

PSYPIONEER

An Electronic Newsletter from London

Volume 1 No14 June 2005

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DOUBTS ABOUT CONTROL OF MEDIUMS BY CROOKES

A new biography of Anna Eva Fay (1851- 1927) has again cast doubt on whether William Crookes was as effective as he believed in the testing of mediums.

‘ The Indescribable Phenomenon - the life and mysteries of Anna Eva Fay’, available from www.hermeticpress.com is a 440 page hardback with many photographs. She is often confused with her daughter in law Eva Fay (died 1931) Both ladies were vaudeville performers, even once appearing in 1906 at competing theatres in New York.

As a child in Ohio, Anna (Ann Eliza Heathman originally) was fostered among Spiritualists where she learnt mediumship. In 1871, she formed a partnership with an often-exposed fraudulent medium known as H. Melville Fay. After another exposure in Boston, they found it prudent to move to Britain in 1874. There was some ungentlemanly competition between the Sidgwick group and Crookes, but eventually she was exclusively investigated by Crookes who endorsed her phenomena, **but only in relation to one séance**. After various complications, including an alleged exposure by her former manager in London, the Fays returned to America in July 1875, and resumed their pattern of stage shows and expensive private sittings. In 1876 another manager, Washington Irving Bishop, again exposed the Fays.

Crookes attempted to control Anna by an electric circuit which would be broken if she moved. This had previously been used with Florence Cook. There is some doubt that this

did prevent movements, and there were in any case ways of eluding it. But meaningful criticism of Crookes and Anna must focus on this one séance of February 19 1875, and on its predecessors under similar test conditions, and this biography rightly does so.

In 1913, Anna appeared at the London Coliseum, and in February, she was elected the first honorary lady associate of the London Magic Circle. Among magicians, she is widely admired for her technical skill, though she was even more ruthless than Houdini.

The problems for Crookes' work have been recognised for many years (see for example, E. J. Dingwall "The Critic's Dilemma" 1967).

- 1) how did Crookes come to endorse Anna, **even in relation to one séance**, an entertainer exposed before and after her first visit to London, some one for whom escaping from bonds was central to their work?
- 2) what about the strange case of another young lady medium, Rosina Showers, who Crookes said confessed she was a fake to Anna, though Rosina resumed seances for a time?
- 3) if Rosina was a fake, what was going on at the joint seances she held with Florence Cook, and each medium produced a materialised figure and they walked together?
- 4) is it surprising that by the end of 1875, Mr. and Mrs. Crookes had withdrawn from the Spiritualist scene? Crookes wrote that he had not obtained conviction of communication, and both the Crookes wrote of their disillusion with Spiritualists.

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A COMMUNICATION LANDMARK

Roy Stemman has earned a lifetime achievement award in writing about the paranormal since his first book 'Medium Rare – the Psychic Life of Ena Twigg' in 1971. Indeed his official history of the SAGB 'One hundred years of Spiritualism' (1972) is now rare, though it cost only 75p on publication! He is the best editor 'Psychic News' never had.

A notable feature of his work is that he integrates material from both Spiritualism and psychical research. And, as years go by, he can also say increasingly that he knew the characters involved, starting with his years as a writer for Psychic News, then as editor of 'Alpha', 'Reincarnation International' and 'Life and Soul' (which will return, though it is in abeyance at present).

'Spirit Communication' (www.piatkus.co.uk) is something special. Written with assistance from Spiritual Truth Foundation, it aspires to be a sequel to such books as Arthur Conan Doyle's 'History of Spiritualism' and Maurice Barbanell's 'This is Spiritualism'. It deals with many aspects of mediumship and Spiritualism in the past fifty years, except for the organisational side which, to be frank, would not interest most of the public. The SPR has more mentions in the index than all the Spiritualist bodies put together.

Some of the chapters provide introductions to the subject that are quite outstanding such as those on 'Recording spirits', 'Trance healing' and 'Spiritualism and healing' How many writers today can say they attended many of the healing demonstrations of Harry Edwards? Which Spiritualists have kept up with Ian Stevenson's rebirth research, like Stemman has? Who else can deploy the survival case presented by George Chapman the healer through whom Dr Lang manifests, and which is stronger than that through ordinary mediumship? Stemman is also ready often to sound a note of caution about dubious phenomena.

This is a book which should be used in Spiritualist educational schemes. It is readable and contemporary (so up to date it notes the disbanding of the Noah's Ark Society). Its only significant need is for the source for some items to be more clearly referenced. The book puts the Spiritualist case. The reader need not agree with the case, but you won't find a better popular exposition today.

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Introduction

In his book "Memoranda", Andrew Jackson Davis reprinted a variety of his notes from the early days of Spiritualism. Many of these repay research, and we illustrate this ongoing process by one such memorandum below, taken from "Memoranda of Persons, Places, and Events.." pages 208-9.

THE ABOMINABLE TEACHINGS OF SPIRITUALISM

BATTLE CREEK, MICH., *October 14, 1857.*

A GREAT friend of Methodism, and one who edits a journal in the interests of Christ, opens thus:

From a paper entitled the Illuminati, published under the auspices of the Spiritualists, we take the following: The third annual meeting of a so-called Religious Association was held at North Collins, Erie County, New York, on the 25th, 26th, and 27th of September last. From the minutes of its proceedings, as published in the Age of Progress, we learn that Andrew J. and Mary F. Davis were prominent among the speakers on the occasion. The following among other declarations, or "testimonies," indicates the doctrine of Mr. and Mrs. Davis:

WOMAN AND MARRIAGE.-Resolved,

That woman, being the mother of the world and a coequal with man in the heritage of immortality, should be favored with every advantage enjoyed by her brother, for physical, intellectual, and moral education or development; that all civil and political

privileges and emoluments should be as accessible to her as to man; that the same remuneration should be granted to her as to her brother for the same kind and amount of labor; and that, in the marriage relation, she should be fully secured in her natural rights to property, to the legal custody of her children, and to the entire control of her own person, that thereby fewer and better children may be born, and humanity be improved and elevated.

This same editor and follower of the New Testament, after quoting the above resolution, says:-

" A. J. Davis claims to have sprung from monkeys and baboons; and certainly his doctrine is worthy of such an ancestry. Yet this wretch in human form claims to be a reformer, and it is a mournful commentary on the state of public morals that he has numerous followers. . . . The whole vile breed are fit only for a lunatic asylum. This miserable delusion is styled by its victims 'the new religion.' Such a religion is, in the strongest possible sense, 'earthly, sensual, and devilish.' To every pure mind it is loathsome and disgusting to the last degree. The man, and still more the woman, that will publicly teach such doctrines, should be shunned, as we would shun the devil, whose servants they are. When one is fairly drawn into the vortex of this abominable delusion, there is no hope for him. It is a leprosy which defies all cure. It is a signing, sealing, and delivering of the soul to Satan, beyond all redemption. When will the community have sense enough and moral principle enough to shun these 'filthy dreamers?' Their very touch is polluting, and the poison of asps is under their tongues."

