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Contents and abstract of central ideas¹

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And by disseminating theosophical ideas and ideals throughout the world.

A letter to “Lucifer” by a perplexed reader. 3

Editorial response by H.P. Blavatsky.

Mr. Sinnett could have no wish whatsoever to convey the idea that he was the first and only channel for promulgating Eastern Esoteric Doctrine. 4

Religion in West and East had long been smothering beneath the dust heaps of Sectarianism and enfranchised Science. Bereft of any scientific religious concept, Science gave Religion the deathblow with the iron bar of Materialism. 5

So once again the Gates of the Palace of Truth were opened, and Mr. Sinnett and other members of the Lodge helped us to turn our gaze upon the bright Star of Bethlehem. 5

Suggested reading for students.

From our Theosophy and Theosophists Series. 6



¹ Frontispiece by Zaw Zaw Aung.

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A letter to “Lucifer” by a perplexed reader.

First published in *Lucifer*, Vol. III (14), October 1888, pp. 172-74. Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (PERTINENT QUESTIONS) X pp. 151-54. Headings by ED. PHIL.

You invite questions respecting all points of difficulty in subjects connected with Occult Science. I cannot reconcile some things relating to the Apostles of Modern Theosophy.

In the “Preface to the Original Edition”¹ of *Esoteric Buddhism*, by Mr. A.P. Sinnett, there are these words:

Two years ago, neither I nor any other European living knew the alphabet of the science here for the first time put into a scientific shape.

This is an emphatic expression; it would seem to imply that the thinking world is exclusively indebted to this book and to its author for that knowledge of the truths of Esoteric Science, which is now making its way amongst European and American Theosophists. But this can hardly be Mr. Sinnett’s meaning.

For, can the statement and its implication be consistent with the fact that Madame Blavatsky, herself a European,² had, some years [152] previously, written *Isis Unveiled*, which though it does not give the same constructive teaching respecting the mysteries of the Universe as does *Esoteric Buddhism*, does yet imply a knowledge on the part of its author of much more than “the alphabet of the science”?

But is it not true, as indicated in *The Occult World*, that Mr. Sinnett owed to Madame Blavatsky his own first knowledge of Esoteric Science, and also his introduction to the adept teacher, the Master from whom he derived the bulk of his information? Madame Blavatsky, we have been led to understand, taught these truths of Occult Science years previously to Colonel Olcott, and in so doing converted him from a Spiritualist to a Theosophist. It is further likely that Madame Blavatsky taught others the same truths.³

¹ Page xxiii, of the 5th Edition.

² [In view of a number of such letters received, a full answer will be given in *The Secret Doctrine*, now nearly ready.— *H.P. Blavatsky*.]

³ [She did, most undeniably. But as her several pupils (Europeans) were *pledged* disciples, which Mr. Sinnett never was, they could not give out to the world what they had learned. — *H.P. Blavatsky*.]

I would also ask if there are no secret students of Science, in its broadest aspects, who have known these things in advance of its recent publication?

It would be a satisfaction to myself and others if it could be stated how the recent teachings of Occult Science really originated, and what the true position of Esoteric Buddhism is as an authoritative exponent of Occult truth.

Now that Theosophical teachings are taking hold of men's minds, it is very desirable that the genesis of the modern movement should be truthfully known. I acknowledge myself greatly indebted to *Esoteric Buddhism*, but I am very anxious to understand the facts to which I have alluded, and to have them reconciled.

Yours faithfully,

CHARLES B. INGHAM



Editorial response by H.P. Blavatsky.

Mr. Sinnett could have no wish whatsoever to convey the idea that he was the first and only channel for promulgating Eastern Esoteric Doctrine.

The case in point is a good illustration of the misconceptions which often spring from looseness of expression in a writer. Certainly, Mr. Sinnett could have no wish whatsoever to convey the idea that he was the first and only channel for the transmission of Esoteric doctrine. In fact, he specially repudiates the claim, as our correspondent will find if he will turn to *p.* xxi, of the Preface to the very edition he cites. Says Mr. Sinnett:

Let me add that I do not regard myself as the sole exponent [153] for the outer world, at this crisis, of esoteric truth.

