

De Zirkoff on Franz Hartmann



Tributes to Dr. Franz Hartmann, German physician, Author, Traveller, and Theosophist.

By Boris de Zirkoff.

From *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (BIBLIOGRAPHY) VIII pp. 439-57.¹

HE WAS BORN AT DONAUWÖRTH, a small town on the Danube in Bavaria, November 22nd, 1838. His father, Dr. Karl Hartmann, was a well-known physician in that town; his mother, Elize von Stack, was of Irish descent, her ancestors having been descendants of Caolbha, the 123rd and last King of the Irish race and 47th King of Ulster. His mother's family emigrated to France after the execution of Charles I, and afterwards to Bavaria during the French Revolution. When Franz was about one year old, his parents moved to Kempten, in Southern Bavaria, where his father had been appointed Government physician. It is there that Franz was educated, first under the guidance of his grandfather who had served the French army under Napoleon, and later in the local public school.

Since his very early youth, Franz felt as if he had two distinct personalities in him: one was a mystic, a dreamer and an idealist, while the other was obstinate and self-willed, inclined to all sorts of mischief. He loved solitude, shunned the company of schoolmates, and revelled in the midst of nature, where intercourse with the spirits of nature was to him a very real thing. He writes:

There I could dream my mystical dreams undisturbed and give my imagination full rein. I was born with a propensity for mystery . . . the invisible world attracted my desire for knowledge more than the visible. . . .

The first book he bought was *The Fiery Dragon*, with all kinds of magical formulæ; not knowing what to do with it, he threw it into the fire. Then he read *The Dark Side of Nature*, by Elizabeth Crowe, and other similar works.

Educated in the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church, he felt his mind greatly influenced at first by its ceremonies, but none of the priests could give him any satisfactory explanation about the mystery and power back of them. At one time he wished to retire into a cloister and become a monk of the Capuchinian Order, but soon gave up this idea. Dissatisfied with mere theory, he wanted *to know*, but had not yet become aware, as he expressed it later, "that the mysteries of religion must first be realized within the knowledge of the heart before they can be understood with the brain." Apart from mystical and religious subjects, he was especially interested in languages and natural sciences, particularly chemistry.

At a time when his religious doubts had become very strong, Franz made friends with a man somewhat older than himself, and who later became a well-known composer

¹ Frontispiece: The Rocky Mountains, Lander's Peak (1863) Albert Bierstadt. Small version of the original.

of music. This young man was a materialist; he believed in having a good time in life, and influenced Franz to look upon all religion as a humbug. Franz read the works of leading materialists, composed poetry and wrote a theatrical play during this period, but found no lasting satisfaction in materialism. Something was still wanting, and, unable to find it, Franz took refuge in agnosticism.

In this state of mind, he turned again to natural sciences, and especially to chemistry, and, after graduating, entered as apprentice in a pharmacy at Kempten. But he discovered that he was often selling remedies which were more harmful to people than helpful, and soon became greatly dissatisfied. After changing his occupation a number of times, he enlisted when 21 as a volunteer in the 1st Artillery Regiment of Bavaria in Munich, and took part in the war between Austria and Italy in 1859.

After peace was declared, Franz became a student of medicine at the University of Munich, and soon excelled the others in duelling, occasional drinking and other amusements, not for love of these things, but out of ambition and pride. As a result of incautious mountaineering, he fractured his leg, but it healed fairly soon. In 1862 he successfully passed his examination as State Pharmacist, and continued his medical studies. He completed them in 1865, becoming *doctor medicinæ and magister pharmaciæ*. Following this, he went on a trip to Paris. Desirous of seeing the ocean, he made a side trip to Le Havre by an excursion train. On the intervening Sunday, he made the casual acquaintance of a gentleman who asked him whether he would like to make a trip to America; he told him that the ship *Mercury*, with some 360 emigrants, was about to leave for New York, and that they needed a physician on board. After a hurried examination before the medical committee, Franz boarded the ship and sailed for New York, where he arrived, after a forty days' voyage, August 28th, 1865.

Having no definite plans, Franz went to see the Niagara Falls and thence to St. Louis. As an epidemic of cholera was raging there at the time, he found an opportunity to make himself useful medically. He remained in St. Louis, became an American citizen in 1867, and soon acquired a remunerative practice, mainly in eye ailments.

Finding his life too monotonous, however, and feeling his *wanderlust* re-asserting itself again, Franz turned his practice over to another physician and went to New Orleans. He found himself constantly driven by a deep-seated yearning to know truth, to understand the reason for existence, and to grasp the meaning of life. His mind was often in the throes of a great inner struggle and he had contemplated suicide more than once.

He took passage on a schooner for Mexico, and arrived at Vera Cruz February 17th, 1871. He visited Mexico City, Puebla, Cordova and Orizaba, became acquainted with Indians and was welcome in their midst. It has been stated that, while in Mexico, Franz met a man of seemingly very great knowledge, possibly an initiate, but did not recognize him as such; this man told him many things about his future life and work.