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Davis makes no comment on this extract, which is one of a series of memoranda in the book, from about that time, on the rights of women. Obviously he does not endorse the headline of the Christian critic. That critic incidentally shows a good knowledge of the letters in the New Testament, and alludes to James, Jude and to Paul writing to the Romans!

To readers today the legal protection of women as described in the motion would not seem exceptional, and Spiritualists were simply ahead of their time. Marital rape, for example, became illegal in England in 1991, and in the American states one by one in the same era (North Carolina, 1993).

But who were the group addressed by the Davises? John Buescher comments:

Based on the other evidence in this selection, my first guess about its provenance would be the "Friends of Human Progress," which, roughly speaking, was an offshoot of the radical group following Elias Hicks that broke off from the mainstream Quakers. The Quakers were sometimes already called "illuminists" from their "inner light" doctrine. The Hicksites emphasized this to the exclusion of all earthly authority or constraint. They were militantly utopian. The "activist" faction of Hicksites formed themselves into a loose confederation of social

progressives, calling themselves the "Friends of Human Progress," with the emphasis here being on "Friends", denoting their Quaker origin.

More is here:

<http://ublib.buffalo.edu/libraries/units/archives/exhibits/old/urr/Collins.html>

And:

http://ublib.buffalo.edu/libraries/units/archives/exhibits/old/urr/FHP_WATERLOO.HTML

And, of course:

<http://www.spirithistory.com/71friends.html>

You also might be interested in this piece I just found.

<http://www.spirithistory.com/69friends.html>

Note that these "trans-Quakers" or whatever, eventually had two meetings each year, in close proximity. The ones that were held at North Collins were really focused on Spiritualism, and so attracted Spiritualists and social radicals who did not have any previous connection to Quakerism, as is clear from the attendees list linked above, which includes, for example, the names of many Universalists, and many more that I know simply as active Spiritualists.

This list puts A. J. and Mary Davis at the 1857 meeting at North Collins. Note that, according to the listing of meetings linked above, the 1857 meeting (Sept 25-27) was held at the 3rd Friends Meeting House in North Collins.

*The "Friends of Human Progress" was clearly not limited to ex-Hicksite Quakers. John Spear's group, who were meeting in Boston in the basement of the Fountain House, holding public meetings on "Practical Spiritualism" (read here, **social radicalism, especially Free Love and the eugenic uplift of the human race**) during the period of 1855-1857, were explicitly connected to the "Friends of Human Progress" in their notices in the Spiritualist newspapers, regarding themselves as a kind of Boston branch, I think.*

The Fountain House Spiritualist-commune/boarding house, etc., was the brainchild of John Orvis, who was one of John's closest associates, who was also an ex-Hicksite (and slavery abolitionist, and Brook Farm alumnus, and, later, labor radical). The Fountain House was also called a "Unitary Home" along the lines of the Free Love "Unitary Home" established in New York City around the same time by Spear associate, social radical and spiritualist Stephen Pearl Andrews. The New York City connection apparently brings the "Friends of Human Progress" into association with social radicals in the city, such as Walt Whitman, who were experimenting with a bohemian lifestyle. Both of the "Unitary Homes" were active Free Love conclaves from about 1855-58.

In the Spiritualist papers, I have seen calls for the "Friends of Human Progress" to attend various spiritualist conventions, and, in fact, Orvis and Spear held a meeting of the "Friends of Human Progress" even as late as 1872 in the Spiritualist community of Ancora, New Jersey. It is unclear to me, however, what real connection they had with the North Collins meetings of the "Friends." Neither Spear nor Orvis are in the list of attendees that Densmore has compiled. (I don't think that the "Dr. Orvis" from Rochester at the 1871 meeting is John Orvis).

In light of the section in Davis' "Memoranda," I note that there was a call for the "Friends of Human Progress" to attend the Rutland, Vermont convention in 1858 that turned into such a circus around the explicit advocacy of Free Love by medium Julia Branch

from the New York "Unitary Home." I have records that Spear's associates--especially those in Ohio--were scandalizing reformers' conventions as early as 1855 or 56 with the explicit advocacy of the position that each woman had the sole right to determine when, with whom, and how often to "assume the maternal role." In practice, this meant what is now called "reproductive rights." In fact, it meant the right to contraception--and later, of course, it turned into the right to abort as well. It also was (correctly) read, by those who were scandalized by it, as an assertion that the traditional marriage bond was void and that people had the right to have sexual intercourse with whomever and whenever and with however many people they felt they had an "affinity."

This was a more explicitly developed statement of the position the Davises were quoted as offering at the North Collins meeting--"...that, in the marriage relation, she should be fully secured ... to the entire control of her person, that thereby fewer and better children may be born, and humanity be improved and elevated." Note that the eugenic goal is explicit in the Davises' formulation of the principle.

Finally, since the Memorandum has a "dateline" of Battle Creek, Michigan, I note that there was apparently a settlement of the "Friends of Human Progress" in or very near Battle Creek. It was named "Harmonia":

<http://archiver.rootsweb.com/th/read/QUAKER-ROOTS/1998-08/0904168974>

This was the settlement that Quaker Henry Willis brought black abolitionist Sojourner Truth to in 1856 in order to address the "Friends of Human Progress." She settled in Battle Creek for a while and became a Spiritualist.

While doing the research for "The Other Side of Salvation," I discovered, and reported in the book, that ex-Universalist minister-turned-Spiritualist Justin P. Averill converted his

Universalist society of Battle Creek to Spiritualism. That congregation merged with the local Quaker Meeting to form a Spiritualist organization. Averill was James Martin Peebles' benefactor when Peebles first separated from the Universalists. Peebles and his wife moved to Battle Creek then, having read about Averill. Averill, for a while anyway, gave Peebles a position with his group there, until Peebles built up his new career as Spiritualist, lecturer, physician, writer, etc. I don't know if this means that either Averill or Peebles had a connection with the "Friends" as constituted at the North Collins meetings. Neither of them show up on Densmore's list of participants.

All readers will be much indebted to Dr Buescher for his information. We learn from this some of the particular connections between Spiritualists, Quakers, Universalists and reformers in general, and see A.J. Davis in a wider context. (two American historians of Quakers also commented on the passage.)

But one mystery remains- do any copies survive of the newspaper “ The Illuminati”?

