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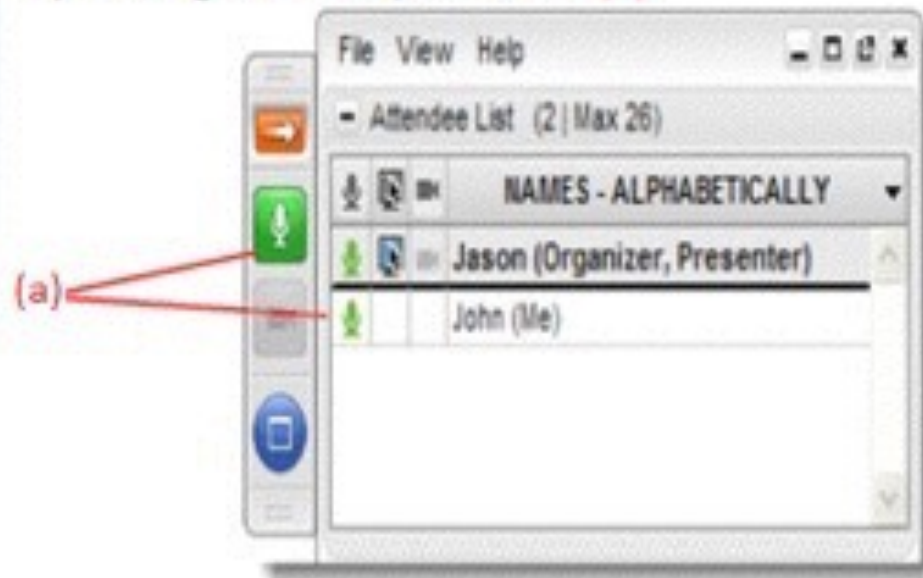
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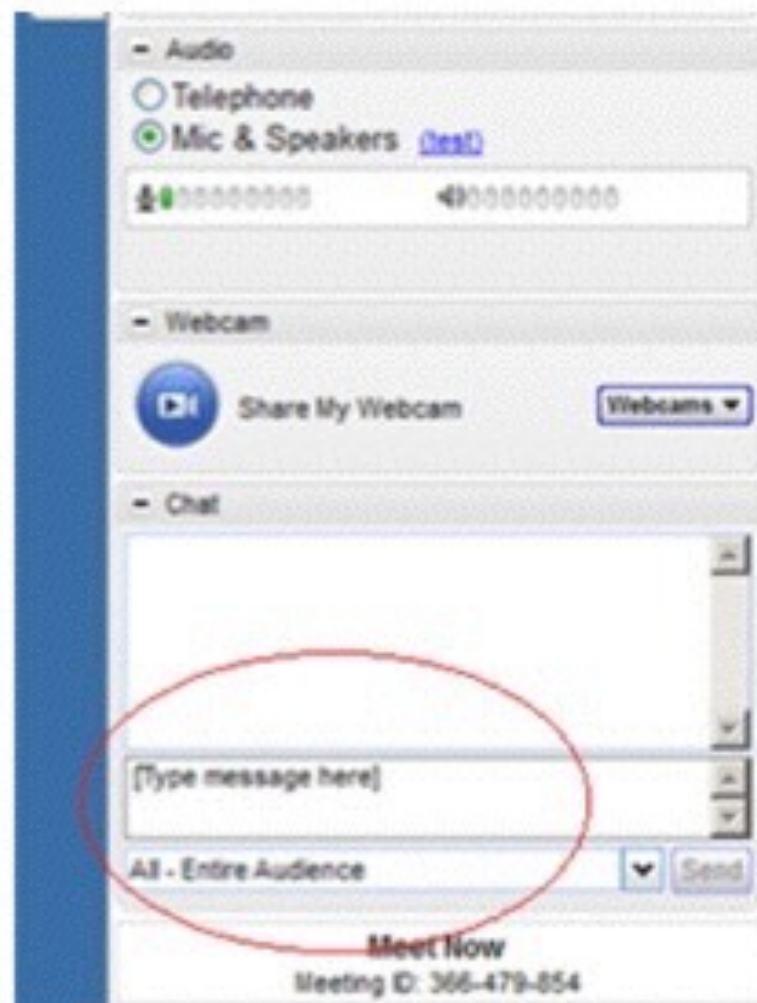
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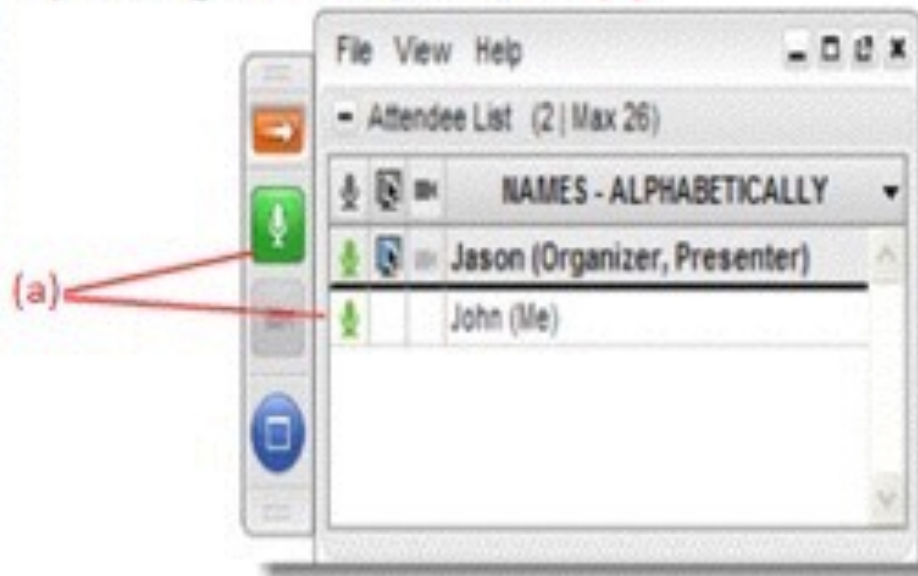