Finding it more profitable to return to the United States, he embarked again at Vera Cruz and returned to New Orleans. Here he was robbed by a fellow-passenger of all his baggage, and was left high and dry, with but a few dollars to his name, and with

all his documents and papers gone. The very next day, talking to an apothecary in a drug store where he had gone to buy a remedy against mosquito-bites, he was offered a position as a physician, and in less than a month built a most remunerative practice.

During his travels, Franz had deliberately associated himself with people of various religious backgrounds, and had even boarded a whole year in the house of a Jewish Rabbi. He had come to realize the utter emptiness of Christian beliefs, especially among the Protestants, and had made friends with various native people, especially Indians, where he found kindness and hospitality.

Though adverse to Spiritualism, his curiosity nevertheless prompted him to visit a certain “materializing séance” held by a medium, where he witnessed very startling phenomena. He became interested and attended lectures by Professor J.M. Peebles, whose philosophy appeared to him to be rational, even though it overthrew all the materialistic theories. One of his patients, a highly accomplished married lady of English and Indian descent, by the name of Katie Wentworth, developed soon into a very remarkable medium, and Franz Hartmann went quite deeply into the study of Spiritualistic literature and experiments with various mediums. Mrs. Wentworth exhausted herself by injudiciously serving as medium in all sorts of groups, became paralyzed and died.

Longing to see the “wild West” Hartmann went to Texas in 1873, and for five years experienced many adventures, while administering to all sorts of people in out-of-the-way places. He bought a piece of land, and after a while married the sister of the wife of a near-by landowner, becoming seven months later a widower. In 1879 he went to Colorado and settled for the time being at Georgetown, feeling very much at home in the Rocky Mountains. He engaged in some gold and silver mining, and also served as coroner for Clear Creek County. While in Colorado, he had many interesting experiences in Spiritualism and was cured of some trouble caused by vaccination in early childhood. He witnessed some astounding phenomena which proved of much value to him, as they put an end to his materialistic scepticism. “It became clear to me,” he writes, “that we are surrounded by a world which, though invisible to our eyes, is, in its way, just as real as the visible world, and that this invisible world is inhabited by countless beings, some higher and some lower in evolution than we are.” Though a believer in the reality of genuine phenomena, Hartmann was most sceptical about their alleged origin, and was very anxious to learn the truth about their causes.

It is at about this time in his life, namely in the early eighties of last century, that Hartmann came across a copy of A.P. Sinnett’s *The Occult World*. Being still greatly attached to certain aspects of the Spiritualistic view of life, he became much irritated at its contents, and wrote a letter to Col. Henry S. Olcott, “giving him and the ‘Brothers’ a piece of his mind.”¹ Correspondence ensued, and a copy of *The Theosophist* came into his hands. It contained an article describing the sevenfold constitution of man and the seven principles of the Universe. This came to him as a revelation, and furnished the key to those mysteries the explanation of which he had sought so long

¹ *Report of Observations, etc., pp. 7-8*

in vain. As he read and pondered, there arose within him the consciousness that his mortal personality was not his permanent, real self, but a changeful thing created by himself, and that he was a superior being in his innermost nature.

While further disappointments arose in respect to Spiritualistic communications, Col. Olcott sent him a third letter and the pamphlet entitled *Hints on Esoteric Theosophy*, No. 1, in which he found many of his doubts cleared up. He then replied to Col. Olcott in a more conciliatory manner, and the outcome of this correspondence was that he received an invitation to come to Adyar and to collaborate in the work of the Movement. To this letter of Col. Olcott's, H.P. Blavatsky had added some few words of her own. Hartmann in the meantime had joined the Theosophical Society in 1882, had read the famous "Fragments of Occult Truth" appearing serially in the pages of *The Theosophist*, and acquainted himself with the contents of *Isis Unveiled*. He felt as if "the sun had suddenly risen over a well-known landscape. . ." ¹

Hartmann left Colorado in September, 1883, on his way to California for the purpose of sailing to India. He stopped at Salt Lake City to study the life of the Mormons, and then proceeded to San Francisco. He writes:

It has always been my experience that if a person desires to make a step forward on the way to progress in spirituality some great and unforeseen internal and external obstacles will arise to hinder him.

This very thing happened to him in San Francisco, where he fell desperately in love with a young Spanish-American lady. A serious inner struggle ensued, but at last the desire for occult knowledge gained the upper hand over this emotional *māyā*. Tearing himself away from the object of his passion, Hartmann left California on October 11th, 1883, on board the *SS Coptic*, bound for Hong Kong. On December 4th, after a brief visit to Japan and China, he arrived at Madras, and went directly to Adyar where he was welcomed by Madame Blavatsky as having come "to my [his] future home." An entirely new and far richer period of his life was about to open before him.