We may hope that the general study of the work of A.J. Davis will be stimulated by the new web site www.andrewjacksondavis.com conducted by Dr John DeSalvo.

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How to obtain this Newsletter

The Psypioneer newsletter is at present available on the web site www.woodlandway.org and we are greatly indebted to our Australian friends. You can obtain it free and direct by sending an e-mail entitled “ Subscribe” to psypioneersub@aol.com or “ Unsubscribe” to discontinue. Assistant editor- Paul J. Gaunt.

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NOTES BY THE WAY – JUNE 2005

Survival Research Network

Within hours of the last issue reaching subscribers, with its review of the publishing scene as we completed our first year, the ground moved again with the launch of the Survival Research Network, of which our colleague Andreas Sommer is secretary. (www.survival-research.net)

This web site will showcase scientific survival research at an academic level, a topic increasingly pushed to the edge in scientific parapsychology, but in which it is hoped to interest younger parapsychologists in particular.

How does the new site relate to the already existing www.survivalafterdeath.org of ISS? It looks like it will be aimed at a more academic audience, without the reach out to Spiritualism which characterises ISS (and ourselves). In practice there is bound to be some overlap of content. There is such a shortage of reputable web sites on the paranormal that the SRN will be very welcome. Andreas Sommer formerly edited “Human Nature”, a paper based journal. He is moving shortly from Freiburg to Northampton, is well connected with the Parapsychological Association, and has the necessary data processing skills. The future looks bright for the new Network, and the site already has some historical material.

Successors to Noah’s Ark

We reported last year on the closure of the Noah Ark Society, whose journal carried important articles on pioneers of physical mediumship. (the name came from Noah Zerdin, a pioneer of home circles.) Two groups have emerged to fill the gap. The more populist is the Zerdin Fellowship, which can be reached at www.zerdinfellowship.com – this has already printed the first issue of “Zerdin Buzz Sheet” of April 2005 with reports of seances. The second group is the International Scientific Association for Research into Transcendental Objective Phenomena directed by Robin Foy (saro@supanet.com) which also plans a magazine, a web site and booklets. Meanwhile, proposals to transfer the content of the old NAS web site to Woodland Way have not yet come to fruition. (www.woodlandway.org.)

The noble one hundred

There are now one hundred subscribers to this newsletter, and a few dozen others who also read it regularly on the web site. Compared with print publications, or the major on-line resources, this is of course very small. Psychic News, for example, had a circulation of 27600 in 1946, (This was still noted in a Catholic Truth Society pamphlet “Spiritualism” 1959 reprint). Most leaders in the psychic field see no need to read our findings.

However, it is often thus with historical publications. The question is – are we influencing those involved in writing and teaching psychic history, as well as the interested enquirer anywhere in the world, who wants to get a clearer picture of some of the events, organisations and personalities that have arisen in the psychic field in past years? This is a long haul. “Theosophical History” has been engaged in something similar for twenty years.

One thing that becomes apparent to the serious student is that although a wealth of information is available on the Net, there are large areas of psychic history that remain electronically quite obscure – many individuals and groups that feature in this or that incident, but whose antecedents or fate are not apparent. A diminishing number of libraries have the books or journals that explain that, and one of our functions is to accurately mediate that material to the wider world.

Reprinting guidelines

When we reprint old material, we try to do so accurately. Anyone who works with scanned material, knows that even the best scanners can play havoc. (A naughty one changed a letter from an SPR president to a paper so that it made repeated allusions to “Psychic Worm,” monthly.) The printers of old pamphlets sometimes used eccentric punctuation (and small type), which we retain. We don’t deliberately miss out sentences, clauses or words. We do sometimes break up the long paragraphs that classical writers favoured, and add a title where one is missing from an extract.

Free speech and historical material

Could it ever again become legally difficult to republish historical psychic material? Theosophical publishers have long faced the problem; when some of their old writers (like Leadbeater or Jinarajadasa) express derogatory racial views; they delete them from reprints. Now under the Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 in the Australian State of Victoria, it has become a civil offence to publish certain material that might cause offence. The subsequent very disturbing case of Daniel Scot and Daniel Nalliah, which involves argument as to what a religion has or has not done in history (among other issues) illustrates the complications. In the UK, it is proposed to introduce a criminal offence of inciting religious hatred punishable with seven years imprisonment, though the proposal is opposed by an alliance of secularists and evangelical Christians.

Do you think this has no implications for you? Well, here a few words from a famous name

“ Its triumvirate were Augustine, Jerome and Ambrose who started the Christian Church off on its career of World domination. They were paralleled in our time by the Nazi triumvirate Hitler, Goebbels and Himmler”, and I shall tell you why..”

Thus Arthur Findlay, who passed away forty years ago. There could scarcely be a more offensive parallel, to compare leading saints of a religion with three Nazi leaders associated with millions of deaths. And it is not all in the past. The quotation is actually from ” The influence of religion on history”, an SNU pamphlet reprint of 1997. You can buy it today from the Psychic News on line bookshop. People doubtless do.

The boot is also on the other foot with criticisms of Spiritualism, like the Christian editor quoted in this issue who attacked A.J. Davis. After all, to say Spiritualists are under the influence of demons (a commonplace of evangelical critique) is a grave charge. People thought to be under the influence of demons are regularly killed in various parts of the world today. And what about the healer who attacked a leading Jewish group as serpents, vipers, hypocrites, fools, blind, whited sepulchres etc; surely a case that might provoke legal proceedings.

Free discussion is vital to historical enquiry, and to the understanding of contemporary issues, even if it is sometimes offensive.

Writing for LIGHT led to loss of job

An astonishing case of censorship is revealed in Roy Stemman's new book " Spirit Communication." Roy was prevailed upon to allow the quarterly LIGHT to publish a lecture he gave to CPS about the value of mediumship in crime detection.

" Surprisingly, my views did not meet with the approval of Psychic News editor Maurice Barbanell, with whom I had worked for close on eight years as assistant editor. He insisted that the newspaper's unwritten editorial policy was that mediumship was meant to be used only to provide evidence for life after death, not to solve crimes. I had no problem with that being the newspaper's policy, as long as I was free to express a different view, always making it clear that I was speaking personally and not acting as the newspaper's spokesperson. However, he insisted that as I was employed by the newspaper, I was not at liberty to express in public any view that differed from its official policy. Even after all these years, it still strikes me as strange that he did not see the irony of wanting to restrict my freedom, when Spiritualism had only won its religious freedom less than two decades earlier.'

Roy decided to leave PN, but eventually returned as chairman of the Board, and the paper enjoyed a " Prague Spring" under Tim Haigh as editor. Alas, it became financially necessary for ownership to be transferred, and the next editor, Julie Stretton soon left because of breach of editorial freedom (as reported in " Psychic World").

