

Adyar Pamphlet No 111 March 1920

Concerning H.P.B (Stray Thoughts on Theosophy)

by G.R.S. Mead

[Reprinted from *The Theosophical Review*, Volume XXXIV]

Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Chennai (Madras) India

I (Wisdom) love them that love me -

Prov. viii, 17.

Where there is mystery, it is generally supposed that there must also be evil.

- Byron

LET us for a few minutes turn our thoughts together to the woman without whom, in every probability, there would have been no Theosophical movement today as we understand it. Let us consider briefly the crude and blundering question: "Do you believe in Blavatsky?"

To me this question sounds strange, sounds even, if I may say so, vulgar. "Blavatsky?" No one who knew her, knew her thus *tout court*. For her enemies even, while she lived, she was Madame Blavatsky or at least H.P. Blavatsky; while for her friends and lovers she was Helena Petrovna, or H.P.B., or the "Old Lady" - which once gave occasion to a pretty witticism of a friend, who slyly remarked that it would have been awkward had *Madame* been *Monsieur*.

When then such an uncompromising question as this is put to us, how are we to answer it in utter honesty, if, as is the case with most of us who have studied the subject, we refuse to adopt either the ignorant position of blind prejudice, which thinks it answers infallibly by screaming the parrot-cry of "trickster," or the, to me still more ignorant view of blind credulity, that once on a time tried to parade our Theosophic streets proclaiming the Bandar-log mantra "H.P.B. says," as the universal panacea for every ill, and solvent of every problem - a species of aberration which, I rejoice to say, has long ceased from troubling us?

To this question, the only answer that the vast majority of our present-day fellowship can give, is perhaps somewhat on these lines: We never knew Madame Blavatsky personally, and now, at this late date, in face of the absolutely contradictory assertions made concerning her by her friends and her foes, it is not to be expected that we can pronounce magisterially on a problem which has baffled even her most intimate friends, or solve an enigma which is as mysterious as the riddle of the ancient Sphinx. What we know is, that in spite of all that people have said against the extravagantly abused woman for upwards of a quarter of a century, the fundamentals of Theosophy stand firm, and this for the very simple reason that they are entirely independent of Madame Blavatsky. It is Theosophy in which we are interested, and *this* would remain an immovable rock of strength and comfort, an inexhaustible source of study, the most noble of all quests, and the most desirable of paths on which to set our feet, even if it were possible, which it is not, conclusively to prove that H.P. Blavatsky was the cleverest trickster and most consummate charlatan of the ages.

For surely even the most prodigal of sons may recall dim - nay, even bright - memories of the glories of the mansions of his father's house; his report need not be necessarily false because he is in exile, feeding with the "swine," and grown like unto them. He may by chance have eaten of the "moly"; his memory of home may be coming back. Nay, in this case, it has come back, though seemingly in a chaotic rush, for in fact and truth - and this is what really counts in the whole matter - it has awakened the same memory in many a one of us, his fellow exiles, who bless him for the story - a true "myth" - which he has told.

All this and more, even the most cautious of us can answer, and so set H.P.B.'s testimony concerning herself, the "memories" concealed within her books, which memories none but the knowing can know, against, on the one hand, the faults of their scholarship - for she was no scholar and never claimed to be one, a fact that makes her work the more extraordinary rather than helps to clarify the problem - and, on the other hand, against the twenty years old inimical Report of a member of a society which is now distinguished but was then in its infancy. Indeed the enigma of H.P.B. is ridiculously far from being so simple as the fervent believers in the infallibility of that very one sided account would have it to be.

The enigma of H.P.B. is, even for those who knew her most intimately, insoluble, as anyone may see for himself by reading the straightforward objective account of her, given by her lifelong colleague in the work, H.S. Olcott, in his *Old Diary Leaves*. No one has in any way given so true a portrait of H.P.B. in her ordinary daily life as has our President-Founder; it is an account of utter honesty, hiding nothing, palliating nothing, but painting in bold strokes the picture of that to me most humanely loveable bundle of inexplicable contradictions; that puzzling mixture of wisdom and folly; that sphinx clad in motley; that successful pioneer of a truly spiritual movement (who was yet, to all appearances, the least fitted to inaugurate such an effort because of her almost mischievous delight not only in

outraging the taboos of conventional thought, but also in setting at nought the canons of deportment which tradition has decreed as the outer and visible signs of a spiritual teacher); that frequent cause of despair even to her best friends, and yet, in spite of her utter incomprehensibility, the most winsome of creatures.