To describe the activities of Franz Hartmann while at Adyar would be tantamount to writing the history of the Theosophical Society at the time. As this would be out of place in this sketch, suffice it to say that he stayed at Adyar until March 31st, 1885, when he sailed for Europe together with Madame Blavatsky, Miss Mary Flynn and Bowaji. A year earlier, he accompanied Madame Blavatsky to Wadhwan and Bombay, and saw her off on her trip to Europe, when she sailed from Bombay, Feb. 20th, 1884; he himself, however, returned then to Adyar, and played a conspicuous role at Headquarters during the absence of the Founders in Europe. He was in residence there, of course, during the expulsion of the Coulombs, and at the time of the visit of Richard Hodgson, December, 1884 to January, 1885, and published a most valuable, first-hand account concerning the Coulombs affair and the situation prevailing at the time. ²

¹ "An Enemy Turned Brother," *The Theosophist*, Vol. IV, Supplement to March 1883, p. 6

² *Report of Observations made during a Nine Months' Stay at the Headquarters of The Theosophical Society at Adyar (Madras), India*, by F. Hartmann, M.D., F.T.S. (An American Buddhist). Madras: Printed at The Scottish Press, by Graves, Cookson and Co., 1884; 60pp.

As he had been vested with a certain degree of authority at Headquarters, and had some very definite ideas about things, he naturally incurred the jealousy of some and received the praise of others, as is usually the case; but whatever may have been the real causes of the various extremely tangled circumstances of that period, and whatever criticism arose in connection with his doings, it would be a grave mistake to ascribe to Dr. Hartmann unworthy motives or evil designs, and to look upon his many actions with positive suspicion and mistrust. As many others, he must have made some grievous mistakes of judgment, and shown unwisdom on more than one occasion, but the unusual circumstances which made up the field of his operations were of a nature which would sorely try any human mind and heart. In spite of many radical changes in his attitude, he can be said to have remained true to Madame Blavatsky.

As far as is known, Dr. Hartmann received at least ten letters and communications from the “Brothers,” the contents of some of which have not been preserved.

The first of these letters was received by him from Master M. on December 25th, 1883, only three weeks after his arrival at Adyar, in reply to a brief letter he had placed in the “Shrine.” The only portion of that letter that has been preserved is as follows:

Blessings! Were we to employ in our service a man of no intelligence, we would have to point out to him, as you say in the West, chapter and verse, *i.e.*, give him special assignments and definite orders; but a mind like yours, with a background of much experience, can find the way by itself, when given a hint in regard to the direction which leads to the goal. Make for yourself a clear picture of what a man is, in what relation this particular life stands to the sum-total of his former existences, and that his future is entirely within his own power, and you will not be in doubt any longer as to what you should do. . . . I placed in H.S. Olcott’s head the idea to suggest to you to come here. Remain in Asia. Take part in the work of the Theosophical Society. Make known without reservations the principles of the philosophy which speaks the loudest in your own heart. Help others, so that you may be helped yourself. . . . Live according to the highest Ideal of Manhood. Think and work. In this lie the conditions of satisfaction for both yourself and others. . . .

M.

The omitted passages, according to Hartmann, had reference to private affairs unknown to anyone in India.¹

The second letter was found by Hartmann in the drawer of his desk, February 5th, 1884, bearing the Master’s seal. We have the following excerpt from the original English text of this letter:

¹ Partial German text in *Lotusblüthen*, LXV, pp. 142-43, of which the above is the English rendering. It does not seem to have been published anywhere else. See *Report of Observ.*, pp. 13-14, and *Journal of the T.S.*, March, 1884, p. 52, where Hartmann gives the text of his own brief letter to the Master:

“*Revered Master!* The undersigned offers you his services. He desires that you would kindly examine his mental capacity and if desirable give him further instruction. Respectfully yours, etc.”

Friend! You seem to me the only fully rational being among the Pelengs now left at Headquarters. Therefore with an eye to a variety of unexpected emergencies in future which I foresee, I must ask you to show practically your devotion to the cause of truth by accepting the rudder of the theosophical cause. If I know anything, I know you to be entirely free from those prejudices and predilections that are generally in the way of a calm and dispassionate pursuit of the chief aim of the Society, full equality among men as brothers and an entire unconcern with the childish fairy tales they call their religion, whether exoteric or esoteric. If you kindly consent to take care of theosophical interests during the absence of Henry [Olcott] and Upāsika [H.P. Blavatsky], I will cause him to write you an official letter, investing you with more official power than any other ‘assistant,’ so as to give you a firmer hold of the rod of authority than you would otherwise have with an informal title shared by so many others. . . .

Your *pucca*¹ authority I ask you to make the best of it in the interests of Truth, Justice and Charity. . . .²

A further excerpt from the same letter, which seems to have been a fairly long one, has been preserved in German.³ Its English rendering is as follows:

. . . Let me give you an advice. Never offer yourself as a chela, but wait until chelaship descends by itself upon you. Above all, try to find yourself, and the path of knowledge will open itself before you, and this so much the easier as you have made a contact with the Light-ray of the Blessed one, whose name you have now taken as your spiritual lode-star. . . . Receive in advance my blessings and my thanks.

M.