Censorship was most apparent in 2000 in the most disturbing Spiritualist case known to me. The Indian guru Sai Baba had been much promoted by PN, including his claims to deity. But when some of SB's followers (the actual successors to PN columnist Peggy Mason) published a dossier about serious offences against boys, no warning was given to PN readers about giving money, or taking their sons, to the ashram. Indeed praise continued. The most that could be said in PN was that Sai Baba had got a bad press, allegedly. ('Psychic World' did carry a warning, as did the Psypioneer web site. – search Google under ' Sai Baba bad press, allegedly' for the PN view!) It should be emphasised that the PN editorship has since changed.

Spelling pitfalls

A recent book speaks of the SPR investigator Everard Feilding, but this is mistyped ' Fielding.' It prompts the question- what are the most common spelling mistakes in the names of pioneers. Among forenames, Frederick (instead of Frederic) Myers is common, as is Alfred Russell (instead of Russel) Wallace. Apparitions were studied by G.N. M. Tyrrell (not Tyrell). Distinguish carefully between Hereward Carrington (chiefly in the States) and W. Whately Carington (formerly Smith) in the UK.

Among organisations, many godly critics of CFPSS (previously CFPS) do not know the correct name behind the initials, while some members of the SPR refer to the society vaguely. Thus A.C. Doyle recalls joining ' the Psychological Research Society' in ' The New

Revelation', which he calls the 'Psychical Society' on the next page. Is this a sign of vagueness in handling evidence? – some researchers have certainly thought so.

Words may also indicate outlook. Spiritualists speak of 'psychic science' which suggests an advance in organised knowledge about psi which others deny. Even the subtle difference between 'psychic research' and 'psychical research' may be meaningful- the former title, when adopted by a journal like that of the ASPR, suggested undue enthusiasm for supposed phenomena! The many alternative names for psychical research also carry different connotations.

Mrs Britten is falsely married in new biography

An example of the problem that a spelling can cause appears in a new biography of Margaret Fox by Nancy Rubin Stuart. "The Reluctant Spiritualist (Harcourt, 2005). (SNU historian Paul Gaunt, whose examination of the evolution of the peddler names, appeared in *Psypioneer Newsletter* January 2005, will report further on this book soon.)

Emma Hardinge was once well-known in American Spiritualism, as was Samuel Brittan. However, Emma married William Britten. At some point, the memory of her faded, and we find in the bibliography of Isaac K. Funk's book "The Widow's Mite" (New York & London, 1904), reference to Prof. S.B. Brittan, and to Emma Harding (sic) Brittan.

The next stage was to marry this pair. "Emma Hardinge, wife of the spiritualist publisher Reverend Samuel B. Brittan" declares Stuart, p.xii.. She repeats this later "Brittan would later wed medium-historian Emma Hardinge. Individually and together they would become leading spokesmen for the spiritualist movement."

This marriage was not a new error. Paul Gaunt notes that it appears in the book by the Goldfarbs "Spiritualism and Nineteenth Century Letters" (1978), which appears in Stuart's bibliography. Students should consult "The names of Emma Hardinge Britten" *Psypioneer News*, November 2004, p.56.

A priceless newsletter

For the library with limited funds, you can't beat subscribing to free newsletters like this one. In recent years, the way has been led by www.survivalafterdeath.org, whose Thursday e mailing is full of psychic news. Among sites focusing on a single person, www.harryprice.co.uk has a valuable newsletter which conveys the very wide range of Price's activities. For some years he was perhaps the most active psychical researcher in Britain.

A reassessment of Harry Price (1881- 1948) was signaled by a paper in the *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research* July 2000 by John Randall, who had been researching Price for the *New Dictionary of National Biography*. (All the *SPR Journal*, *Proceedings* and house journal(*Paranormal Review*) is now on line for *SPR* members at www.spr.ac.uk.)

Price was an energetic investigator of many phenomena from 1920 onwards whose books, library, laboratory and quarrels were widely reported. His unsuccessful relationship with the SPR overshadowed everything.

The reasons for this included doubts about his honesty, especially in two investigations – the physical mediumship of Rudi Schneider, and the haunting of Borley Rectory.

Randall defends the conduct of Price and suggests that Price was a victim of SPR snobbery.

“ In those days the Council of the Society was dominated by a small group of people belonging to the British upper class and closely related to one another by marriage. Several writers have commented on the selectivity displayed by this group towards evidence provided by people of other social classes.” (p.161)

Any rehabilitation of Price would pose problems for Spiritualists because of his role in an attack on William Hope the spirit photographer, and some sweeping critical comments he made about the Movement. Price’s role in relation to Helen Duncan was also dubious. Nevertheless, many of his cases deserve re-examination.

It was Price’s local rector in Sussex who called him “ a man of complete integrity” (p.168).

Speaking volumes

Some readers may wonder when the first volume of this Newsletter will end. The last issue of Volume One should be that of December 2005

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HIS NAME IS JOHN

BECAUSE of Christian pressure, there have always been broadcasting restrictions on Spiritualism by the BBC. So who first spoke of healers on the radio?

Possibly a vicar, John D Pearce-Higgins in a sermon "Christ Heals Today" on Sunday June 25th, 1950 broadcast from St Gabriel's Church, Hanley Swan, Worcestershire, later issued as a booklet by Arthur James of Worcester, price 7d post free. (Arthur James were already publishers of various healing authors like Agnes Sanford and Starr Daly.)

The booklet explained “ *The B.B.C., in a series of services dealing with the life of Christ entrusted the theme of “ Christ the Healer “ to the Rev. John D. Pearce-Higgins, M.A.,*

Hon. C.F., Vicar of Hanley Castle and Chaplain and Lecturer at the City of Worcester Training College. “

Healing he insisted was not confined to the Bible: "Only the bigoted and blind in scientific prejudice could deny the work of people like Agnes Sanford (author of 'The Healing Light') or Pastor Brown in America (recorded by Starr Daily (sic- PP) in 'Recovery' and 'Release') or of Harry Edwards or the late W T Parrish and his wife, and there are many others."

This mention of Edwards and Parrish in a sermon about Christ was courageous. For JDPH, who had a brilliant academic record and a war record as army chaplain, his outspokenness and his interest in the paranormal may well have held his career back. To be eventually vice-provost of Southwark Cathedral when Mervyn Stockwood was Bishop was not a glittering prize, though it may have given him more time for outside interests.

He served as chairman of the Modern Churchmen's Union from 1958-68 and as vice-chairman of the Churches' Fellowship for Psychical and Spiritual Studies for over a decade from 1961. But by the time of his passing on 24 January 1985 in his eightieth year, his influence had sharply declined, and not only because of frail health.