If he omitted to mention the writer and her American pupils and colleagues of 1874-78, Colonel Olcott and Mr. Judge, it was undoubtedly because he regarded "Madame Blavatsky," on account of her Russian nationality, as more Asiatic than European — a harmless delusion many a patriotic Englishman labours under — and the former gentlemen, as Americans. It had also escaped him for the moment, no doubt, that among the group of Initiates to which his own mystical correspondent is allied, are two of European race, and that one who is that Teacher's superior is also of that origin, being half a Slavonian in his "present incarnation," as he himself wrote to Colonel Olcott in New York.

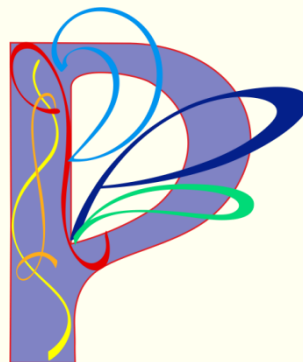


Religion in West and East had long been smothering beneath the dust heaps of Sectarianism and enfranchised Science. Bereft of any scientific religious concept, Science gave Religion the death-blow with the iron bar of Materialism.

Esoteric Buddhism has rendered precious service, by popularizing in exoteric form esoteric truths, meddling with pure metaphysics being disclaimed by its author,¹ and in the propagation of theosophical ideas throughout the world; and it has proved its popularity by passing already through six editions, and being just at this moment about to appear in a seventh. Yet it is not free enough of minor errors to entitle it to be regarded as an infallible Scripture, nor its modest author as a Divine Revelator — as some foolish enthusiasts, in search of new idols, figure to themselves. The correspondent's question as to "how the recent teachings of Occult Science really originated," is easily answered. A crisis had arrived in which it was absolutely necessary to bring within reach of our generation the Esoteric Doctrine of the eternal cycles. Religion, both in the West and East, had long been smothering beneath the dust heaps of Sectarianism and enfranchised Science. For lack of any scientific religious concept, Science was giving Religion the *coup-de-grâce* with the iron bar of Materialism.

So once again the Gates of the Palace of Truth were opened, and Mr. Sinnett and other members of the Lodge helped us to turn our gaze upon the bright Star of Bethlehem.

To crown the disorder, the phantom-world of Hades, or Kama-loka, had burst in a muddy torrent into ten thousand séance-rooms, and created most misleading notions of man's *post-mortem* state. Nothing but a few fundamental tenets from the Esoteric philosophy, sketched in broad outlines by such a clear and brilliant writer as Mr. Sinnett [154] is known to be, could snatch mankind from drowning in the sea of ignorance. So once again the Gates of the Palace of Truth were opened and Mr. Sinnett and many other willing workers have caught each a ray. But as all the light can only be got by re-uniting all the different rays of the spectrum, so the archaic philosophy in its entirety can only be apprehended by combining all the glimpses of light that have passed through the many intellectual prisms of our own and preceding generations.



¹ See p. 46.

Suggested reading for students.



From our Theosophy and Theosophists Series.

- A DEBT OF GRATITUDE TO LORD LYTTON
- A LAY CHELA ON OCCULT STUDY
- A LAY CHELA ON THE SECRET DOCTRINE
- A THEOSOPHICAL LOVE FEAST IN FRANCE
- A THIRSTY HORSE-LEECH PLEADING ADMISSION TO THE T.S.
- ALETHEIA IS OUR GOD AND DOGMA
- ANCIENT ETHICAL WORSHIPS
- ARCHAIC THEOSOPHY IS PRE-BUDDHIST WISDOM-RELIGION
- BLAVATSKY DEFENDS BLAVATSKY
- BLAVATSKY DEFENDS THE KEY TO THEOSOPHY
- BLAVATSKY ON ANNA KINGSFORD
- BLAVATSKY ON THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SOUL AND SPIRIT
- BLAVATSKY ON THE ORIGIN AND SOURCE OF THE SECRET DOCTRINE
- BLAVATSKY ON THE THEOSOPHY OF DR. N.I. PIROGOV
- BLAVATSKY ON THE TRAVELLING TRUTHSEEKER
- BLAVATSKY REFUTES ARGUMENTS AGAINST THEOSOPHY
- BLAVATSKY REFUTES THE ASSERTIONS OF A FRENCH THEOSOPHIST
- BLAVATSKY'S OPEN LETTER TO FELLOW THEOSOPHISTS
- BUCK ON THE NATURE AND AIM OF THEOSOPHY
- COLD METAPHYSICS VERSUS DIVINE WISDOM
- CONDUCT AND DUTIES OF A TRUE THEOSOPHIST
- CORY'S ANCIENT FRAGMENTS (1832)
- COSMOPOLITANISM IS FAR HOLIER AND NOBLER THAN GRASPING GREEDINESS CLOAKED IN PATRIOTISM
- DE ZIRKOFF ON CHARLES JOHNSTON