Reference is here made to the fact of Dr. Hartmann becoming a Buddhist, December 26th, 1883. There was in the same envelope a photograph, cabinet-size, of the Master’s face, with a dedication to Hartmann on the back of it.⁴

The third letter was received by him in the railway carriage on his way from Wadhwan to Bombay, February 15th, 1884, while accompanying Madame Blavatsky. Its text is unknown.⁵

The fourth was a letter from Master K.H., and was received. March 22nd, 1884, through the astral form of a high chela. It was delivered to Dāmodar but addressed to Hartmann, and dealt with the critical situation prevailing at the time at Headquarters. Its text is as follows:

¹ [Authentic, genuine, proper]

² “Autobiography of Dr. Franz Hartmann,” *The Occult Review*, January 1908, p. 24. In *Report*, etc., p. 30, four or five lines from this letter are quoted. Instead of “theosophical cause,” “theosophical canoe” is mentioned, and the last sentence appears as: “Make the best of your authority in the interests, etc.”

³ *Lotusblüthen*, LXV, pp. 146-48

⁴ Cf. *Report*, etc., pp. 29-30; *Journal of the T.S.*, March, 1884, p. 53; letter of Dr. Hartmann to W.Q. Judge, *The Path*, Vol. X, p. 191.

⁵ *Lotusblüthen*, LXVII, p. 290

So long as one has not developed a perfect sense of justice he should prefer to err rather on the side of mercy, than commit the slightest act of injustice. Madame Coulomb is a medium, and as such irresponsible for many things she may say or do. At the same time she is kind and charitable. One must know how to act towards her, to make her a very good friend. She has her own weaknesses, but their bad effects can be minimized by exercising on her mind a moral influence by a friendly and kindly feeling. Her mediumistic nature is a help in this direction, if proper advantage be taken of the same.

It is my wish therefore, that she shall continue in charge of the household business, the Board of Control of course exercising a proper supervisory control and seeing in consultation with her, that no unnecessary expenditure is incurred. A good deal of reform is necessary, and can be made rather with the help than the antagonism of Madame Coulomb. Dāmodar would have told you this but his mind was purposely obscured, without his knowledge, to test your intuitions. Show this to Mad. C. so that she may co-operate with you.

K.H.¹

The fifth letter, also from K.H., was precipitated April 1st, 1884, before Hartmann's own eyes on a blank sheet of paper lying on the table at the time.²

The sixth consisted of but a few words from Master M. written on a letter Hartmann had received from Europe sometime in April, 1884.³

The contents of these two letters are unknown.

The seventh letter, received from Master M. April 26th, 1884, was dropped in Dāmodar's room at Ootacamund, and forwarded by him to the Doctor. The following excerpt from this letter has been preserved:

For sometime already the woman [Coulomb] had opened communication — a regular diplomatic *pourparler* with the enemies of the cause, certain padris. — She hopes for more than 2,000 Rupees from them, if she helps them ruining or at least injuring the Society by injuring the reputation of the founders. Hence hints as to 'trap doors' and tricks. Moreover when *needed* trap doors *will be found*, as they have been forthcoming for sometime. They are sole masters of the top story. They have full entrance to and control of the premises.

"Monsieur" is clever and cunning at every handicraft, good mechanic and carpenter and good at walls likewise. *Take note of this ye Theosophists.* They hate you with all the hatred of failure against success; the Society, Henry, H.P.B., theosophists, and aye the very name Theosophy. The * * * are ready to lay out a good sum for the ruin of the Society they hate. . . .

¹ Published in *Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom*, Second Series, No. 73, from a photographic reproduction of the original, whose whereabouts are no longer known. Cf. *Report*, etc., p. 33; *Journal of the T.S.*, July 1884, pp. 99-100.

² *Journal*, etc., July 1884, p. 100

³ *Report*, etc., p. 35; Vania, *Mme. H.P. Blavatsky*, etc., p. 206.

. . . Moreover the J[esuits] in India are in direct understanding with those of London and Paris. . . . Keep all said above in strictest confidence, if you would be strongest. Let her not suspect you know it, but if you would have my advice be prudent. Yet act without delay.

M.¹

The eighth was a letter from Master M. and concerned W.Q. Judge's trip to India. Its date is given by Hartmann as July 30th, 1884, which is most likely wrong, as Judge left Europe end of June and arrived in Bombay July 15th, 1884. An excerpt from it preserved in German translation reads as follows in its most likely English rendering:

. . . There are letters which show that she [Mme. Coulomb] tried to persuade Upāsika that the reason why you wish to banish her and Monsieur C. is that you are in command over the situation, and wish to deliver the Society in the hands of the Spiritualists. . . . Be friendly towards W.Q. Judge. He is true, faithful and trustworthy. . . .