John was a lovable man but he may have liked to shock people. What is more use to the Church, he might ask, twenty bishops or twenty mediums? It was not a question that went down well with dog-collared audiences.

As an active psychical researcher, he was well-placed to provide intellectual weight to the emerging CFPSS, and to some extent he did. He co-edited a useful book of essays 'Life, Death and Psychical Research'. But he was not able to write books himself.

As a Modern Churchman (i.e. an old fashioned Liberal in theology) he was by definition suspect to the more conservative elements in the Church, both Catholic and Evangelical - quite apart from his support of mediums.

Here too he ran into increasing difficulties in later years. Like Bishop Stockwood, he championed Ena Twigg who was one of the most gifted sensitives of her generation; she was also an SNU minister. By 1970 she was world famous and at times treated like royalty. But her contacts with his clerical colleagues did not always go well.

Later in his work with haunted houses, he worked with a male medium who also appeared on TV. Unfortunately the medium's extracurricular activities were featured in a Sunday paper.

Being by now disillusioned with mediums, he was finally assisted by a married couple, Roman Catholic healers. They got into financial difficulty and appeared in court, with JDPH as a witness.

In the light of this it is important to emphasise the big issues on which John was right. During the 1960s a tide of unbelief swept the main Churches and God was reported to be dead, or possibly to be a psychedelic mushroom. John made it clear that people survived death and met their loved ones again, against theologians like David Jenkins, whose very real faith in God did not extend to the traditional understanding of the Resurrection.

In the 1970s, with the coming of the charismatic movement, fear of demons was stirred up, to be "remedied" by exorcism. John who had considerable experience of troubled people and places, testified that earthbound people lay behind much of the trouble and that they needed a compassionate approach to free them. They were not demons or even evil in many cases.

This has since become more widely accepted in the Church, even by Evangelicals under the name 'Requiem Healing' (the title of a 1991 book by Michael Mitton and Russ Parker). It was good to see that Ian Wilson's 'In Search of Ghosts', quoted JDPH and took a similar line.

However, John was also inclined to doubt the existence of demons at all - human evil being capable of such depths - and here he went beyond Michael Perry, also a liberal, who later reaffirmed his belief in Satan in the second edition of the semi-official handbook 'Deliverance'.

John also played a part in the launch of "The Christian Parapsychologist" the most successful publishing initiative of CFPSS. The CFPSS psychical phenomena committee first approved the project in 1975. John provided the main article in the first issue "An Alternative to Exorcism". But a few weeks later he rang me up "We have run into trouble" he reported. The General Secretary was not happy about the new publication under the CFPSS name. For some weeks CP hung in the balance until the chairman Martin Israel gave it his blessing.

But I recall also my first meeting with John when he came to address a student meeting I had organised, and this middle aged clergyman dismounted from the local train after a long journey, probably one of hundreds he made to meetings large and small over the decades. "Are you going to seek ordination?" he asked me within five minutes! (I wasn't.)

Now he is among the Fellowship pioneers in what he liked to call the celestial civil service, and his deeds are written mainly in the bound volumes of old psychic newspapers. As ever he will be on the side of the angels, but perhaps with a mischievous twinkle.

("His name is John" is what the father of John the Baptist wrote "to everyone's astonishment" on a writing tablet at the naming ceremony of the baby. The father had been temporarily struck dumb after disbelieving the angel Gabriel who told him that he and Elizabeth were to have a child, despite being both well on in years! Gabriel also conveyed the name. See Luke 1.63. This text was used in the sermon at John's funeral.)

.....

THE PASSING OF A MAN OF COURAGE

Under this headline, the CFPS Quarterly Review, in its issue 21 of September 1959 reported

Early on Sunday morning, June 28th, the Rev. Maurice Elliott passed to the Higher Life, after several months of patiently borne illness. ...'

In the same issue appeared a message left by their hon. Secretary setting out his beliefs.

WHERE I STAND

BY THE REV. G. MAURICE ELLIOTT

I AM leaving behind the following statement so that, after my passing, there may be no misunderstanding as to what my attitude was to the very end regarding Psychological Science and Spiritualism.

I remain convinced that Science, through the medium of psychical science, has proved (if there be such a thing as " proof ") that we do live on after the death of our physical bodies and that, under certain conditions, communication with those on the Other Side is possible. I believe that this knowledge *may be* of the greatest possible help and comfort to the bereaved and, indeed, to " all who profess and call themselves Christians." But please let no one quote what I have just said without giving the substance, at least, of the next paragraph.

I have stressed the words " may be " and have not written "must be". Why is that? It is because of the changed attitude of modern organized Spiritualism towards the fundamental truths of the Christian Faith. I write " changed " because it is fast becoming an anti-Christian Movement whereas when I first became interested in it was, as it should be, non-religious; it was a science. Mr. Gow, the then Editor of *Light* was never weary of telling his readers that " Spiritualism deals with facts in nature, *not* in religion ".

Spiritualism has substituted a slavish belief in guidance by guides for devotion to Christ and belief in His guidance, and it has caricatured, if not denied, the fundamental truths of the Christian Faith. The Christian church is largely to blame for this. For centuries she has neglected to teach and preach the full Christian Faith which includes much that psychical science is now revealing to us.

Those who know me best will remember how hard a battle I fought to try and persuade Church authorities - especially Archbishop Temple - to investigate the phenomena on which Spiritualism is founded, and how they did so and produced a " Majority Report "

which Archbishop Lang would not allow to be published. And those who know me best will remember too that I wrote such books as *Spiritualism in the Old Testament* and *The Psychic Life of Jesus*, and various pamphlets including " Bible Blunders "-all of which I would alter somewhat were I writing them again, but none of which I regret writing.

I have not changed my attitude towards the Spiritualism of Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir William Crooks (sic – PP), Sir William Barrett at whose feet I sat. To that kind of Spiritualism I owe more than tongue can tell or thought measure.

.....

Among the tributes to Elliott carried by the QR was one from Mrs Forsyth Andrew (daughter of Principal Peter Taylor Forsyth, late of Hackney College). She said “ I am indeed very sorry to feel that I cannot expect to hear from Mr. Maurice Elliott any more here but I know he will rejoice at meeting my father again. It is to Mr. Elliott entirely that I owe the initiative which has caused me to republish many of my father’s books. I have known him since his student days under my father.”

These books and this teacher, which combine a Christocentric devotion and scholarship, played a crucial part in Elliott’s life.

.....