As for myself, when I am confronted with the notorious S.P.R. (Society for Psychical Research) Report - though I must confess that I rarely hear anything about it nowadays - I have a very simple answer to make; and it runs somewhat on these lines. You who believe in the S.P.R. investigator's account say that Mme. Blavatsky was a trickster, You did not know her personally; nor, as a matter of fact, did the Committee who adopted the investigator's account. Even the investigator himself had to get the data on which he based his theory from others, when he arrived in Madras. It is thus all at second-hand at the best; even the investigator saw nothing at firsthand. Like the investigator, and like you who believe in his theory, I too was not there; I, therefore, have no means of judging at firsthand. I can only put the very ample written testimony and the still ampler unwritten evidence of her friends who were present, in favour of H.P.B. against the accusations of two dismissed employees, adopted by the missionaries, and afterwards endorsed by the S.P.R. investigator, who at that time seems to have had no firsthand acquaintance with the simplest psychic phenomena, and to have felt himself compelled to exhaust every possible hypothesis of fraud, even the most absurd, before giving Mme. Blavatsky the benefit even of the slightest doubt.

Since those days, however, such a change has come over the general opinion of the S.P.R. with regard to psychic matters, and Dr Hodgson himself has so fundamentally altered his own position, owing to his now mature firsthand experience, that one need not be held to be departing entirely from an impartial judgment in thinking it more probable that Dr Hodgson's inexperienced hypotheses with regard to Mme. Blavatsky are not to be preferred to the many years of testimony in her favour brought forward by her friends in all countries.

Oh, but - some one will say under the influence of this notorious Report - they were all deluded, hypnotized. She was, on the showing of the evidence, helped by many skilful confederates all over the world; it was all a clever system of deception.

This is indeed the main burden of the hypotheses put forward by this Report; on all occasions confederates, trapdoors, etc., hypnotism. Anything, everything, but the admission that H.P.B. was, even at times, so common a thing as an ordinary spiritualistic medium! No; she must be proved lower even than that - an unmitigated fraud in every direction. Even an impartial outsider must feel inclined to exclaim; *Surtout pas trop de zèle, Messieurs les Inquisiteurs!* We have throughout presented to us the picture of nothing but a cunning *prestidigitatrice*, with the elaborate preparations and carefully planned surprises, carried out by astute confederates. It is true that this host of confederates has never been

brought into court; they have disappeared into the invisible. Indeed they have, and that too not metaphorically; or rather, perhaps, they have never been anywhere else than in the invisible, for did not H.P.B. call them elementals?

Be that as it may be, I, for my part, when investigating a subject, prefer firsthand evidence. I have, therefore, as opposed to the endorsers of and the believers in this Report, so to speak, never left her side; I worked with her in the greatest intimacy, was her private secretary. The picture which the Report paints of H.P.B. flatly contradicts all my personal experience of her, and therefore I cannot but decline to accept it.

I went to her after the publication of the Report, three years after, when the outcry was still loud and suspicion in the air; for the general public of that day, believing in the impossibility of all psychic phenomena, naturally condemned H.P.B. without any enquiry. I went with an accurate knowledge of the Report and of all its elaborate hypotheses in my head; it could not have been otherwise. But a very few months' firsthand acquaintance with H.P.B. convinced me that the very faults of her character were such that she could not have possibly carried on a carefully planned fraud, even had she wanted to do so, least of all an elaborate scheme of deception depending on the manipulation of mechanical devices and the help of crafty confederates.

She was frequently most unwise in her utterances, and if angry would blurt out anything that might come into her head, no matter who was present. She did not seem to care what anyone might think, and would sometimes accuse herself of all kinds of things - faults and failings - but never, under any circumstances, even in her wildest moods, did she ever utter a syllable that in any way would confirm the speculations and accusations of Dr Hodgson. I am myself convinced that had she been guilty of the things charged against her in this respect, she could not have failed, in one or other of her frequent outbursts or confidences, to have let some word or hint escape her of an incriminating nature. Two things in all the chaos of her cosmos stood firm in every mood - that her Teachers existed and that she had not cheated.

But the irreconcilables will say: Oh, she was too cunning for you; besides, she glamourised you.

The irreconcilables are of course privileged to say anything their fancy may dictate; it is far easier to be seemingly wise at a long distance and to imagine things as one would desire them to have been, than to have, like myself, to try to solve the actual problem that was daily before my own eyes, for three years and more, and the further and still more complex problem contained in a most voluminous literary output, every page of which one has read, and many of which one has had in one way or other to edit. What, however, has always been a personal proof to myself of H.P.B.'s *bona fides*, is a purely objective thing,

incapable of being explained away by impatiently casting it into the wastepaper basket of psychological theoreticians.