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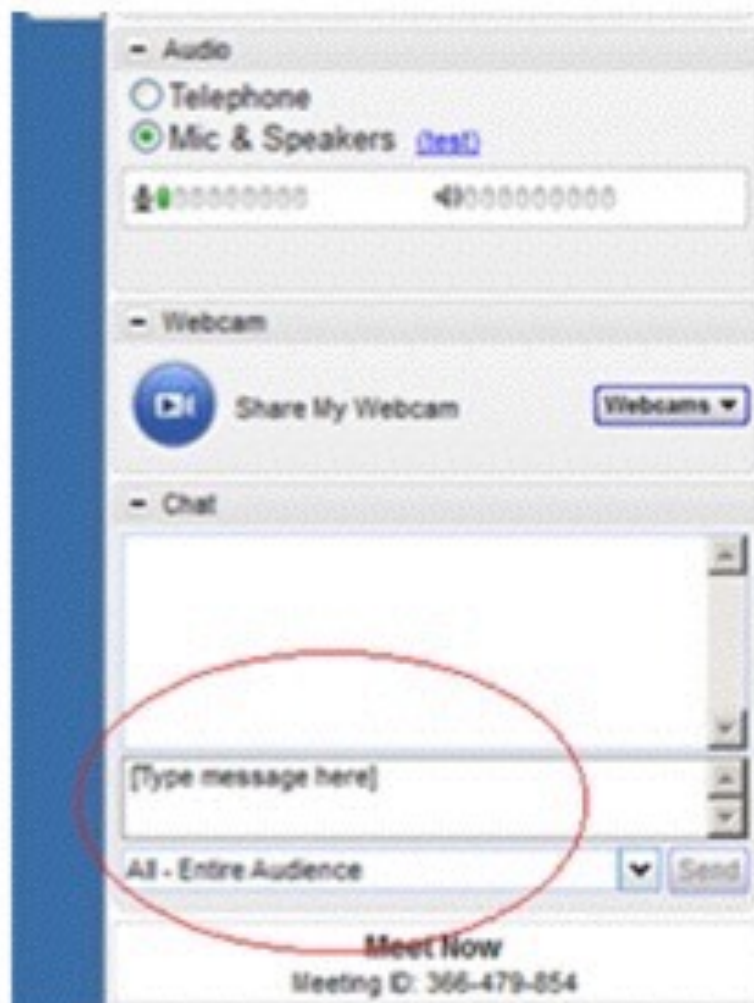
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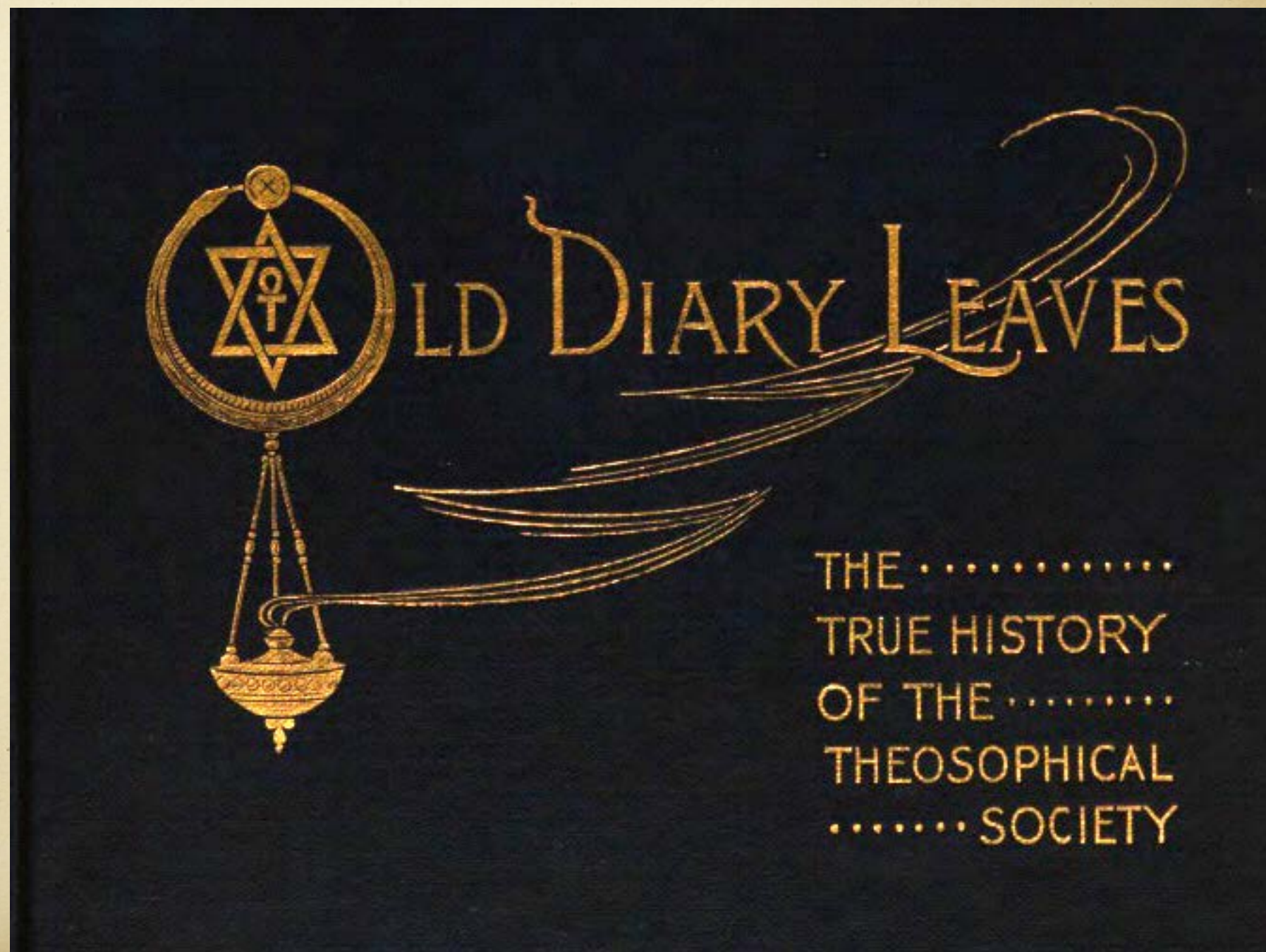