At the funeral service on 2 July, John Peace Higgins said

“ We, the Churches’ Fellowship, had a great privilege of having within our gates a pure and fine spirit, one who was unusual in that he had no rancour, no bitterness, for the many slings and arrows inflicted upon him. His kindness, wisdom, and courage – that moral and spiritual courage – mark him out. And I am sure that he will be remembered in the Church which treated him rather badly but which he continued to serve. His name will be remembered long after those who figure in the Church papers will have passed into oblivion. “

.....

MADAME BLAVATSKY GAVE POST-MORTEM MESSAGE TO AUSTRALIAN THEOSOPHISTS

H.P.Blavatsky (1831-1891) the co-founder of the Theosophical Society, sent a special message to the Sydney Lodge of the (Adyar) Theosophical Society on the anniversary of her death (White Lotus Day) 1917. It came via the Theosophical clairvoyant C.W. Leadbeater, and he received it while crossing the harbour by ferry.

Leadbeater explained that she now lived in a masculine body which she had taken directly after leaving the previous one - an Indian boy age 14 originally, who had apparently drowned but revived mysteriously, and then changed completely in character. While not taking any direct part in the T.S., she still gave advice - and some teachings by dictation.

In her message, she said in part " "You who live here in the metropolis of the Southern Hemisphere, you have a grand opportunity before you. See that you take it, that your part of this new Sub-race may not disappoint Him when He comes to rouse it and lead it." (a reference to the Coming World Teacher then thought to be imminent.)

Leadbeater told the meeting " So far as I know, you are the only people in the world who are getting a message from her: you may naturally feel yourselves honoured."

The incident is included in Mary K.Neff " How Theosophy came to Australia and New Zealand " (Australian Section of T.S., Sydney, 1943). It is one of a number of accounts of Madame Blavatsky's whereabouts that arose among Spiritualists or Theosophists after her death.

(Reprinted from the now defunct www.psypioneer.com.)

MADAME BLAVATSKY, BUDDHISM AND TIBET

– a spoken paper at the Theosophical History conference London, Sunday 15 June 2003, with revisions

Preface (2005)

Madame Blavatsky was a psychic pioneer of some distinction who interacted with many other such pioneers. Probably most readers discount her claim to have real Tibetan teachers, men not spirit guides. Many would question her first hand acquaintance with Tibetan culture- she seems generally unaware of the many Tibetan works that have since reached the West but in her time had not.

And yet, to some scholars like Suzuki and Conze, there did seem to be an authentic Mahayana inspiration. In recent years, there has been a new wave of argument. Now read on...

.....

Let's begin with two contrasting quotations.

“ The role of the redoubtable Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky in popularizing “eastern “ doctrines remains hotly contested. However it is now clear, that despite the

legend which she and her hagiographers propagated, Blavatsky never stepped on Tibetan soil. Her claims that her later writings derived from Himalayan Mahatmas forming a kind of Atlantean brotherhood residing in secrecy in a remote region of Tibet and with access to long-hidden antedeluvian sources of wisdom, need not be treated seriously.”

Harry Oldmeadow “ The Western Quest for ‘Secret Tibet’” **Esoterica** III (2001) 48-107

(Oldmeadow is identified with the Traditionalist school, whose leader Guenon “exposed” Theosophy.)

“ The theosophical movement has in general not knowledge enough of theosophy to see what the Reigles have done.” – Henk Spierenburg, May 2003.

Every year on 8 May, Theosophists throughout the world pay tribute to Madame Blavatsky, co-founder of the Theosophical Society. Since the publication of Dr Vernon Harrison’s paper “ J’ Accuse” by the Journal of the Society for Psychological Research in April 1986, the pain of the over-hasty negative 1885 verdict of that body on HPB has been much reduced.

Not directly addressed by Dr Harrison though was the problem of Madame Blavatsky’s Tibetan connection. Arthur Lillie, Richard Hodgson and their successors had thought to explain this by reference to published sources available in HPB’s time, recycled and at times garbled by her in a spurious claim to initiated knowledge of the Tibetan tradition.

Defenders of HPB, including the “Old Lady “ herself, have in contrast claimed that she had lived in Tibet, as well as enjoying personal contacts with Tibetan Buddhist figures. From the time of Sinnett onwards, biographers have wrestled with the fragmentary and contradictory data.

At one theosophical history conference in London scholars heard both the” for” (Jean Overton Fuller) and “against” (Robert Gilbert) case for HPB’s travels in Tibet. But another line of research focuses, not on HPB’s movements, but on her writings. To what extent does she show special knowledge of Tibet?

In 1999, an American Theosophist Richard Taylor began a research project into Blavatsky and Buddhism. Taylor was part of a postgraduate group in Buddhist Studies at The University of California, Berkeley. He assembled a list of Buddhist publications available in her lifetime, which is rather longer than might be expected. It is possible to see where HPB quotes from these, sometimes through her footnotes, though in other cases, (as G.R.S. Mead regretfully observed a century ago) she does not cite even when borrowing chunks of text.

Thus she employs Emil Schlagintweit “ Buddhism in Tibet” (London, 1863). In our time, David Reigle, Daniel Caldwell and Richard Taylor appear to have been the persons who realised this. Her definitions of parinishpanna, parikalpita, paramarthasayta and

samvritisatya (The Secret Doctrine I pages 56-8 are notable examples.) Sometimes she appears to misunderstand what she is quoting.

At the same time, Taylor concluded that we also find in early theosophical writing, especially in the Mahatma letters, a knowledge of Tibetan terms which was not (so far as we know) generally available to western scholars of HPB's time. The Mahatma Letters also indicate that some at least of HPB's teachers saw themselves in Buddhist terms.

Rich Taylor's findings, though unfinished, were placed on the Blavatsky. Net site, but not published in paper form. They form an excellent recent introduction to the subject.

Yet the revelation through Blavatsky was not Tibetan Buddhism. After all, Tibetan Buddhists today do not subscribe to Theosophy. What then was it? A set of answers has been provided by another American scholar, David Reigle (working with his wife Nancy Reigle, whose name should generally be assumed in references below to David.).