THEOSOPHY AND THEOSOPHISTS SERIES
SUGGESTED READING FOR STUDENTS

- DE ZIRKOFF ON EDWARD DOUGLAS FAWCETT
- DE ZIRKOFF ON FRANZ HARTMANN
- DE ZIRKOFF ON GERALD MASSEY
- DE ZIRKOFF ON HP BLAVATSKY COLLECTED WRITINGS
- DE ZIRKOFF ON SUBBA ROW
- DE ZIRKOFF ON THE COUNTESS OF CAITHNESS
- DE ZIRKOFF ON THE DREAM THAT NEVER DIES
- DE ZIRKOFF ON THE SECRET DOCTRINE
- DE ZIRKOFF ON THE SIBYLLINE ORACLES
- DE ZIRKOFF ON THE THIRD VOLUME OF THE SECRET DOCTRINE
- DE ZIRKOFF ON THREE EMINENT THEOSOPHISTS
- DE ZIRKOFF ON WILHELM HÜBBE-SCHLEIDEN
- DE ZIRKOFF RECALLS HIS FORMATIVE YEARS IN RUSSIA
- EARLY THEOSOPHICAL DOCTRINES EXPOUNDED BY H.P. BLAVATSKY
- EASTERN LIGHT SHINES ON WESTERN MINDS
- EASTERN THEOSOPHY IS NEITHER A CREED, NOR A RELIGIOUS BODY
- ESSENTIAL THEOSOPHICAL DOCTRINES
- HARTMANN ON HOW TO ENTER THE PATH TO INFINITE LIFE
- HARTMANN ON THE HARMONICAL SOCIETY
- HOW THEOSOPHY REKINDLED TRUE BROTHERHOOD IN INDIA
- HUMANITY SEEMS TO PROGRESS BY INVENTING ONE DISCOVERY AFTER THE OTHER
- IMPORT AND POTENCY OF NUMBERS AS SYMBOLS
- IN THE EARLY DAYS OF THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT
- ISIS UNVEILED IS THE MAJESTY OF TRUTH UNVEILED
- JUDGE AND DE ZIRKOFF ON GEORGE MEAD
- JUDGE ON THE HEART DOCTRINE
- JUDGE ON THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT
- JUDGE ON THE TRUE THEOSOPHIST'S PATH
- JUDGE ON THEOSOPHICAL STUDY AND WORK
- KEYS TO THE MYSTERY LANGUAGE
- LET THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY PERISH, THAN FORSAKE THE CAUSE OF TRUTH
- MEDITATION ALONE WILL NOT LEAD TO THEOSOPHIC DEVELOPMENT
- MYSTERY IS NOT UNREVEALED KNOWLEDGE