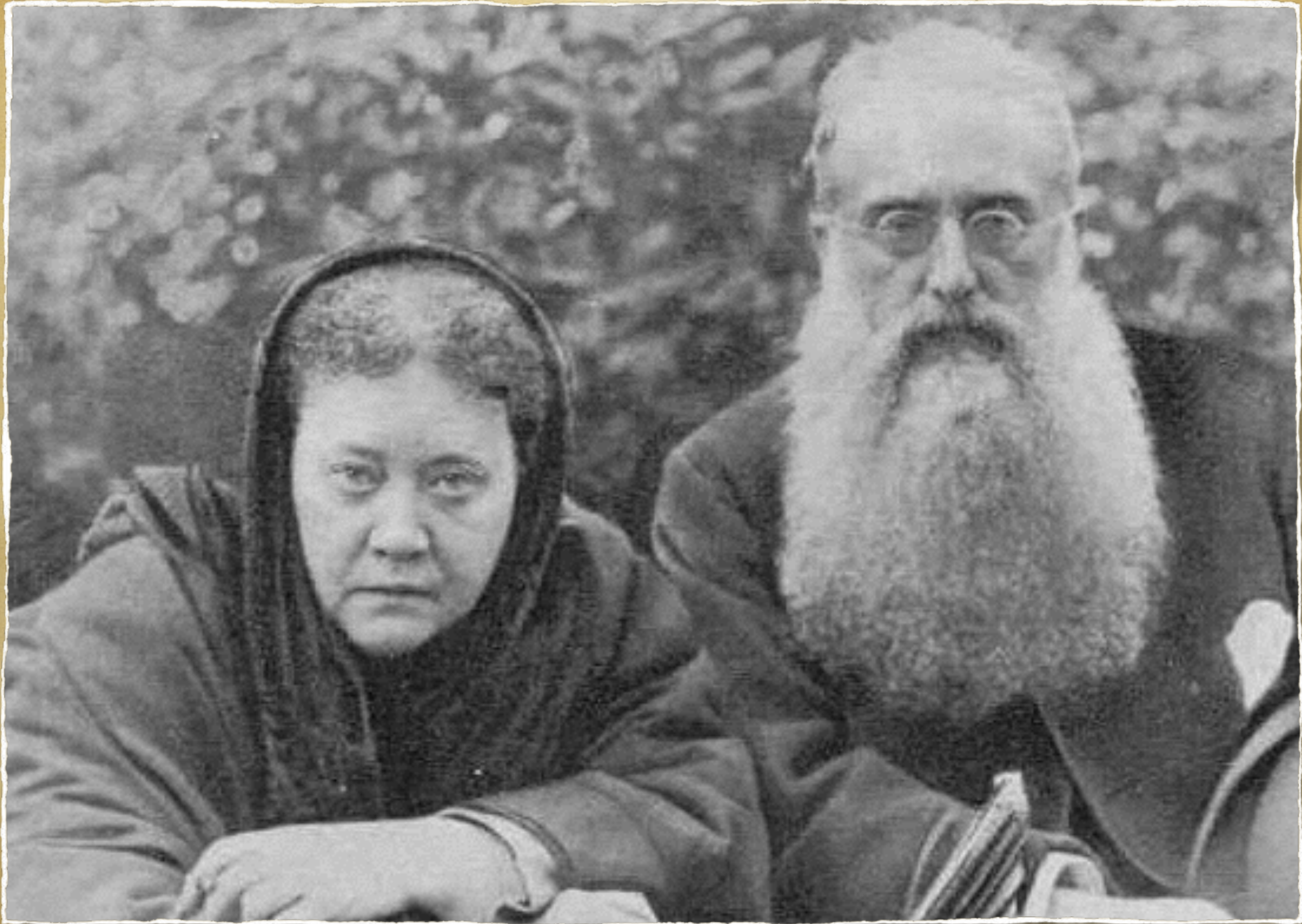


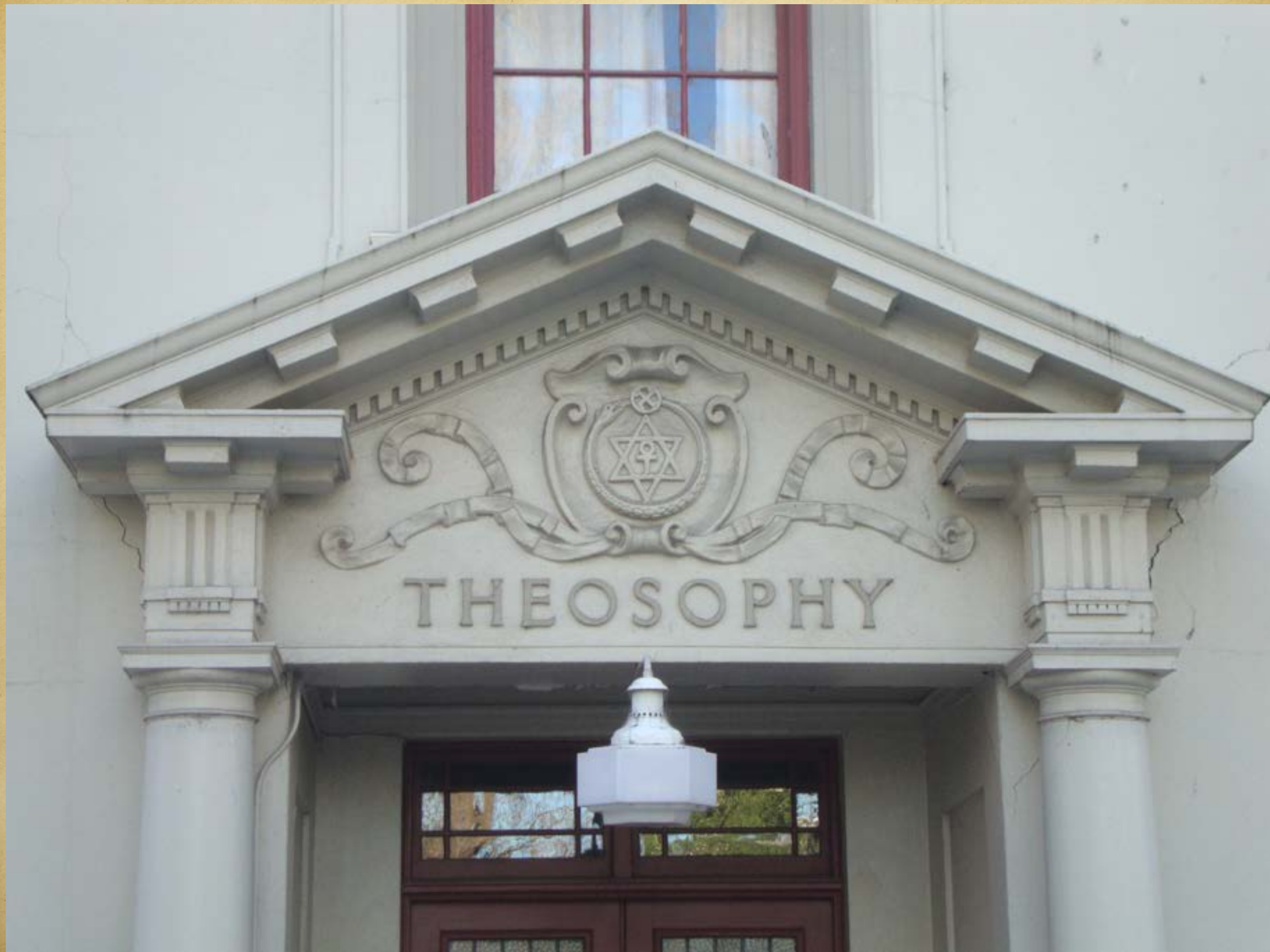
HPB in 1873

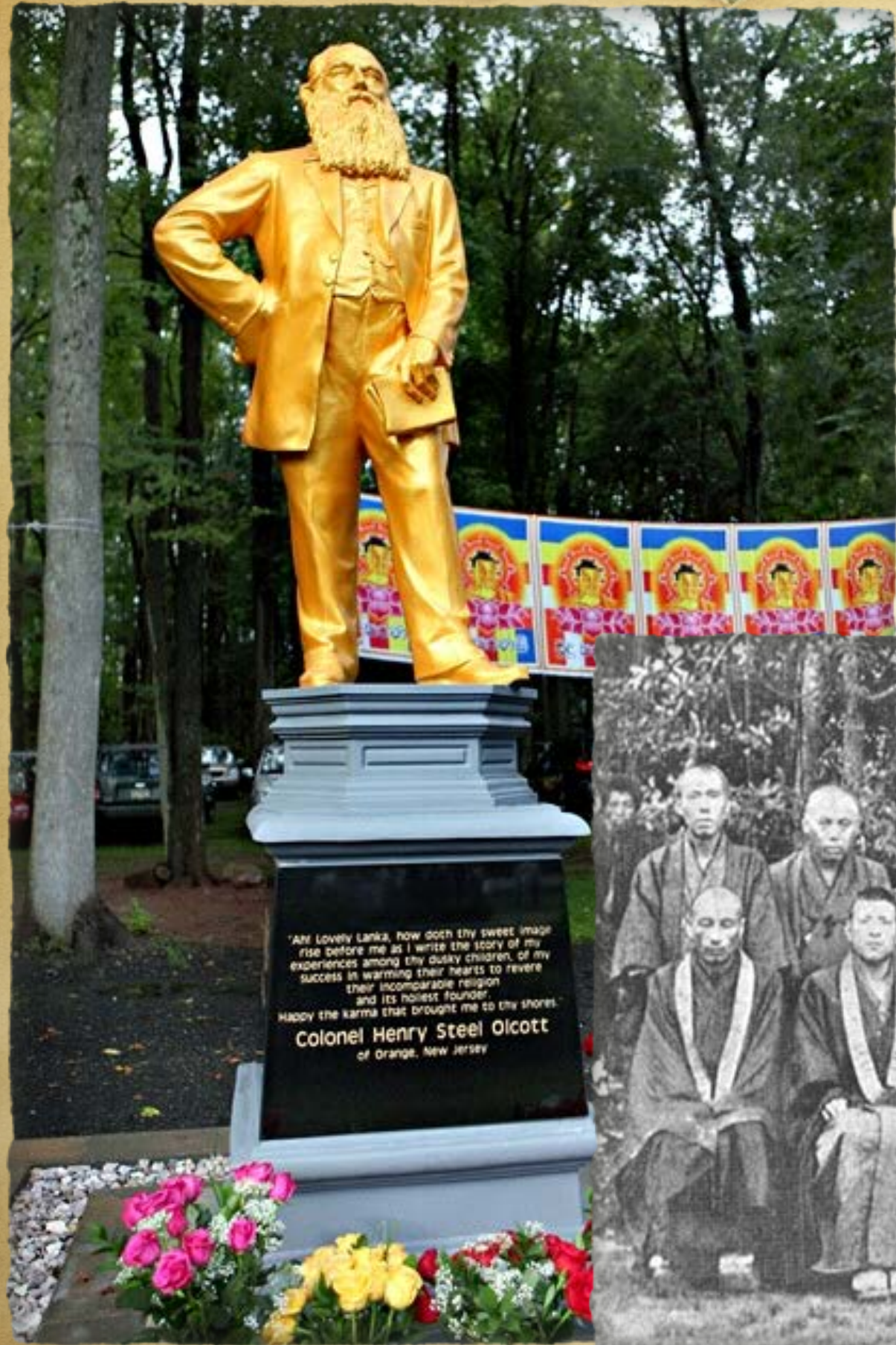


Colonel Henry Steel Alcott









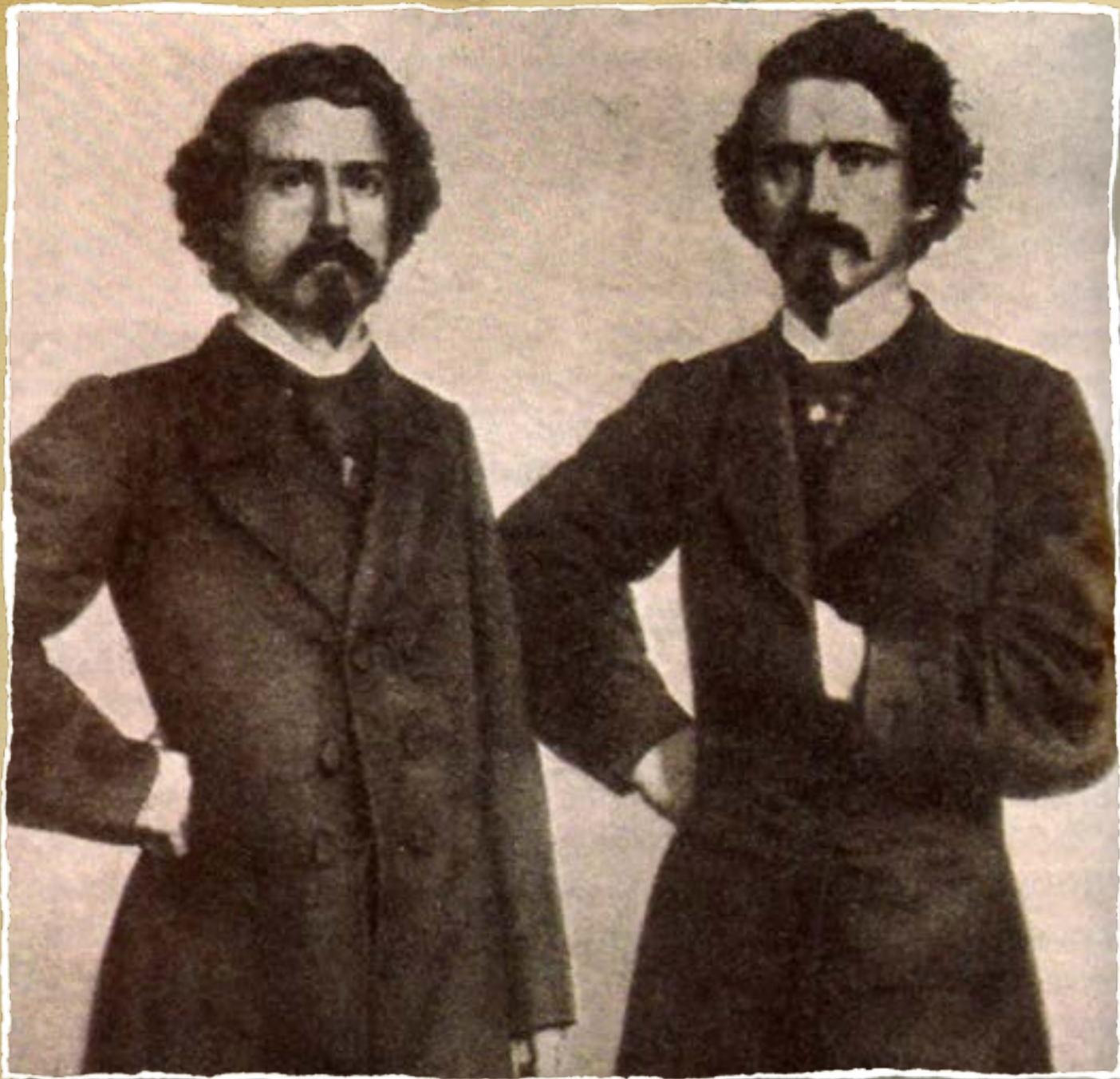


“Where was there a human being of such a mixture as this mysterious, this fascinating, this light-bringing H. P. B.? Where can we find a personality so remarkable and so dramatic; one which so clearly presented at its opposite sides the divine and the human? Karma forbid that I should do her a feather-weight of injustice, but if there ever existed a person in history who was a greater conglomeration of light and shadow, wisdom and indiscretion, spiritual insight and lack of common sense, I cannot recall the name, the circumstances or the epoch.”