Reigle (the name rhymes with legal eagle !) found in 1981 that the term " Books of Kiu-te" used by HPB appeared in a book by C.R. Markham " 2nd edition 1879, called " Narratives of the Mission of George Bogle to Tibet". The reference was in an appendix by Horace Della Penna called in turn " Brief Account of the Kingdom of Tibet". The Books of Kiu-Te are in the Tibetan Buddhist canon, they are the Tibetan Buddhist Tantras. Later it transpired that Henk Spierenburg had published the same identification of the Books of Kie-Te through the Dutch Theosophical Society in 1975, but this had not become known in the English-speaking world. Spierenburg had begun reading the books mentioned by HPB, with a view to collecting together her references to such traditions as Buddhism, the Vedas and the New Testament (This is now a major series, invaluable to students.). He had therefore read Markham and Della Penna, and realised that this book was the source of HPB's term " Kiu-Te" . It would appear that no one had done this before Spierenburg, although a follow-up of HPB's references would have led to it

We owe to Wizards Bookshelf and Richard Robb (best known for their Secret Doctrine Reference Series) the publication in 1983 of Reigle's booklet " The Books of Kiu-te" which has since been reprinted. Then in 1999 Robb issued " Blavatsky's Secret Books", a hardback collection of the Reigles' papers and research reports. But this has attracted disappointingly little attention. Recently David Reigle's work has started to become more easily available though www.easterntradition.org

Reigle has suggested that in " The Stanzas of Dzyan", on which " The Secret Doctrine" is a commentary, HPB has used the first (cosmology) section of the Kalachakra Tantra, but in its longer original form, rather than the shortened form known today. This Tantra was associated with the Panchen Lama at Shigatse in Tibet, with which HPB claimed affiliation. At present, during the minority of the present Panchen Lama, it is in particular the other leading Tibetan dignitary, the Dalai Lama, who has made the Kalachakra Tantra known in the West, and has conducted initiations into it.

But the actual metaphysics presented by HPB and her teachers is not Gelugpa., the school to which both the Dalai and Panchen Lamas belong. It is not, on certain major points, the same as the public teaching of Tsong-ka-pa, the great reformer of that school. It has (suggested Reigle) closer affinities with the Jonangpa school, a smaller and at times persecuted tradition., not well known in the West, though there are now Dorje Ling centres in Brooklyn and Atlanta, USA.

Yet the origins of HPB's teaching are not in Tibet, or at least, not in the Tibetan language. It will be remembered that most Tibetan scriptures were specially translated from the Buddhist Sanskrit, though it was in Tibetan that Tsong-ka-pa and other Tibetan teachers commented on them. The Buddhist Sanskrit originals, about 50% of which may still exist, take us closer to the original of the Book of Dzyan. That original may in turn be in a different language, which HPB called Senzar. The search for it chiefly motivates David and Nancy Reigle

Reigle therefore concludes that HPB's primary teachers were indeed affiliated with Tibetan Buddhism, but they were also initiated into a more secret tradition, not limited to Tibet or to Buddhism.

This endorsement of HPB is significant because of Reigle's Sanskrit scholarship. It is not unknown for an orientalist (if a vague term may be permitted) to have been involved in Theosophy in his or her youth, but the academic community would hold that they should abandon this in maturity and then write off HPB as a crank or worse.

Reigle, in contrast, has established a reputation as scholar in the Sanskrit Buddhist materials, yet he has been led to put HPB firmly into a Tibetan Buddhist context, though it is admitted that there are some problems on matters where she differs from the main Tibetan Buddhist view. It is the Stanzas of Dyzan whose teaching is of most interest to him. "The Voice of a Silence" a later poetic work by HPB is also very important as the first exposition in the West of the bodhisattva ideal, which is central in Mahayana Buddhism..

Reigle can read Tibetan. This is almost unprecedented in the Theosophical world, if one excepts a handful of Tibetans who join the TS for such reasons as access to its libraries.(Sanskrit scholars, in contrast, have not been rare , at least among Indian Theosophists.).

There has been, coincident with the spread of Tibetan Buddhism in the West, a greater interest in its relationship with Theosophy. The quarterly magazine "Fohat", founded in Edmonton, Canada in 1997 was not only for a time the chief publisher of Reigle papers, but has carried other contributions on related subjects - by its editor Robert Bruce MacDonald, by the late Abhinyano (a Western Buddhist) and by Gerald Schueler, an American writer on the magical tradition.

Schueler considers that Theosophy and Mahayana Buddhism are identical in their core, though differing in emphasis, and (at face value only) conflicting at certain points. He

believes that HPB was initiated into Mahayana and into Dzogchen, a form of once secret practice found chiefly in the Nyingma school.

Another student, Grigor V. Ananikian has noted “ The Central Asian Dzogchen is common to and found within Bon, Nyingmapa lineage, as well as in some northern Indian elements of the Sikhs, Nathas....” He would prefer to look northwards to Central Asia and west to Persia for HPB’s school.

In this connection I should like to call attention to a paper by Dr Todd Gibson “ Inner Asian Contributions to the Vajrayana”(Indo-Iranian Journal **40** 37-57 1997) .Gibson challenges the common view that Tibetan Buddhism was essentially transmitted from India. Important developments in esoteric Buddhism, he argues came from the North, from inner Asia. Even the Buddhist mandala seems to have developed there.

Madame Blavatsky occasionally included actual Tibetan language passages or fragments in her work, rendered in our alphabet. Michael Lewis, in association with Ken Small, has recently examined one such phonetic fragment in the Proem to “ The Secret Doctrine”. Lewis has special knowledge of spoken Tibetan dialects. Their unpublished paper “ In the Matrix of the Primordial Deities” indicates a Tibetan original to the first Stanza of Dzyan.

Similarly, David Reigle has been working for some years on the Tibetan terms in the “Cosmological Notes” that appeared as an appendix to the” “ Letters to A.P. Sinnett”. But the whole corpus of Reigle’s work has largely been ignored. Like Dr Harrison at the time of his famous SPR paper, he is not a member of a Theosophical Society despite being, I would suggest, the most important defender of HPB in the world today

Reigle has another qualification. He is initiated into the Kalachakra tradition. This gives him a special perspective on Madame Blavatsky’s claim to have Tibetan links. Unfortunately, except perhaps for Ian Brown of London , other Kalachakra practitioners are not interested in the Blavatsky claim.(Brown took part in the 1986 Theosophical History conference in London). .In 1996, Spirit of the Sun Publications (Santa Fe, New Mexico) published David Reigle’s essay “ Kalacakra (sic) Sadhana and Social Responsibility” in book form (available through Wisdom Books in the UK.).

There is also a growing community of academic scholars active in researching aspects of Tibetan Buddhism. They have nothing to say about David Reigle’s Blavatsky work either, even when they know of it. Sometimes this may be because they consider Blavatsky not a respectable figure for them to study. No one ever harmed their academic career by publishing a disparaging reference to HPB in an academic paper, but serious study has been rare. Another problem for the academic scholars is that they would need not only knowledge of Tibetan, but also of Sanskrit, to seriously engage with David Reigle’s research. And then there is the fact that anyone who attempts objective research of Blavatsky may receive abuse from some so-called followers of Blavatsky.