To all intents and purposes, as far as any objective knowledge was concerned, I went to work with H.P.B. as an entirely untried factor. I might, for all she knew to the contrary, have been a secret emissary of the enemy, for she was to my knowledge spied on by many. In any case, supposing she had been a cheat, she must have known that it was a very dangerous experiment to admit an untried person to her most intimate environment. Not only, however, did she do this, but she overwhelmed me with the wholeheartedness of her confidence. She handed over to me the charge of all her keys, of her MSS, her writing desk and the nests of drawers in which she kept her most private papers; not only this, but she further, on the plea of being left in peace for her writing, absolutely refused to be bothered with her letters, and made me take over her voluminous correspondence, and that too without opening it first herself. She not only metaphorically, but sometimes actually, flung the offending missives at my head! I accordingly had frequently to open all her letters and not only to read them but to answer them as best I could; for this strange old lady cried out with loud outcry to be relieved of the burden of letter-writing, that she might write her articles and books, and would wax most wrathful and drive me out, whenever I pestered her to answer the most pressing correspondence or even to give me some idea of what to reply in her name.

Now I am not saying it was right of a woman who day by day received a large batch of letters, some of them - many of them - containing the most private thoughts of men and women all over the world, admitting the reader to the intimacy of their inner life, [When some of her bitterest foes were attacking her - men and women who previously had poured forth their confidences into her unwilling ears - she exclaimed to me: "God! how they must respect me!" They knew she would not make use of their confessions against them.] thus to entrust them to a young man comparatively ignorant of life and almost entirely unable to deal with them, otherwise than each morning, so to speak, to beard the lion in his den - for the Old Lady was leonine - and persist in parading the most important of this correspondence before the eyes of H.P.B., to her even increasing annoyance and a regular periodical outburst, when both correspondence and secretary were first committed to an infernal w.p.b., and finally some sort of a compromise was arrived at.

I grumbled then, but now I rejoice, for so I learned in a short time what might otherwise have taken me many long years to acquire; but it seemed to me, and still so seems, to have been somewhat rough on her correspondents, unless indeed in many cases the fool had to be answered according to his folly - and I was a useful fool for that answering side of the business.

But, be this as it may be, convinced me wholly and surely that whatever else H.P.B. may have been, she was not a cheat or trickster - she had nothing to hide;

for a woman who, according to the main hypothesis of the S.P.R. Report, had confederates all over the world and lived the life of a scheming adventurer, would have been not only incredibly foolhardy, but positively mad to have let all her private correspondence pass into the hands of a third party, and that, too, without even previously opening it herself.

All this and much else proved to me that H.P.B. was assuredly not a cheat and trickster, certainly not while I knew her; and in every probability was not in the past when I did not know her. Of one thing, however, I am certain, that I know far more about H.P.B. her life and work, than those members of the S.P.R. who have persistently done their best to disgrace her before the world, and that their hypotheses are ludicrously insufficient to unriddle that sphinx of the nineteenth century, H.P. Blavatsky who was, at the lowest computation, not only as interesting as a dozen Mrs So and So's, on whom the S.P.R. have expended so much energy, but who, further, was the chief means of opening many windows into the greatness of things, not one of which will be shut again, for the lifework of the greatest of her detractors in the S.P.R. does but ever more and more support her own contentions.

“Do you believe in H.P.B? Yes; I believe in H.P.B. As for H.P. Blavatsky, I have no more high opinion of her than had H.P.B. herself, for she straitly distinguished between the two; but I reject with scorn the ludicrous attempt to explain even H.P. Blavatsky by calling her a trickster and a common charlatan. I believe firmly in H.P.B's *bona fides*; but above all things I believe with all my soul in the great things she fought for, in the deep Mysteries of which she gave tidings. I should, however, like always to be allowed, if I can, to state them in my own way, and, if I am able, to support them in my own way, for I frequently dissent from H.P.B's methods and from her manner.

She was filled with imperfections, even as we all are, but she - when she touched a height, it was a great height. There was something colossal, titanic, even cosmic, about H.P.B. at times; indeed I have sometimes had the apparently whimsical notion that she did not belong to this planet, did not fit into this evolution. But, indeed, who shall unriddle the enigma of H.P.B.? What did she not touch at times? Multiplex personality in contact with multiplex personalities - as complex perchance as man's whole nature, in miniature at least!