THEOSOPHY AND THEOSOPHISTS SERIES
SUGGESTED READING FOR STUDENTS

- NO THEOSOPHICAL JOURNAL CAN SATISFY ALL CREEDS AND BELIEFS
- OCCULT TRUTH IS NATURE WITHOUT THE ILLUSORY VEIL OF THE SENSES
- OUR GOD IS HUMANITY AND OUR CULT THE LOVE OF OUR FELLOW-MAN
- OUR ONLY DELIVERER AND SAVIOUR
- PLEDGED STUDENTS' PRESCRIBED GUIDE FOR CONDUCT
- PREREQUISITES TO MEMBERSHIP OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
- PRESIDENTIAL AUTHORITARIANISM IS AN AFFRONT TO BROTHERHOOD
- SPURNED THE SUBSTANCE AND CLUTCHED THE SHADOW
- STUDENTS HAVE A CHOICE OF TWO PATHS
- SUBBA ROW DEFENDS ESOTERIC BUDDHISM
- SUBBA ROW'S ESOTERIC WRITINGS (1895)
- THAT WHICH IS FALSE CAN ONLY BE KNOWN BY TRUTH
- THE AIMS AND MISSION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY FULFILLED
- THE BRETHERN OF THE ROSY CROSS NO LONGER EXIST
- THE CHALDEAN ORACLES OF ZOROASTER
- THE CROWN JEWELS OF THEOSOPHY (PHOTO ALBUM)
- THE POWER OF THE TRINITY OF KOSMOS MANIFESTS THROUGH THE FOUR PRINCIPLES OF MAN
- THE REVIVAL OF EASTERN OCCULT PHILOSOPHY
- THE SUN OF TRUTH FEARS NO LIGHT AND NEEDS NO LIES
- THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IS NOT A NURSERY FOR BUDDING ADEPTS
- THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL ARCANE TERMS
- THEOSOPHIA - FOUNTAIN, PERSPECTIVES, PRACTICE (DRAWING)
- THEOSOPHIA: INNER WISDOM
- THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, THE GREAT MORAL BUT SILENT FORCE
- THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY - ESOTERIC SECTION (LETTERHEAD)
- THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY - MISSION AND FUTURE
- THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY - MONOGRAM 1 (LOGOTYPE)
- THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY - MONOGRAM 2 (LOGOTYPE)
- THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY - OBJECTS AND EARLY ACCOMPLISHMENTS
- THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY - SEAL 1 (LOGOTYPE)
- THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY - SEAL 2 (LOGOTYPE)
- THEOSOPHICAL SYMBOLS (TRUE TYPE FONT)
- THEOSOPHIST IS WHO THEOSOPHY DOES

THEOSOPHY AND THEOSOPHISTS SERIES
SUGGESTED READING FOR STUDENTS

- THEOSOPHISTS DEFINED ATTITUDINALLY, ETHICALLY, PHILOSOPHICALLY (DRAWING)
- THEOSOPHY AND THEOSOPHISTS
- THEOSOPHY BRINGS THE WISDOM OF LOVE BEFORE THE EYE OF THE SOUL
- THEOSOPHY IS DEEPER MONISM THAN SECULARISM, AND MORE PHILOSOPHICAL
- THEOSOPHY IS RELIGION ITSELF AND SUBLIME CODE OF ETHICS
- THEOSOPHY IS THE PRECIOUS PEARL WITHIN THE SHELL OF EVERY RELIGION
- THEOSOPHY IS THE SCIENCE OF TRUTH AND THE RELIGION OF JUSTICE
- TRIBUTES TO DE ROBIGNE MORTIMER BENNETT
- TRIBUTES TO WILLIAM QUAN JUDGE
- TRUE THEOSOPHISTS ARE ALWAYS UNDER THE MASTER'S EYE
- TRUTH IS ALWAYS MIXED WITH ERROR AND HINDERED BY TECHNOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE
- TWO JOURNALS DEVOTED TO THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN
- VERNAL BLOOMS BY WILLIAM QUAN JUDGE
- VISTAS OF VIRTUE AND TRUTH
- WADIA'S RESIGNATION FROM THE TS
- WHAT SORT OF MAN THE REAL PHILOSOPHER SHOULD BE?
- WHEN PURE LOVE IS PERVERTED, HUMANITY QUIVERS
- WHO CAN MEND THE BROKEN SOCIETY?
- WHO CAN READ THE RIDDLE OF THE SERPENT?
- WHO SHOULD BE INVITED TO THEOSOPHICAL MEETINGS?
- WHY A BRAHMIN ABANDONED HIS CASTE
- WHY PAGAN SYMBOLISM IS INDESTRUCTIBLE?
- WILDER ON THE WISDOM RELIGION OF ZOROASTER