ODL x-xi



Feeding time between decks (steerage) in an emigrant ship 1873



The Eddy farmhouse at
Chittenden, Vt.

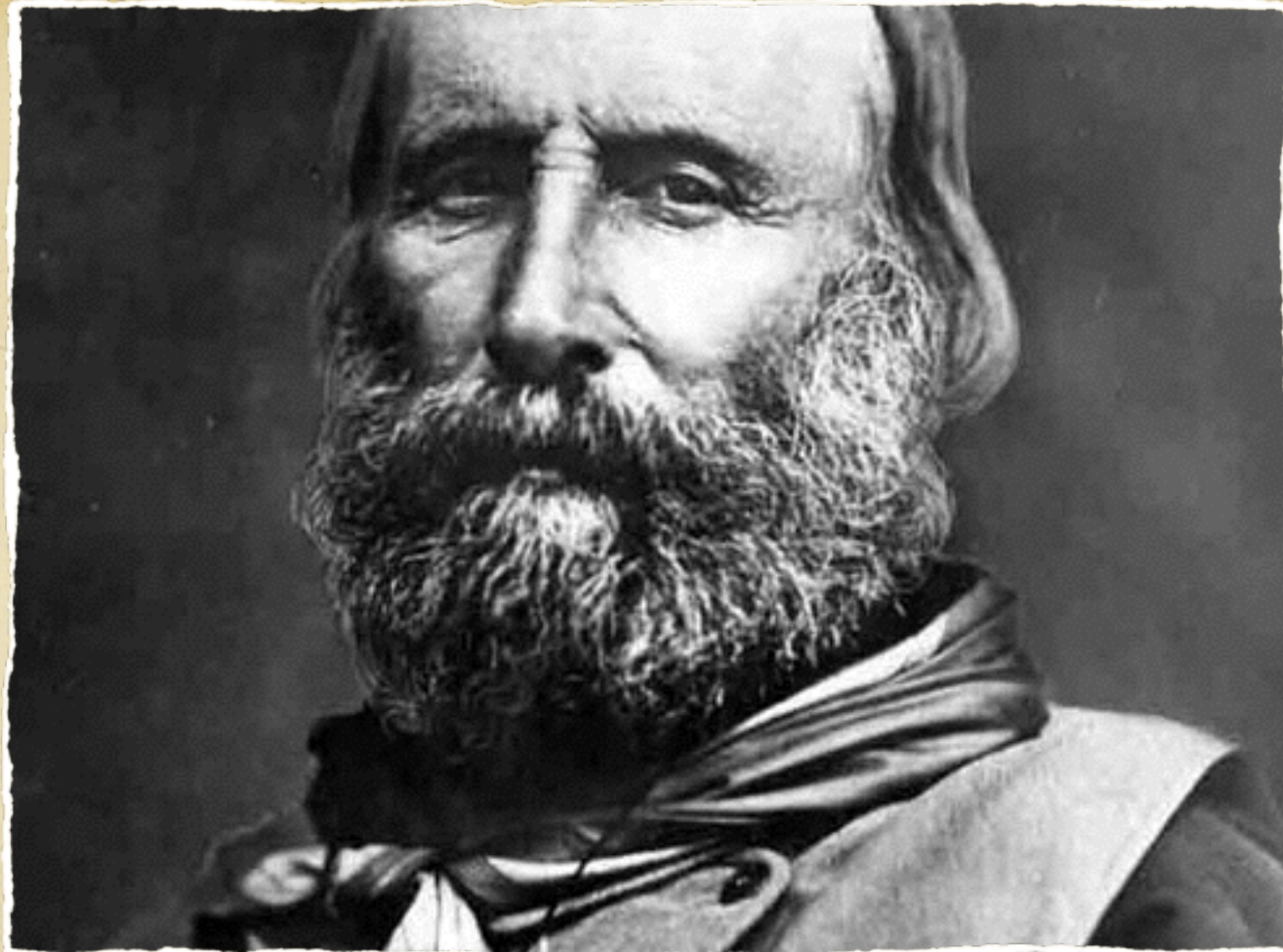


“My eye was first attracted by a scarlet Garibaldian shirt the former wore, as in vivid contrast with the dull colours around. Her hair was then a thick blond mop, worn shorter than the shoulders, and it stood out from her head, silken-soft and crinkled to the roots, like the fleece of a Cotswold ewe. This and the red shirt were what struck my attention before I took in the picture of her features. It was a massive Calmuck face, contrasting in its suggestion of power, culture, and imperiousness, as strangely with the commonplace visages about the room as her red garment did with the grey and white tones of the walls and woodwork and the dull costumes of the rest of the guests.” ODL p.4.





The battle of Mentana, Italy



Giuseppe Garibaldi

“In proof of her story she showed me where her left arm had been broken in two places by a sabre-stroke, and made me feel in her right shoulder a musket-bullet, still imbedded in the muscle, and another in her leg. She also showed me a scar just below the heart where she had been stabbed with a stiletto. This wound reopened a little while she was at Chittenden, and it was to consult me about it that she was led to show it to me.” ODL p.9



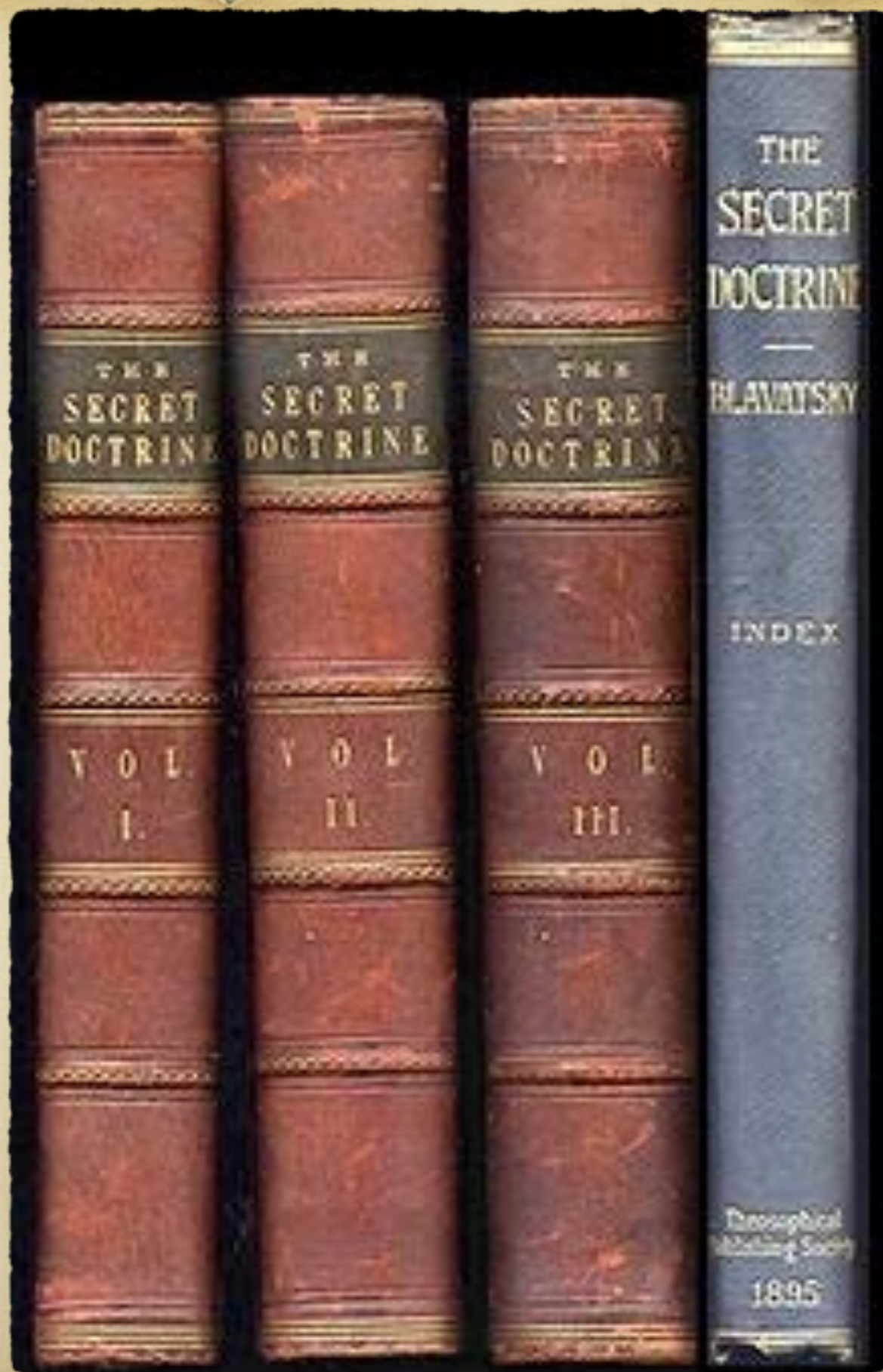
“The Arrest of the Carabinieri”