I make the surface critic an unconditional present of the faulty apparatus of her controversial writings - though that is perhaps somewhat too generous a gift on all occasions. She was no scholar, had no training at school, or college, or university; was no scientist, had presumably never witnessed a laboratory experiment in her life; she was no mathematician, *[Indeed her favourite habit was to count on her fingers. On one occasion when she was engaged on a chapter of *The Secret Doctrine*, she called her niece into her room and addressed her somewhat as follows: “Here, my dear, you are a mathematical pundit; where does the *comma* go? I am certain of the figures but can't see

where the confounded comma comes in.” This was the value of the circular measure of two right angles, and anyone who has read the learned disquisition of the matter in *The Secret Doctrine* will be somewhat puzzled to account for the fact that the writer knew so little of mathematics as to confuse the decimal point with a comma!] no formal philosopher of the schools, could not, most probably, have told you the difference between the positions of Kant and Schopenhauer had you asked her - and yet she wrote on all these things, and frequently with the greatest acumen.

Of all this I make a present to the critic; I class all this as mostly ephemeral, as what will to a large extent pass away, as what has in some measure already passed away, for science has grown much in later years and is now denying many things that she denied, and affirming many that she affirmed twenty years ago. But the giant's grip of the whole scheme of things, the titanic sweep of world-processes envisaged, the cyclopean piling of hypotheses on hypotheses till her hypothetical Ossas and Pelions reached to heaven, and to the heaven of heavens - the fresh atmosphere of life and reality with which she surrounded her great expositions - all this I claim for her enduring reputation. She was a titan among mortals; she pointed the way to me and to many others, and that is why we love her. Setting forth on the way she showed, we know she lied not as to the direction. Our titan was elemental, as indeed are all titans; but in laying foundations it is necessary to have giants, and giants when they move cannot but knock over the idols in the shrines of the dwarfs.

Let me then speak of a subject of which I presumably know as much as even the most industrious adverse critic of H.P.B.'s work - her literary remains. I have carefully read all she has written; much of it I have edited, some of it I have read many, many times. I think I may say without any undue boasting that no one knows better than I do the books from which she quotes and the use she makes of quotations. She was, indeed, more or less mediæval, or even, at times, Early-Christian, in her quotation work; let us grant this fully in every way - though perhaps we are a little inclined to go too far in this nowadays. But what I have been most interested in, in her writing, is precisely that which she does not quote from known sources, and this it is which forms for me the main factor in the enigma of H.P.B. I perpetually ask myself the questions: Whence did she get her information - apparent translations of texts and commentaries, the originals of which are unknown to the Western world?

Some ten years ago or more, the late Professor Max Müller, to whom all lovers of the Sacred Books of the East owe so deep a debt of gratitude, published his most instructive set of Gifford Lectures, entitled *Theosophy or Psychological Religion*. These I reviewed in much detail, in a series of three articles in this REVIEW. The aged Professor wrote to me a kindly note on the subject, taking exception to one or two points, and we exchanged several letters.

He then expressed himself as surprised that I should waste, as he thought, what he was good enough to call my abilities on "Theosophy," when the whole field of Oriental studies lay before me, in which he was kind enough to think I could do useful work. Above all, he was puzzled to understand why I treated seriously that charlatan, Mme Blavatsky, who had done so much harm to the cause of genuine Oriental studies by her parodies of Buddhism and Vedanta, which she had mixed up with Western ideas. Her whole Theosophy was *du réchauffé* of misunderstood translations of Sanskrit and Pâli texts.

To this I replied that as I had no object to serve but the cause of Truth, if he could convince me that Mme. Blavatsky's Theosophy was merely a clever or ignorant manipulation of Sanskrit and Pâli texts, I would do everything in my power to make the facts known to the Theosophic world; for I naturally did not wish to waste my life on a "swindle" - the epithet he once used of *Esoteric Buddhism* at an Oriental Congress. I therefore asked him to be so good as to point out what in his opinion were the original texts in Sanskrit or Pâli, or any other language, on which were based either the "Stanzas of Dzyan" and their commentaries in *The Secret Doctrine*, or any of the three treatises found in *The Voice of the Silence*. I had myself for years been searching for any trace of the originals or of fragments resembling them, and had so far found nothing. If we could get the originals, we asked nothing better; it was the material we wanted.