M.²

The ninth letter is of August 2nd, 1884, and is from Master K.H.; its original is in the Adyar Archives; its text throws some light on certain peculiarities of Dāmodar, and tends to explain why Dr. Hartmann had some misunderstandings with him. The letter says:

Dāmodar has undoubtedly many faults and weaknesses as others have. But he is unselfishly devoted to us and to the Cause, and has rendered himself extremely useful to Upāsika. His presence and assistance are indispensably necessary at the Headquarters. His inner self has no desire to domineer, though the outward acts now and then get that colouring from his excessive zeal which he indiscriminately brings to bear upon everything, whether small or great. It must however be remembered that inadequate as our 'instruments' may be, to our full purpose, they are yet the best available since they are but the evolutions of the times. It would be most desirable to have better 'mediums' for us to act thro; and it rests with the well-wishers of the Theosophical Cause how far they will work unselfishly to assist in her higher work and thus hasten the approach of the eventful day. Blessings to all the faithful workers at the Headquarters.

K.H.³

The tenth and, as far as ascertainable, the last letter, is from Master M. A *facsimile* of a portion of the original has been preserved, as a microfilm of it had been made when the original was in the hands of Hugo Vollrath, of Leipzig, Germany. This *fac-*

¹ *Report*, etc., pp. 35-36; Cf. *Journal*, etc., July 1884, p. 100; Vania, *op. cit.*, p. 206; *Lotusblüthen*, LXV, pp. 212-13; and "Autobiography," etc., p. 27, where text has slight variations.

² *Lotusblüthen*, LXVI, p. 217

³ *Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom*, First Series, No. 28. Cf. W.T. Brown, *My Life*. Facsimile in C. Jinarājādāsa's *Did Madame Blavatsky Forge the Mahatma Letters?*, p. 15.

simile is reproduced herewith, as far as is known, for the first time.¹ Transcribed, it reads as follows:

The fool is making capital against Society out of your letter (about discovery). He quotes from, reads it to all, reviles the entire Theosophical household on its strength. You ought to stop him. Again. In such a great work as this Movement no one should expect to find his associates all congenial, intuitive, prudent or courageous. One of the first proofs of self-mastery is when one shows that he can be kind and forbearing and genial with companions of the most dissimilar characters and temperaments. One of the strongest signs of retrogression when one shows that he expects others to like what he likes and act as he acts.² You know whom of you the cap fits. Be a help to us and act accordingly. You are too many here. With more or less bits of too much self-personality.

You have earned much good karma during past year, friend and brother, though, of course mistakes and small sins of commission and omission have now and then been made. It is not best for you that I should specify exactly what you should do, or where you should go. Do not quit this place at any rate before K.s pamphlet has been revised and corrected thoroughly. It must be *very strong*. There are still black clouds over Headquarters and rumblings of dangerous thunder. The woman has the malice of a *dugpa* in her and the “one Eyed” is good help in her infernal concoctions. The young man from London cool and prepared for anything as he is, was stunned by her the other day — her *lie* [*facsimile* ends abruptly here].³

An additional portion of this letter, which Hartmann dates as of January 12th, 1885, has been preserved in German translation. The most likely English rendering would be as follows:

I do not have to explain to you first . . . as you have studied the laws of Karma, although not without some help having been given to you in this. For this reason, you do not receive more often instructions from me. We are leaders but not child-nurses. The weak ones, not the strong ones, are in constant need of definite ‘Orders,’ and at times our chelas satisfy their wishes. This is willing slavery, but no healthy growth. Step forward and try to see clearly yourself what is most needed for the Society. Seek out what your duty may be, and carry it out. If you do the right thing, I will be at your side; but I will not give any advice, and will not involve myself in anything, unless it be unavoidably required, and you were in great doubt. . . .

. . . An infinite field of activity lies before you; the whole world is open to you. . . . Great obstacles are to be overcome; the greater is the power required to overcome them, the greater is the growth that comes from it. A constant re-

¹ p. 449

² The last two sentences were quoted by Hartmann in *The Theosophical Forum*, New Series, Vol. III, April 1898, p. 11.

³ The woman mentioned in this letter is Emma Coulomb, and the one-eyed individual is her husband, Alexis Coulomb. The young man from London is of course Richard Hodgson. It is not certain what is meant by “K.’s pamphlet.”

straint of passions, a sleepless watch over, and patient forbearance of, human weaknesses, will help towards victory.

M.¹

After Madame Blavatsky and party had reached Europe in the Spring of 1885, Dr. Hartmann remained with her at Naples and at Torre del Greco. When Madame Blavatsky moved to Würzburg, he first went to Munich, to see his sister, Countess von Spreti, then to Kempten, in Bavaria, to visit his relatives and to have a look at the place where he had spent his youth. Subsequently he visited Madame Blavatsky, both at Würzburg and in London. He had a symbolic dream during the night following her passing, in which he saw an eagle returning to its home in the sky.

Dr. Hartmann longed to go back to America, where the solitude of the Texas prairies and the peaks of the Rockies had a great attraction for him. He was almost ready to leave, when, as a result of strange circumstances, he made the acquaintance of an occult student who was the leader of a small body of real Rosicrucians, though they did not call themselves so. He writes:

. . . When he first entered my room I at once recognized his face as one which I had seen in a vision on the night of January 1st, 1884, while lying awake on my couch at Adyar. It seemed to me at that time that a large serpent, the symbol of wisdom, was coiled up at the side of my bed, with its head erect, looking sternly at me, and that head was the head of the man I met, and I knew that a ray of wisdom would come to me by his aid.