“I was sitting alone with her in her drawing room when he made his first visit. They talked of Italian affairs, and he suddenly pronounced the name of one of the greatest of the Adepts. She started as if she had received an electric shock; looked him straight in the eyes, and said (in Italian) “What is it? I am ready.” He passed it off carelessly, but thenceforward the talk was all about Magic, Magicians, and Adepts. Signor B. went and opened one of the French windows, made some beckoning passes towards the outer air, and presently a pure white butterfly came into the room and went flying about near the ceiling. H. P. B. laughed in a cheerful way and said: “That is pretty, but I can also do it!” She, too, opened the window, made similar beckoning passes, and presently a second white butterfly came fluttering in. It mounted to the ceiling, chased the other around the room, played with it now and then, with it flew to a corner, and, presto! both disappeared at once while we were looking at them. “What does that mean?” I asked. “Only this, that Signor B. can make an elemental turn itself into a butterfly, and so can I.” The insects were not real but illusionary ones. I recall other instances of her control of elementals or, as Hindus would term it, Yakshini Vidya. An early one is the following: On a cold winter’s night, when several inches of snow lay upon the ground, she and I were working upon her book until a late hour at her rooms in Thirty-Fourth Street. I had eaten some saltish food for dinner, and at about 1 A.M., feeling very thirsty, said to her: “Would it not be nice to have some hothouse grapes?” “So it would,” she replied, “let us have some.” “But the shops have been closed for hours, and we can buy none,” I said. “No matter, we shall have them, all the same,” was her reply. “But how?” “I will show you, if you will just turn down that gas-light on the table in front of us.” I turned the cock unintentionally so far around as to extinguish the light. “You need not have done that,” she said. “I only wanted you to make the light dim. However, light it again quickly.” A box of matches lay just at hand, and in a moment I had relit the lamp. “See!” she exclaimed, pointing to a hanging book-shelf on the wall before us. To my amazement there hung from the knobs at the two ends of one of the shelves two large bunches of ripe black Hamburg grapes, which we proceeded to eat. To my question as to the agency employed, she said it was done by certain elementals under her control, and twice later on, when we were living in the so-called “Lamasery,” she repeated the phenomenon of bringing fruits for our refreshment while at work on Isis.” ODL p.16-7





“[HPB] brought four of the Masters to my attention, of whom one was a Copt, one a representative of the Neo Platonist Alexandrian school, one—a very high one, a Master of the Masters, so to say—a Venetian, and one an English philosopher, gone from men’s sight, yet not dead. The first of these became my first Guru, and a stern disciplinarian he was... In time, I came to know from themselves that H. P. B. was a faithful servant of theirs, though her peculiar temperament and idiosyncrasies made her too antipathetic to some of them to permit of their working with her. This will not seem strange if one remembers that each individual man, whether adept or laic, has evolved along a particular ray of the Logos, and is in spiritual sympathy with his associate souls of that ray, and may be in antagonism, on this physical plane, with entities of another ray when clothed in flesh. This is probably the ultimate ratio of what is called magnetic, auric, or psychical sympathy and antipathy. Whatever the reason may be some of the Masters could not and did not work with H. P. B. Several did, among them some whose names, have never as yet been given out, but whom I had much intercourse with in those early years of the Theosophical Society movement.
ODL p.19-20



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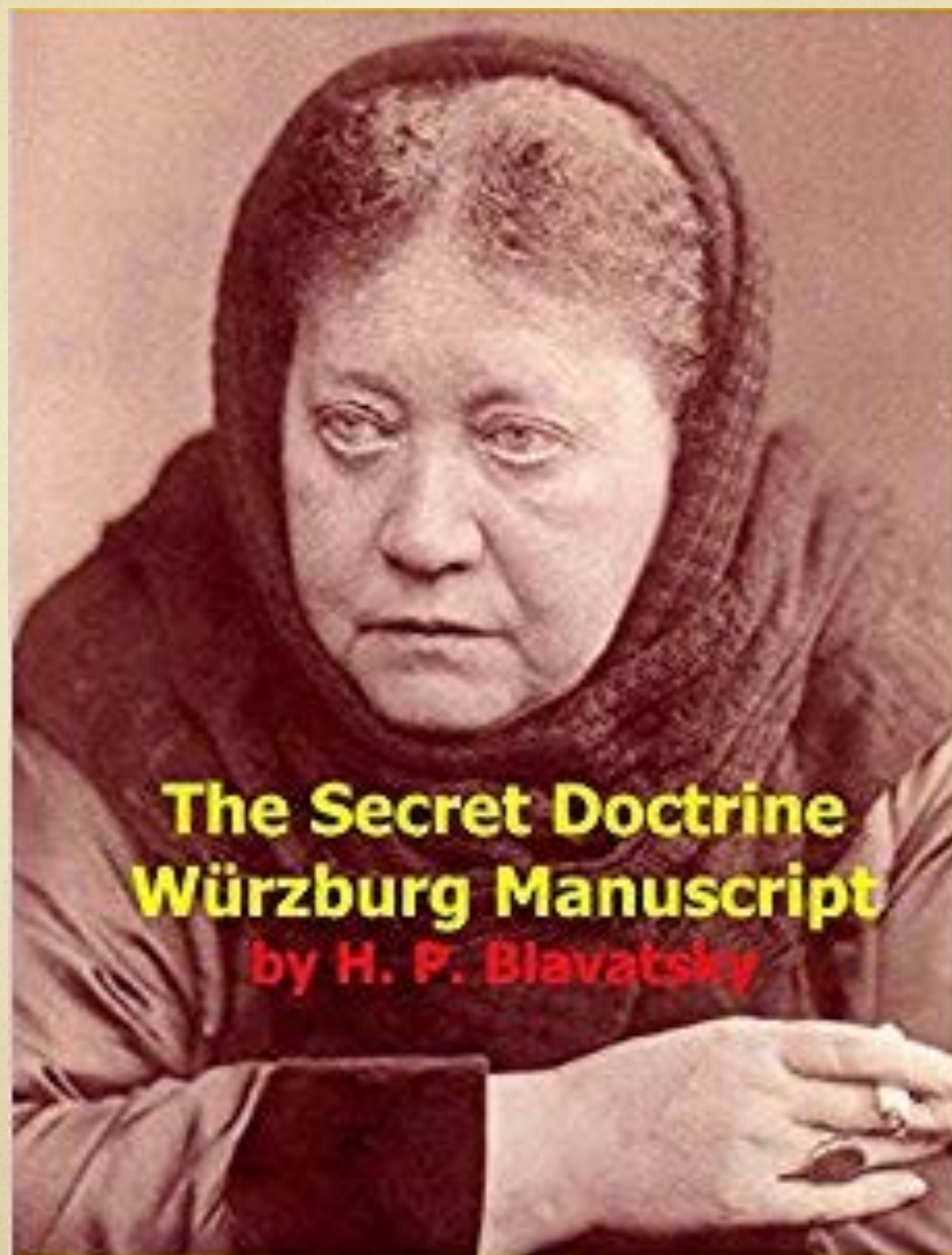
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Theosophical
Publishing Society

1895



“These truths are in no sense put forward as a revelation... for what is contained in this work is to be found scattered throughout thousands of volumes embodying the scriptures of the great Asiatic and early European religions, hidden under glyph and symbol, and hitherto left unnoticed because of this veil. What is now attempted is to gather the oldest tenets together and to make of them one harmonious and unbroken whole... it is perhaps desirable to state unequivocally that the teachings, however fragmentary and incomplete, contained in these volumes, belong neither to the Hindu, the Zoroastrian, the Chaldean, nor the Egyptian religion, neither to Buddhism, Islam, Judaism nor Christianity exclusively. The Secret Doctrine is the essence of all these. Sprung from it in their origins, the various religious schemes are now made to merge back into their original element, out of which every mystery and dogma has grown, developed, and become materialized.” SD p. vii-viii





“The aim of this work may be thus stated: to show that Nature is not “a fortuitous concurrence of atoms,” and to assign to man his rightful place in the scheme of the Universe; to rescue from degradation the archaic truths which are the basis of all religions; and to uncover, to some extent, the fundamental unity from which they all spring; finally, to show that the occult side of Nature has never been approached by the Science of modern civilization. If this is in any degree accomplished, the writer is content. It is written in the service of humanity, and by humanity and the future generations it must be judged. Its author recognises no inferior court of appeal. Abuse she is accustomed to; calumny she is daily acquainted with; at slander she smiles in silent contempt.” SD p. vii-viii



En also Ain: The absolute deific Principle, impersonal, and unknowable, literally, 'no-thing'

“Esoteric philosophy reconciles all religions, strips every one of its outward, human garments, and shows the root of each to be identical with that of every other great religion. It proves the necessity of an absolute Divine Principle in nature. It denies Deity no more than it does the Sun. Esoteric philosophy has never rejected God in Nature, nor Deity as the absolute and abstract Ens. It only refuses to accept any of the gods of the so-called monotheistic religions, gods created by man in his own image and likeness, a blasphemous and sorry caricature of the Ever Unknowable.”

