — yet they might find a word or two to say on the *advertising portions* of the mystical paper. Having, as mentioned elsewhere, in his powerful Kabbalistic phraseology, sent the Christian “Church to the Devil” and Theosophists along with it, let Mr. Julius Kohn rest on his laurels, as it behoves a Christian Kabbalist — the latter appellation being applied to him on the authority of his own words. He writes:

Whenever demanded, whether I know a special process whereby to acquire magic power, whereto³ my reply ever is “beyond the Christ-life there is nothing”⁴

— this particular “Christ-life” *nota bene* to be studied according to his, Mr. J. Kohn’s interpretations, never as taught by “the Devil’s Official Church” (*sic*) as he elegantly puts it. We are, however, glad to learn from the above that this promising mystic is a convert to Christ, as that news is calculated to save his “adeptship of Jesus Christ” from more than one scathing criticism. For, viewing the production with a thoroughly unbiased eye, who should, or could ever know more about the “magical powers” of

¹ It is not enough for a “hierophant” or an “adept” to abstain from wine and liquor; *he must avoid leading others into temptation*, if he cares to deserve the glorious name. We would then put the following question to those, who, denying our Eastern Brotherhood, accept as “hierophants” and “adepts” persons having no right to the appellation: what man, acquainted but with the A.B.C. of Occult sciences would dare maintain that even a simple pupil — let alone an adept in Occultism — would, while pursuing the *divine* science, at the same time obtain and hold a patent for the invention of a distilling apparatus for the manufacture of an improved whisky!! Imagine a modern Paracelsus or Jacob Boehme, proprietor of a dram shop [where alcoholic beverages are sold] and erecting distilleries in London and Ireland! Truly our age is an AGE OF BRASS.

² For instance, when he writes:

“And, down to the present time, official priests take fermented wine — which is an impure intoxicant, and from which Jesus abstained all His life,”

what is it but an arbitrary, foolish statement, founded on no authority, that the author could point out, except his own lucubrations?

³ [to which]

⁴ *Spiritualist*, September 9th

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Christ than the direct lineal descendant of those who insulted Jesus in Jerusalem by saying: "He casteth out devils through the prince of devils?"



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- WHAT IS MUSIC BY RICE
- WHEN THE DOORS OF THE WORLD CLOSED ON THEM
- WHY DO ANIMALS SUFFER
- WHY THE HOLLOW MEN PRIZE THEIR VICE