Hartmann remained at Kempten and identified himself with this group of mystical students, most of whom were poor people, without scholastic education of any kind, but had experienced within themselves some genuine spiritual conditions, and were able, according to Dr. Hartmann's testimony, to teach others how to find the Path. Much of what Hartmann wrote in his later books was based on instructions he received from these people.

In the Spring of 1888, Dr. Hartmann travelled to the U.S.A., and lectured there for a while, visiting New York, Philadelphia and other cities in March and April of that year. He then returned to his native country.

Around 1893, having received offers from a German publisher in Leipzig, Hartmann started editing a German Theosophical monthly journal called *Lotusblüthen* which continued for eight years (1893–1900, sixteen volumes), and was later revived as *Neue Lotusblüthen* (1908–1912, five volumes). The issues of these periodicals contain many interesting articles from able writers, besides Hartmann's own essays, some of which later appeared in book-form.

Around the turn of the century, Dr. Hartmann was living at Hallein, near Salzburg, in Austria, in the vicinity of the famed Untersberg Mountain, which has the reputation of being inhabited by Gnomes. He was then Director of a sanatorium for tuberculosis. At the time of the so-called "split" in the Theosophical Society, he identified himself with the American Organization headed by W.Q. Judge, known then under

¹ *Lotusblüthen*, LXVI, pp. 219-20

the name of the Theosophical Society in America. After Judge's death in 1896, he supported for a while the activities of Katherine Tingley, and was elected, August 30th, 1896, President of a Theosophical Group founded by her in Germany while on a round-the-world trip.

In April 1897, Dr. Hartmann came over to America once again, and represented the German Theosophists at the Convention of the Theosophical Society in America, which was held in New York. He then set out on a rather extensive lecture tour through the Central States, in company with Cyrus F. Willard, a prominent Mason and active in the T.S.

Dr. Hartmann's association with Katherine Tingley did not last, however, owing to various differences which arose on the subject of the conduct of the Society. He soon disbanded the newly-formed group, and founded in Munich on September 3rd, 1897, a body known as the *Internationale Theosophische Verbrüderung*, on lines which he considered to be closer to those indicated by Madame Blavatsky in the early days. It was under the jurisdiction of a three-member Council, the Doctor himself remaining until his passing the Corresponding Secretary of the group. A year after the founding, the seat of this group was transferred to Leipzig.

In 1899, Dr. Hartmann found a valuable friend and ally in Hugo Vollrath, who had formed a Theosophical Group of his own at approximately the same time. They undertook together several lecture tours in Germany and Austria, intended for the spreading of the Theosophical ideas, and collaborated with each other along various other lines. In 1906, Hugo Vollrath founded in Leipzig the *Theosophische Verlags-haus*, which began systematically to publish the various works of Dr. Hartmann, as well as his *Neue Lotusblüthen*.

The International Theosophische Verbrüderung, founded by Dr. Hartmann became in time rather widely spread throughout Germany, publishing after January 1909, a journal called *Theosophische Kultur*. Similarly to other Theosophical groups in Germany, this organization suffered greatly during the upheavals of recent years, but is still active in West Germany at the present time.

Dr. Hartmann's literary output was prodigious. Practically all of his varied writings were produced after his association with the Theosophical Movement and show an outstanding command of English. He also wrote in his own native German. Any attempt to draw up a complete list of his literary productions runs into considerable difficulties, mainly on account of the fact that some of his German works, bearing an identical title to those in the English language, are not in every case merely a German translation of the English text, but often a new version of the latter written in German; it should also be borne in mind that a number of titles are merely a pamphlet or book-form edition of certain articles or essays contributed by Dr. Hartmann to various English and German periodicals. So it is somewhat doubtful whether an absolutely correct and complete listing of his works can now be made, especially when it is remembered that a systematic attempt was made in Germany during the Second World War to destroy his writings, together with other mystical and theosophical works.

As far as can be ascertained, his first work on Occultism was *Magic, White and Black*,¹ enlarged from what originally was but a small pamphlet written “for the purpose of demonstrating to a few inexperienced inquirers that the study of the occult side of nature was not identical with the vile practices of sorcery.” The object of this work was “to assist the student of occultism in studying the elements of which his own soul is composed, and to learn to know his own physical organism.” The author intended in it “to give an impulse to the study of a science which may be called the ‘anatomy and physiology of the Soul,’ which investigates the source from which man’s desires and emotions spring.” It has been said that the material contained in this work is the result of discussions with Madame Blavatsky while Dr. Hartmann was at Adyar.²

The second work of Dr. Hartmann was *The Life of Paracelsus and the Substance of his Teachings*.³ Being a physician himself, the author showed a profound understanding of the occult philosophy of Paracelsus, and produced for the first time an account of his teachings in readable and easily accessible form. The work contains many passages quoted from the writings of the great mediæval mystic, and these are replete with occult information and hints which must prove of great value to the intuitive student.