SD Introductory xx

“In etymology **Adi**, and **Adhi Budha**, the one (or the First) and “Supreme Wisdom” is a term used by **Aryâsanga** in his Secret treatises, and now by all the mystic Northern Buddhists. It is a Sanskrit term, and an appellation given by the earliest Aryans to the Unknown deity; the word “Brahmâ” not being found in the Vedas and the early works. It means the absolute Wisdom, and “**Adi-bhûta**” is translated “the primeval uncreated cause of all” by Fitzedward Hall. Æons of untold duration must have elapsed, before the epithet of Buddha was so humanized, so to speak, as to allow of the term being applied to mortals and finally appropriated to one whose unparalleled virtues and knowledge caused him to receive the title of the “Buddha of Wisdom unmoved.” **Bodha** means the innate possession of divine intellect or “understanding”; “**Buddha**,” the acquirement of it by personal efforts and merit; while **Buddhi** is the faculty of cognizing the channel through which divine knowledge reaches the “Ego,” the discernment of good and evil, “divine conscience” also; and “Spiritual Soul,” which is the vehicle of Atma. “When Buddhi absorbs our Egotism (destroys it) with all its Vikaras, Avalôkitêshvara becomes manifested to us, and Nirvana, or Mukti, is reached,” “Mukti” being the same as Nirvana, i.e., freedom from the trammels of “Maya” or illusion. “**Bodhi**” is likewise the name of a particular state of trance condition, called Samadhi, during which the subject reaches the culmination of spiritual knowledge.” SD Introductory xix

Aryasanga: direct disciple of Gautama and founder of the first Yogacharya school
Yogacharya: one who has mastered the doctrines and practices of ecstatic meditation

Adi, and **Adhi Budha**: Supreme Wisdom, the Unknown deity

Adi-bhûta: the Primeval Uncreated Cause of All

Buddha of Wisdom Unmoved: A human with one whose unparalleled virtues and knowledge

Bodha: the innate possession of divine intellect or understanding

Buddha: the acquirement of bodha by personal efforts and merit

Buddhi: the faculty of cognizing the channel through which divine knowledge reaches the Ego, or Spiritual Soul, which is the vehicle of Atma

Bodhi: a particular trance condition called Samadhi, during which the subject reaches the culmination of spiritual knowledge.

...Indeed, the secret portions of the “**Dan**” or “**Janna**” (“Dhyan ”) of Gautama’s metaphysics – grand as they appear to one unacquainted with the tenets of the Wisdom Religion of antiquity – are but a very small portion of the whole. The Hindu Reformer limited his public teachings to the purely moral and physiological aspect of the Wisdom- Religion, to Ethics and man alone. Things “unseen and incorporeal,” the mystery of Being outside our terrestrial sphere, the great Teacher left entirely untouched in his public lectures, reserving the hidden Truths for a select circle of his **Arhats**. The latter received their Initiation at the famous **Saptaparna** cave near Mount Baibhâr... Thus, the reader is asked to bear in mind the very important difference between orthodox Buddhism – i.e., the public teachings of Gautama the **Buddha**, and his esoteric **Budhism**. His Secret Doctrine, however, differed in no wise from that of the initiated Brahmins of his day. The Buddha was a child of the **Aryan** soil, a born Hindu, a **Kshatrya** and a disciple of the “twice-born” (the initiated Brahmins) or **Dwijas**. His teachings, therefore, could not be different from their doctrines, for the whole Buddhist reform merely consisted in giving out a portion of that which had been kept secret from every man outside of the “enchanted” circle of Temple-Initiates and ascetics. Unable to teach all that had been imparted to him – owing to his pledges – though he taught a philosophy built upon the ground-work of the true esoteric knowledge, the Buddha gave to the world only its outward material body and kept its soul for his Elect. SD Introductory xix-xx

Dan or Janna: divine wisdom

Arhats: “the worthy one” Has entered the highest path and is thus emancipated from rebirth

Saptaparna: Sevenfold. The cave referred to had seven chambers and was often meditated in by the Buddha (see image)

Buddha: One who acquires **Budha** or divine understanding

Aryan: name of the 5th root-race

Kshatrya: 2nd of four Hindu castes the ruling caste.

Dwijas: Initiated Brahman



“... While a prominent Cinghalese priest assured the writer that it was well known that the most important Buddhist tracts belonging to the sacred canon were stored away in countries and places inaccessible to the European pundits, the late Swami Dayanand Sarasvati, the greatest Sanskritist of his day in India, assured some members of the Theosophical Society of the same fact with regard to ancient Brahmanical works.... [for] in all the large and wealthy lamaseries, there are subterranean crypts and cave-libraries, cut in the rock, whenever the **gonpa** and the **lhakhang** are situated in the mountains... Along the ridge of **Altyn-Toga**, whose soil no European foot has ever trodden so far, there exists a certain hamlet, lost in a deep gorge. It is a small cluster of houses, with a poor-looking temple in it, with one old lama, a hermit, living near by to watch it. Pilgrims say that the subterranean galleries and halls under it contain a collection of books, the number of which, according to the accounts given, is too large to find room even in the British Museum... SD Introductory xxiv

Cinghalese (modern: Sinhalese): a member of a people originally from northern India, now forming the majority of the population of Sri Lanka.

Gonpa: a temple or lamasery

lhakhang: a subterranean temple for mystic ceremonies

Altyn-Toga: a mountain range in northwestern China that separates the eastern Tarim Basin from the Tibetan Plateau (see image below).





“Built deep in the bowels of the earth, the subterranean stores are secure; and as their entrances are concealed in such oases, there is little fear that anyone should discover them, even should several armies invade the sandy wastes”

SD Introductory xxxiii



“The Secret Doctrine was the universally diffused religion of the ancient and prehistoric world. Proofs of its diffusion, authentic records of its history, a complete chain of documents, showing its character and presence in every land, together with the teaching of all its great adepts, exist to this day in the secret crypts of libraries belonging to the Occult Fraternity. ...it is not the fault of the initiates that these documents are now “lost” to the profane; nor was their policy dictated by selfishness, or any desire to monopolize the life-giving sacred lore. There were portions of the Secret Science that for incalculable ages had to remain concealed from the profane gaze. But this was because to impart to the unprepared multitude secrets of such tremendous importance, was equivalent to giving a child a lighted candle in a powder magazine.” SD Introductory xxxiv

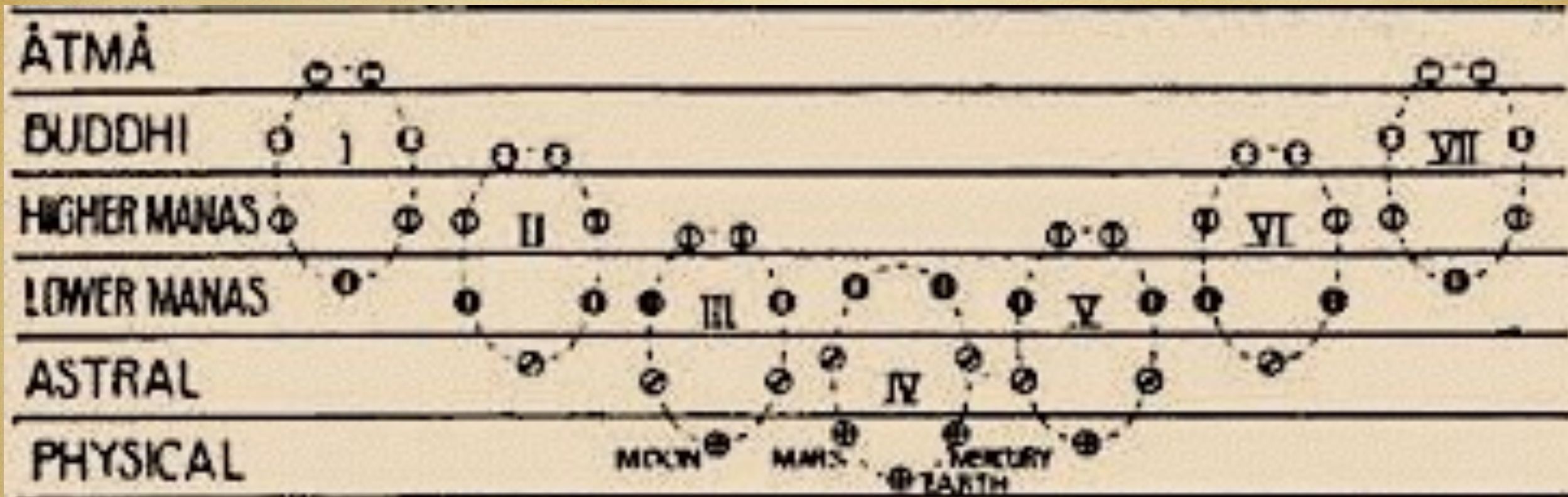


DIAGRAM V.—The Seven Chains of the Earth Scheme.