One of the few critical responses to Reigle, or at least his early work, has come from Tim Maroney, in his “Book of Dzyan” (Oakland, California, Chaosium, 2000) who relates Blavatsky to the horror fantasist H.P. Lovecraft. Maroney is an OTO initiate but despite this, or perhaps because of it, he is dismissive of Reigle’s attempt to give Blavatsky a Tibetan context, and even reprints part of Hodgson’s report.

The work of Reigle and others on Tibetan aspects of HPB is naturally relevant to the problem of putting HPB into an overall context. Because she uses material from a variety of traditions – and says so – she may be said to have affinities with those schools. So she may be explained partly as a Sufi, or an Ismaili, or a Kabbalist, or a Buddhist, a Spiritualist, or a spiritual ancestor of Gurdjieff.

If we as (mostly) Europeans with a heritage of European esotericism claim Blavatsky as mainly European in her inspiration, with some oriental trappings, which may be the emerging academic view today, can we respond adequately to the challenge “She claimed a Tibetan and Sanskrit inspiration, and study of original language materials is actually substantiating this. “?

I am not saying that knowing Sanskrit confers infallibility on a scholar’s interpretation. There is an instructive case at the moment involving another expert in Sanskrit Buddhist scriptures, and that is Dr Christian Lindtner of Denmark. Understanding Greek also, he read the Christian gospels and detected Mahayana Buddhist originals.. That is relevant to an old argument, in which HPB participated with gusto - whether Christianity borrowed from Buddhism. As it happens, another Sanskrit and biblical scholar, retired British legal professor Duncan Derrett, while admitting more Buddhist influence than do biblical scholars without Sanskrit knowledge, does not accept Dr Lindtner’s judgment on the supposed Mahayana Buddhist originals. Similarly, in a sense, one would not mind if someone refuted David Reigle and the others, but they would need to do it effectively with some knowledge of the original languages.

Another specialist in Sanskrit, formerly of the British Library, is Jeanine Miller, whose new book about Blavatsky is eagerly awaited. And this brings me to an aspect of the oriental connection which is ironic. Reigle and Miller, reading Sanskrit, recognise the authentic inspiration of Blavatsky, and serious Blavatsky students applaud. But R and M also detect genuine Sanskrit and Tibetan elements in the writings of Alice Bailey and her inspirer DK. Some of these same students are then sceptical!

In a further irony, Alice Bailey was of course a theist, and a theme of David Reigle’s most recent work is that Theosophy, as presented through HPB, was non-theistic, that is belief and worship of a personal god outside the individual was not taught. Indeed, Reigle argues that the wisdom religion in ancient India was non-theistic and gradually became overlaid with theism, with disastrous consequences because theism is associated with religious persecution. Jainism, Buddhism and early Hinduism therefore were not theistic. The underlying teaching of the Dalai Lama today is not theistic either.

This is congenial to the original teachings of “ The Secret Doctrine” and The Key to Theosophy” but many Theosophists have been theistic, and in the UK, for example, the efforts of Geoffrey Farthing, Adam Warcup, Blavatsky Trust and others to recall them to non-theism have had limited success.

As historians, however, we are chiefly interested in placing Madame Blavatsky and the Theosophical movement in a historical context. Historians cannot afford to ignore the resurgence of the Tibetan explanation of HPB. They could disregard Geoffrey Barboraka on the grounds that he did not know Tibetan well, but some of those working now in this area clearly do.

While Paul Johnson presented some evidence in “ The Masters Revealed” (1994) supporting HPB’s special access to Tibetan Buddhist sources, newer and more detailed studies by David Reigle and other scholars add considerably more weight to the argument.. We may not be able to say definitely what Col. Olcott saw late one evening in 1882, or where HPB was in 1851. But in examining the teaching, which after all is the more important subject, we have vastly more material now available from oriental scriptures with which to make informed comparisons, and we have a series of learned articles by David Reigle and others on their implications.

Let me offer a brief theory of HPB. In his classic work “ HP Blavatsky Tibet and Tulku” (1966) Geoffrey Barboraka identified Blavatsky as a tulku, a person in whom another higher entity was manifesting. That book, incidentally, could be the focus for a whole day’s seminar. (In “ The Secret Doctrine” Blavatsky herself explains Boehme, the German mystic , the same way, using the Sanskrit equivalent nirmanakaya.).

There are personal testimonies to Blavatsky, cited by Barboraka, behaving in this entranced or inspired manner which is familiar to psychical researchers in a lower level of inspiration. In “ The Mahatma Letters” it is clearly stated that as a result of her experiences at the hands of her teachers she was psychologically not complete any more.

The positive side of this tulku status is that passages of her writing are quite brilliant in their knowledge and their expression, even allowing for the editing skills of Wilder, Mead or the Keightleys around her. The negative side is that I am not sure that she could always remember where she had been or what she had said. I do not mean that she was basically a fantasist, laying claim to an occult career she never had; it was her occult work which had led to some diffusion of her consciousness, such as gaps in memory.

Moreover, ideas could clothe themselves in her mind using whatever words or phrases were available in her memory. That is why, for example, in “ The Voice of the Silence” she expressed her basic theme in material gathered from many sources, including a past article in “ The Theosophist”. (Daniel Caldwell has lately reminded us of this article in a valuable note.)

Finally, let us observe how HPB’s Tibetan teachers may have given to the Theosophical Society a limited time. I refer to the well-known statement (in “ The Key to Theosophy”

for example,) that at the end of each century a special spiritual push was made. This appears to be related to the traditions of the Seven Rishis , and also to the Kalachakra texts.

At the end of the 17th century in England, we find the Theosophical Transactions of Jane Leade ,Dr John Pordage and the Behmenists. At the end of the 18th century we have the Theosophical Society which grows into the New Church of Swedenborgians. These impulses fade and then at the end of the 19th century comes the Theosophical Society still present. But what happens at the end of the twentieth.? Is there a new impulse, as HPB predicted?

Could it be Tibetan Buddhism? Perhaps we take for granted the present Dalai Lama, appearing at a religious conference here, conducting initiations there, his edited lectures on the library shelves, the world's second best known religious leader after the Pope. But this is quite an extraordinary development. Previous Dalai Lamas were unknown outside the Buddhist region. While one wishes the present Dalai Lama long life, we may even soon see another Dalai Lama who is (like the fourth) a non-Tibetan.

The subject of Madame Blavatsky, Buddhism and Tibet is today an active area of research, rather neglected it has to be admitted by the Theosophical societies, but essential in any serious theosophical history. But if the new wave of defenders of the Tibetan connection of HPB are to win a hearing, they too will have to bring their findings out of the theosophical community and into mainstream academic publications. Even the best of Theosophical journals and publishers reach only a small audience.. Some use of the many western Buddhist publications would help, though some publications will turn up their nose, forgetting perhaps who were the first western Buddhists!