This was followed by *An Adventure among the Rosicrucians*,⁴ reviewed by Madame Blavatsky herself in the pages of *Lucifer*.⁵

After this came one of the most remarkable works produced by the indefatigable doctor, namely, *The Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians of the 16th and 17th Century*,⁶ an English translation of a very scarce German Rosicrucian work which exists partly in print and partly in unique manuscript, treating in a collection of symbols of the spiritual structure of the Universe. It is a work mentioned in the writings of the mediæval philosophers, but which has been seen only by a very few persons living at present, all accessible copies of it having been destroyed by the Jesuits. It consists of a great number of collared plates and designs, describing the interaction of the forces existing on various planes, and is in fact a summary of Rosicrucian wisdom. The work contains an excellent “Introduction by the Translator” on the views of the Rosicru-

¹ London: George Redway, 1886; 8vo. xii, 228pp.; 3rd rev. & enl. ed., Boston: Occult Publ. Co., 1888; 4th American ed., York: J.W. Lovell Co., 1890, with latest emendations by the author. This work has been reviewed in *The Theosophist*, IX, Supplement to September 1888, and in *The Path*, IV, March 1890. A German version (not a translation) of this work is mentioned in *Lucifer* XIV, p. 83.

² This may well be so, as a great deal of this material was published serially in *The Theosophist*, under the title of “Practical Instructions for Students of Occultism,” and running from Vol. V, May 1884, to Vol. VI, April 1885, inclusive. The series was signed “American Buddhist.”

³ London: George Redway, 1887; xiii, 220pp.; 2nd rev. ed., New York: Theosophical Publishing Co., 1896. Also issued by J.W. Lovell Co., New York, 1891, as part of their Occult Series, and by Macoy Co., New York, in 1932. Reviewed at length by Maurice Frédal in *The Theosophist*, VIII, February and March, 1887.

⁴ Boston: Occult Publ. Co., 1887. Reviewed in *The Theosophist*, IX, April 1888.

⁵ [The full text of *With the Adepts, an adventure among the Rosicrucians*, prefaced with a review by H.P. Blavatsky, can be found in our Mystic Verse and Insights Series under the title “With the Adepts, by Franz Hartmann.” — ED. PHIL.]

⁶ Boston: Occult Publ. Co., 1888. This large-sized (12” X 16½”) work is sometimes called *Cosmology or Universal Science*, as these are actually the initial words of its full title. It has 54 pages of text, 16 pages of an Introduction, and 25 hand-collared plates. Its original price was only \$6.00. and Rs. 15 in India. It was reviewed in *The Theosophist*, IX, May 1888, and in *Lucifer*, Vol. III, September 1888.

cians in general, and on the requirements which are necessary for the study of spiritual mysteries. The *hand-collared* plates, magnificently executed, are accompanied by two main treatises: *Aureum Seculum Redivivum* (The Ancient Golden Age), by Henricus Madathanus Theosophus, and *A Treatise on the Philosopher's Stone*, by “a still living Philosopher, but who does not desire to be known.” A good vocabulary of technical terms is included. It is a work which awakens the student's intuition, and does not clutter his mind with superfluous explanations. As the original edition of this work was a very small one, it has now become an antiquarian item, obtainable only on very rare occasions, and offered for as much as \$150 or more per copy.

The next work to be published was *The Life of Jehoshua, the Prophet of Nazareth*,¹ intended to describe to a certain extent the psychical and spiritual processes which take place in everyone who travels the road of initiation. It presents the outer events of Jehoshua's life as merely the framework for conveying certain spiritual truths to the intuition of the would-be disciple.

Soon after appeared *The Principles of Astrological Geomancy*,² and *In the Pronaos of the Temple of Wisdom*.³ These were followed by *The Life and Doctrines of Jacob Böhme*,⁴ which consists mainly of copious verbatim excerpts from the writings of the remarkable seer, with notes and commentaries by the author.

In his *Occult Science in Medicine*⁵ the author calls the attention of those who follow the profession of medicine to the higher aspects of that science and to the forgotten occult treasures of the past, basing much of his research on Paracelsus. It is a most valuable little book, especially for those who are called upon to try and heal others.

*Among the Gnomes*⁶ is a satire on those who deny everything “supernatural.” *Buried Alive*⁷ treats of premature burial and how to avoid it.

Among works written in German, regarding which information is incomplete and often misleading, mention should be made of the following:

Theophrastus Paracelsus als Mystiker, a work which was to appear at the expense of the city of Salzburg, and under the patronage of the Austrian Government.⁸

¹ Boston: Occult Publ. Co., 1889; 208pp. Reviewed in *Lucifer*, Vol. III, October 1888, and *The Path*, Vol. II, October 1887; Dr. Hartmann himself made some pertinent remarks on the purpose of this work in *Lucifer*, Vol. III, January 1889, pp. 439-40.

² *The Art of Divining by Punctuation, according to Cornelius Agrippa and Others*. With 70 pages of diagrams. London: Theosophical Publishing Co., 1889; new ed., London: Wm. Rider & Co., 1913; 220pp.