“Doctrines such as the planetary chain, or the seven races, at once give a clue to the seven-fold nature of man, for each principle is correlated to a plane, a planet, and a race; and the human principles are, on every plane, correlated to seven-fold occult forces—those of the higher planes being of tremendous power. So that any septenary division at once gives a clue to tremendous occult powers, the abuse of which would cause incalculable evil to humanity. A clue, which is, perhaps, no clue to the present generation—especially the Westerns—protected as they are by their very blindness and ignorant materialistic disbelief in the occult; but a clue which would, nevertheless, have been very real in the early centuries of the Christian era, to people fully convinced of the reality of occultism, and entering a cycle of degradation, which made them rife for abuse of occult powers and sorcery of the worst description.” SD Introductory xxxv



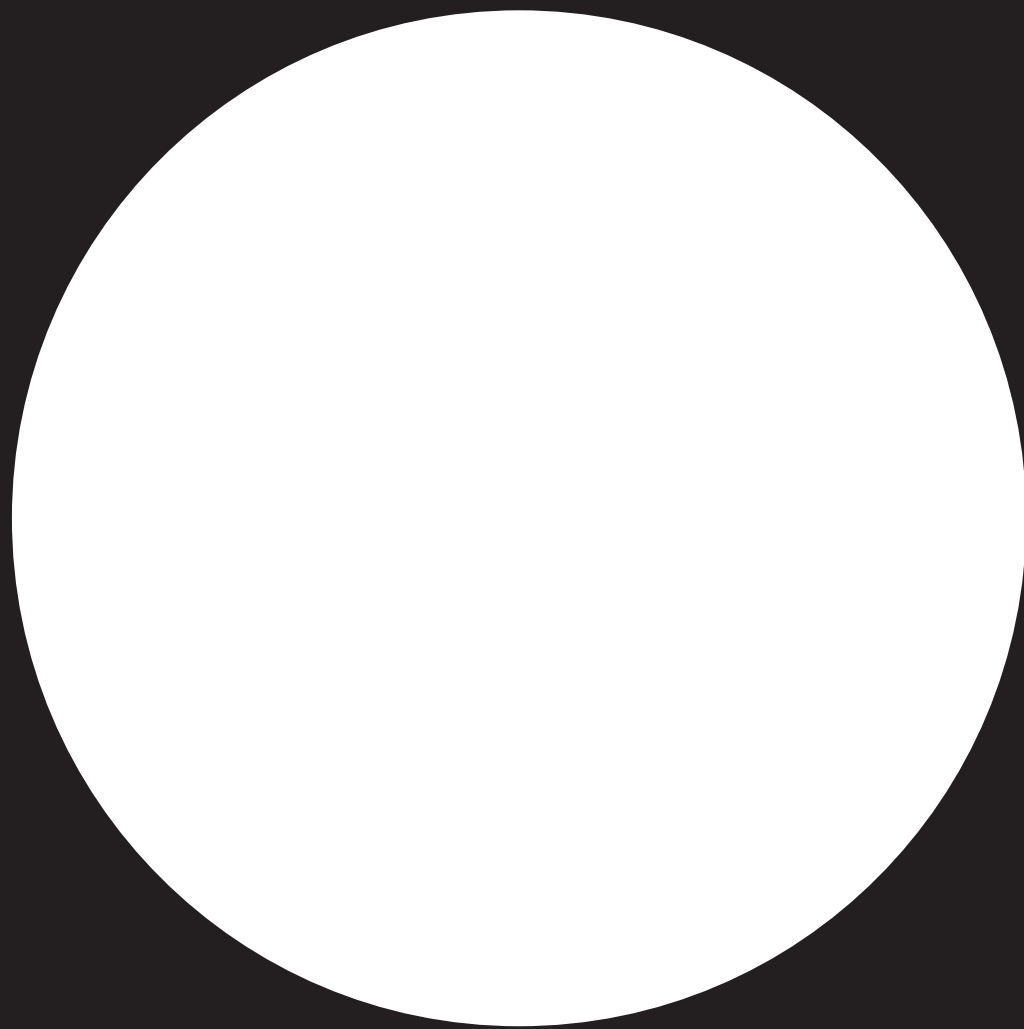
“The days of Constantine were the last turning-point in history, the period of the Supreme struggle that ended in the Western world throttling the old religions in favour of the new one, built on their bodies. From thence the vista into the far distant Past, beyond the “Deluge” and the Garden of Eden, began to be forcibly and relentlessly closed by every fair and unfair means against the indiscreet gaze of posterity. Every issue was blocked up, every record that hands could be laid upon, destroyed. Yet there remains enough, even among such mutilated records, to warrant us in saying that there is in them every possible evidence of the actual existence of a Parent Doctrine. Fragments have survived geological and political cataclysms to tell the story; and every survival shows evidence that the now Secret Wisdom was once the one fountain head, the ever-flowing perennial source, at which were fed all its streamlets the later religions of all nations from the first down to the last. This period, beginning with Buddha and Pythagoras at the one end and the Neo-Platonists and Gnostics at the other, is the only focus left in History wherein converge for the last time the bright rays of light streaming from the æons of time gone by, unobscured by the hand of bigotry and fanaticism.” SD Introductory xlv



“...to the public in general and the readers of the “Secret Doctrine” I may repeat what I have stated all along, and which I now clothe in the words of Montaigne: Gentlemen, ‘I have here made only a nosegay of culled flowers, and have brought nothing of my own but the string that ties them.’ Pull the “string” to pieces and cut it up in shreds, if you will. As for the nosegay of facts—you will never be able to make away with these. You can only ignore them, and no more.” SD Introductory xlv



“There is no religion higher than truth”
“SATYÂT NÂSTI PARO DHARMAH ”
—the motto of the Maharajah of Benares,
adopted by the Theosophical Society.



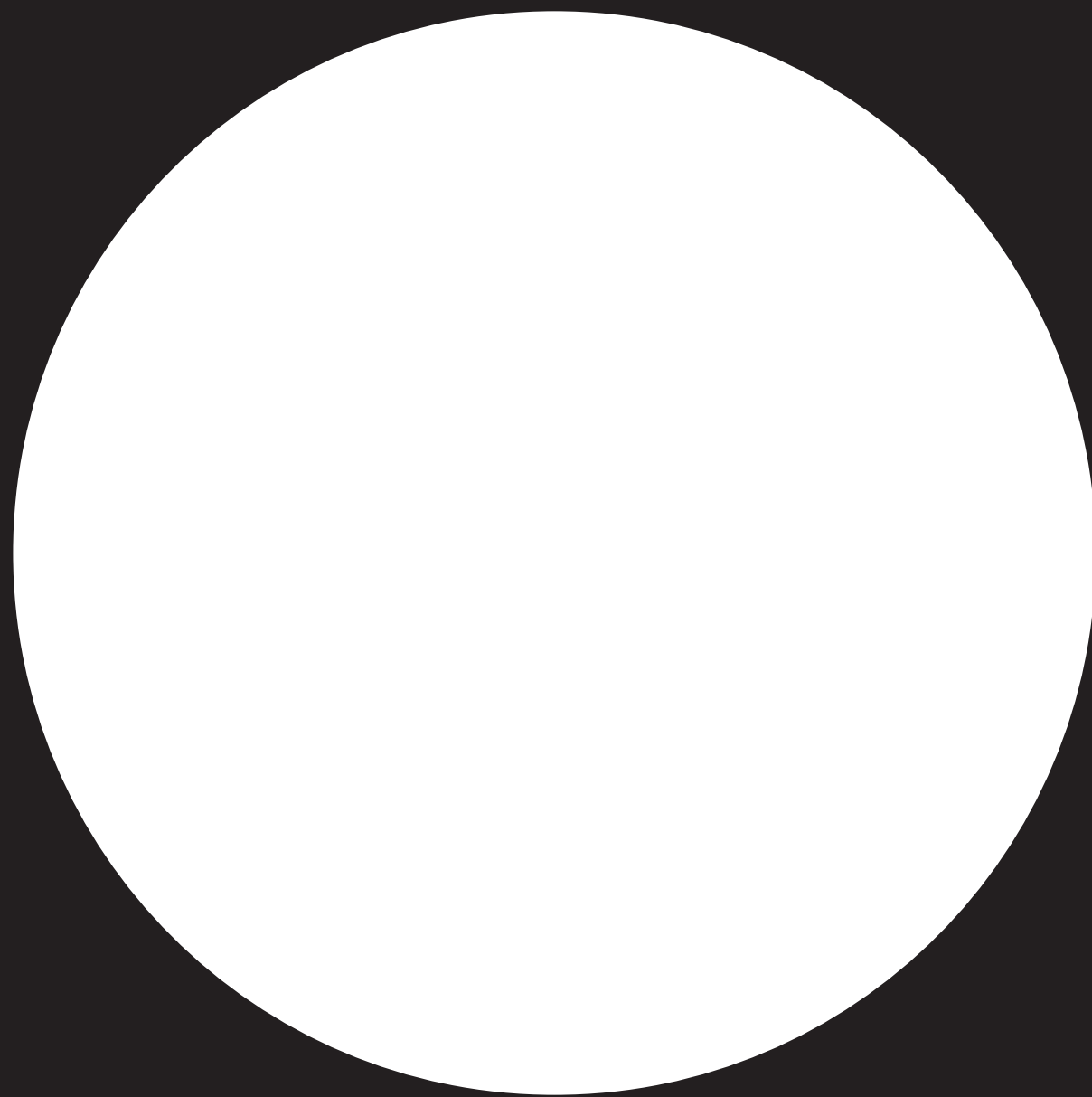
“PROEM.