To this Professor Max Müller replied in short note, pointing to two verses in *The Voice of the Silence*, which he said were quite Western in thought and therefore betrayed their unguineness.

I answered that I was extremely sorry he had not pointed out the texts on which any sentence of the "Precepts" or any stanza of the "Book of Dzyan" was based; nevertheless, I should like to publish his criticism, reserving to myself the right of commenting on it.

To this Professor Max Müller hastily rejoined that he begged I would not do so, but that I would return his letter at once, as he wished to write something more worthy of the REVIEW. I, of course, returned his letter, but I have been waiting from that day to this for the promised proof that H.P.B was, in these marvellous literary creations, nothing but a sorry centonist who out of tags of misunderstood translations patched together a fantastic motley for fools to wear. And I may add the offer is still open for any and every Orientalist who desires to make good the, to me, ludicrous contention of the late Nestor of Orientalism.

I advisedly call these passages, enshrined in her works, marvellous literary creations, not from the point of view of an enthusiast who knows nothing of Oriental literature, or the great cosmogonical systems of the past, or the Theosophy of the World Faiths, but as the mature judgement of one who has been for some twenty years studying just such subjects. Nor can it be maintained with any show of confidence that the Stanzas and their Commentaries, and the

Fragments from what is called the Book of the Golden Precepts, are adequately paralleled by the writings of spiritualistic mediumship; they are different from all these, belong to a different class of transmission.

The Stanzas set forth a cosmogenesis and anthropogenesis which, in their sweep and detail, leave far behind any existing record of such things from the past; they cannot be explained as the clever piecing together of the disconnected archaic fragments still preserved in sacred books and classical authors; they have an individuality of their own, and yet they bear the hallmark of an antiquity and the warrant of an economy which the Western world thinks to have long passed away. Further, they are set in an atmosphere of commentary apparently translated or paraphrased from Far Eastern tongues, producing a general impression of genuineness that is difficult for a scholar who has sufficiently overcome his initial prejudices to study them, to withstand.

As for the Fragments which purport to be treatises of a mystic Buddhist school, they too bear on their faces every mark of genuineness, even in their heretical nature and in the self-confession of their sectarian character. It is far more difficult to believe they are forgeries, begotten of a Western brain, than to believe they are, if not literal translations, at least free versions from genuine documents, perhaps of the *Aryasanga* school sermons for pupils on the Path.

Almost without exception I find that people who loudly condemn H.P.B. when asked "Have you read these things?" answer: "Oh, I really can't be bothered to read anything that woman wrote; she was an impostor" or "No, I have not read these things; and anyway I am not an Oriental scholar, but Professor Max Müller in *The Nineteenth Century*," etc., etc.

All of which is rather in favour of H.P.B. than against her, for there must be something almost superhuman on the side of one who can arouse such blind prejudice in otherwise fair-minded folk.

The enigma of H.P.B. which no Report or a thousand such Reports can solve, among many other riddles, presents us *in limine* with the question: Whence did H.P.B. become possessed of these things? What is the most simple hypothesis to account for it all? If you say she was a spiritualistic medium - then you must extend this term enormously beyond its ordinary connotation, and translate it into a designation of great dignity, and carry it up into the heights of exalted genius; for nothing short of this, I am convinced, will satisfy the unprejudiced enquirer.

I have tried every hypothesis and every permutation and combination of hypotheses of which I have heard or which I have devised, to account for these truly great things in H.P.B.'s literary activity, and I am bold to say that the only explanation that in any way has the slightest pretension to bear the strain of the evidence is that these things were dictated to, or impressed upon, her psychically by living teachers and friends, most of whom she had known physically. It is true

that, as she herself stated, and as was stated through her, she at times got things tangled up badly, but she strove her best to do her best in most difficult circumstances.

Indeed, one of the most interesting facts in the whole problem is that she was herself as much delighted with the beauty of these teachings and amazed at the vastness of the conceptions as anyone else. If she herself had invented them, she often would say, then she was a world-genius, a Master, instead of being, as she knew she was, the very imperfect servant who simply declared there were true Masters to serve. She might repudiate everything else, but this she never gainsaid. Doubtless she has distorted many things, has not heard correctly, has transmitted them imperfectly, for she was ever very ill and harassed, the object of never-ceasing attack, treachery, and ingratitude, in addition to being naturally of a very fiery and tempestuous nature. All of which things make it all the more surprising that so much was achieved and not that more was not accomplished. The powers that were used must thus have been very great, perhaps an earnest and foreshadowing of what may be accomplished in the West if found necessary, and an absolute departure from the conventional conditions of the contemplative life as a means of illuminations.