³ Containing the history of the true and false Rosicrucians, etc. London: Theosophical Publishing Society, 1890(?); also Boston: Occult Publishing Co.

⁴ London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1891; 334pp. Reviewed in *The Path*, V, February 1891; *Lucifer*, VIII, May 1891; and by Anna Ballard in *The Theosophist*, XII, June 1891.

⁵ London: Theosophical Publishing Society; New York: *The Path*; and Adyar: The Theosophical Society, 1893; 100pp. Reviewed by Dr. Henry T. Edge in *Lucifer*, XIV, March 1894, and in *The Theosophist*, XV, April 1894.

⁶ London: T. Fisher Unwin; Theosophical Publishing Society, 1895; 272pp., Illustrated. Reviewed by Annie Besant in *Lucifer*, XVII, January 1896.

⁷ Boston: Occult Publishing Co., 1895. Reviewed in *The Path*, IX, February 1895, and *Lucifer*, XVI, August 1895. Republished as *Premature Burial* by Swan Sonnenschein, London, 1896.

⁸ Referred to in *The Path*, IX, May 1894, and in *Lucifer*, XIV, July 1894, p. 431.

*Mysterien, Symbole und Magisch Wirkende Kräfte.*¹

Unter den Adepten und Rosenkreuzern.

Die Erkenntnislehre der Bhagavad-Gita.

Populäre Vorträge über Geheimwissenschaft.

Was ist Theosophie?

and a considerable number of other titles, which are both reprints of his essays originally written for his own Journals, and separate works on a variety of mystical subjects.

Dr. Hartmann also translated into German H.P. Blavatsky's *The Voice of the Silence*,² and produced a metrical German translation of the *Bhagavad-Gita*,³ based primarily on Sir Edwin Arnold's poetic rendering as *The Song Celestial*. Its beauty and strength are most remarkable.

In addition to his various works published in book-form, Dr. Hartmann wrote a large number of articles and essays for various Theosophical publications. Some of them are on occult subjects, some others are autobiographical. One of the longest serials was his "Talking Image of Urur," which ran for many months in *Lucifer*,⁴ but apparently remained unfinished, as its book-form reprint shows, which has an additional chapter in it.⁵

Dr. Hartmann also translated several Oriental Scriptures into German, such as the *Ātma-Bodha* and the *Tattva-Bodha* of Śamkarāchārya, and several others.

After the passing of Madame Blavatsky, the publication rights for *The Secret Doctrine* were apparently held by Annie Besant, and as a German translation of this epoch-making work was greatly to be desired, Dr. Hartmann secured from Annie Besant permission to undertake this laborious task. He received from her the needed authorization in September 1895, and secured the able collaboration of Robert Froebe, a scholarly Theosophist holding the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Dr. Froebe is chiefly responsible for the translation work, while Dr. Hartmann reserved to himself the task of reading the proofs. The basis for the translation was the revised edition of 1893. It was published at Leipzig by the Publishing House of Wilhelm Friedrich, under the title of *Die Geheimlehre*, and Dr. Hartmann's Prefatory Note is dated from Torbole (Südtirol), September 1st, 1899. Dr. Froebe translated also "Volume III" of *The Secret Doctrine*, as published in 1897, and this volume was issued by the Lotus Verlag at Leipzig. At a later date, the Theosophisches Verlagshaus at Leipzig, founded by Dr. Hugo Vollrath, published a German translation of *Isis Unveiled*, in uniform format and general appearance with the former work.

¹ Referred to in *The Theosophist*, XIV, July 1903, p. 630.

² Leipzig: Wilhelm Friedrich, 1892. Cf. *The Path*, VII, August 1892, p. 163.

³ Braunschweig: C.A. Schwetschke und Sohn, 1893. Reviewed by Dr. H.T. Edge in *Lucifer*, XII, May 1893.

⁴ Vols. III, IV, V.

⁵ New York: J.W. Lovell & Co., 1890; 307pp.

All in all, the literary output of Dr. Hartmann was prolific, and it has been recently reported that the interest in his writings is on the increase in both Germany and Austria, as part of the present-day re-awakening of spiritual thought.

Dr. Franz Hartmann, a veteran warrior in the modern Theosophical Movement, and one of its most outstanding personalities, passed away at Kempten, Southern Bavaria, on August 7th, 1912. He will be remembered for his life-long devotion to the Cause of true spirituality, and as a fearless worker in the field of human freedom.

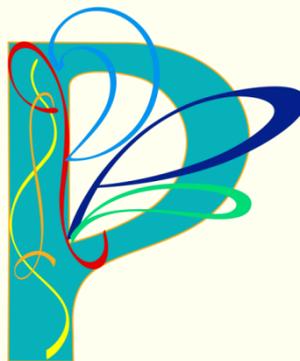
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- Georg Priem, *Dr. Hartmann. Sein Leben und Wirken*. Leipzig: Theos. Kultur-Verlag, 1912.
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- *The Occult Review*, Vol. XVI, 1912, pp. 121-27 (Obituary).



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