H.P.B. was a warrior not a priestess, a prophetess rather than seeress; she was, moreover, most things you would not expect, as an instrument for bringing back the memory of much that was most holy and wise in antiquity. She was indeed as it were the living symbol of the seeming foolishness in this world, whereby the wisdom was forthshadowed. In this birth, I am persuaded, I shall never look upon her like again; she alone has given me the feeling of being in contact with someone colossal, titanic, at times almost cosmic. I have sometimes wondered whether this strange being belonged to our humanity at all - and yet she was most human, most lovable. Had she run away from some other planet, so to speak? Did she normally belong to their evolution? *Quien sabe?*

To all of such questions none of us who knew her and loved her can give any sure answer; she remains our sphinx, our mystery, our dearly loved Old Lady. She was not a teacher in any ordinary sense, for she had no idea of teaching in any orderly or systematic fashion; indeed she detested the very idea of being considered a spiritual or ethical teacher, cried out loudly against it, protested she was the least fitted of all to be called to such an office. No, she was better than that, better than any formal instructor, for she was as it were a natural fire at which to light up enthusiasm for the greater life of the world, a marvellous incentive to make one grip on to the problems of self-knowing, a wonderful inspirer of longings for return, a true singer of the songs of home; all this she was at times, while at times she was intensified confusion.

It is some thirteen years since H.P.B. departed from her pain-racked body, and yet somehow or other with each year my affectionate remembrance of her does but increase, and I ever look back to her and her work for inspiration to revive the

feeling of greatness and large-heartedness, and that fresh atmosphere of freeing from conventionality which meant springtime, and growth, and a bursting of bonds, and a flowing of sap, and the removing of mountains as the young shoots burst from their tiny mustard seeds and shook the earth heaps from their shoulders. It was the virile life in her, the breadth of view, the quick adaptability, the absence of prudery and pietism, the *camaraderie*, the camp-life as it were of those earlier days, that made the blood circulate in the veins, and the muscles tense for strenuous hardship and advance into regions ever more and more unknown.

But why do I, who am no hero-worshiper, allow myself thus enthusiastically to write of my "occult mother-in-law," as she humorously called herself? I know not, except that these are Stray Thoughts on Theosophy, and my thoughts not infrequently stray to her who set my feet on the way, and that in writing about her I have revived some deeper feelings than I had intended to arouse, for my main object was to lead up to a suggestion concerning White Lotus Day, a suggestion which has already been adopted by the President-Founder at the last General Meeting of the Society. This paper however, was written before I received the Report of that meeting, and when I had already written as follows:

As the years roll round, on May the 8th, the day of her departure from her body, many gatherings of Theosophists celebrate H.P.B.'s memory, and we call it White Lotus Day, though why precisely I know not. Perhaps it might have been better to have followed the Platonists and have chosen her birthday for this keeping of her memory green, but be that as it may be, it was never intended by her friends to be a day of lamentation - and, indeed, I do not think that any so regard it, and sure it is that H.P.B. herself would have screamed out against any such absurdity. Equally would she, I think, have cried out, against any attempt at making such a gathering an occasion for pietism or hero-worship. Indeed, I know no one who detested, more than she did, any attempt to hero-worship herself - she positively physically shuddered at any expression of reverence to herself - as a spiritual teacher; I have heard her cry out in genuine alarm at an attempt to kneel to her by an enthusiastic admirer. But would H.P.B. desire to keep this day for herself, and thus to inaugurate the idea of starting a sort of calendar of Theosophical "saints," and of adding to May 8th many other dates of departures of distinguished colleagues? I think not; I have somehow never been able to persuade myself that H.P.B., could approve of White Lotus Day as it is. But since it does exist, I would suggest that its utility might be vastly increased by keeping it as the day on which we specially call to mind the memory of all our well-known colleagues who have left the body - not only of H.P.B., though of her first and foremost, but of T. Subba Row, of W. Q. Judge, though he did grievous wrong, of Piet Meuleman of Holland, of many others. Let us make it a time of keeping clean the memory of the links of the chain, a day of the history-making of those who are as yet comparatively the few, but who will ere long be the great majority of our Theosophical Fellowship. White Lotus Day if you will, but Commemoration Day as well.

At the same time our President-Founder was settling it all at Adyar on these lines, and the suggestion is now a fact accomplished. But enough for the moment of these Stray Thoughts concerning H.P.B.

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