PAGES FROM A PRE-HISTORIC PERIOD.

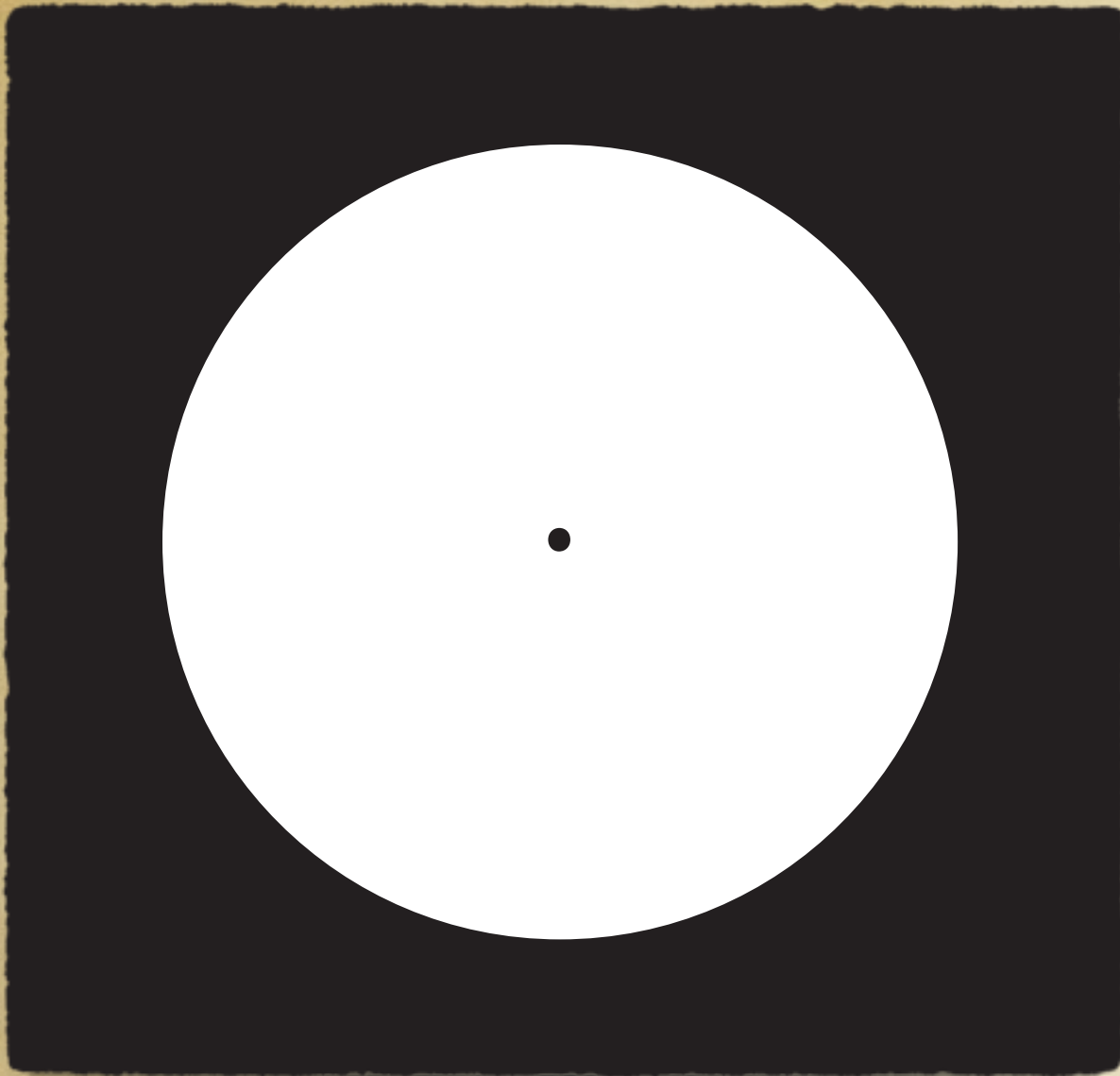
An Archaic Manuscript—a collection of palm leaves made impermeable to water, fire, and air, by some specific unknown process—is before the writer’s eye. On the first page is an immaculate white disk within a dull black ground.



On the following page, the same disk, but with a central point.



The first, the student knows to represent Kosmos in Eternity, before the reawakening of still slumbering Energy, the emanation of the Word in later systems.



Pralaya: A period of obscurity or repose planetary, cosmic, or universal the opposite of Manvantara

Mundane Egg: Of this earthly world rather than a heavenly or spiritual one (spiritual here being a relative term)

Kosmos: (*Gr.*) The universe as distinguished from our world (globe or earth)

Manvantara: A period of manifestation as opposed to Pralaya (rest or dissolution) applied to various cycles

The point in the hitherto immaculate Disk, Space and Eternity in **Pralaya**, denotes the dawn of differentiation. It is the Point in the **Mundane Egg**, the germ within the latter which will become the Universe, the all, the boundless, periodical **Kosmos**, this germ being latent and active, periodically and by turns. The one circle is divine Unity, from which all proceeds, whither all returns. Its circumference a forcibly limited symbol, in view of the limitation of the human mind indicates the abstract, ever incognisable presence, and its plane, the Universal Soul, although the two are one. Only the face of the Disk being white and the ground all around black, shows clearly that its plane is the only knowledge, dim and hazy though it still is, that is attainable by man. It is on this plane that the **Manvantaric** manifestations begin; for it is in this soul that slumbers, during the Pralaya, the Divine Thought,* wherein lies concealed the plan of every future Cosmogony and Theogony.* SD p.1

It is on this plane that the Manvantaric manifestations begin; for it is in this soul that slumbers, during the Pralaya, the Divine Thought,* wherein lies concealed the plan of every future Cosmogony and Theogony.*

* It is hardly necessary to remind the reader once more that the term “Divine Thought,” like that of “Universal Mind,” must not be regarded as even vaguely shadowing forth an intellectual process akin to that exhibited by man. The “Unconscious,” according to von Hartmann, arrived at the vast creative, or rather Evolutionary Plan, “by a clairvoyant wisdom superior to all consciousness,” which in the Vedantic language would mean absolute Wisdom. Only those who realise how far Intuition soars above the tardy processes of ratiocinative *[form judgments by a process of logic; reason]* thought can form the faintest conception of that absolute Wisdom which transcends the ideas of Time and Space. Mind, as we know it, is resolvable into states of consciousness, of varying duration, intensity, complexity, etc. all, in the ultimate, resting on sensation, which is again Maya. Sensation, again, necessarily postulates limitation. The personal God of orthodox Theism perceives, thinks, and is affected by emotion; he repents and feels “fierce anger.” But the notion of such mental states clearly involves the unthinkable postulate of the externality of the exciting stimuli, to say nothing of the impossibility of ascribing changelessness to a Being whose emotions fluctuate with events in the worlds he presides over. The conceptions of a Personal God as changeless and infinite are thus unpsychological and, what is worse, unphilosophical.

* Plato proves himself an Initiate, when saying in Cratylus that θεός *[theos]* is derived from the verb θέειν *[théō]* “to move,” “to run,” as the first astronomers who observed the motions of the heavenly bodies called the planets θεοί *[genitive singular of theos]*, the gods. Later, the word produced another term, ἀλήθεια *[alētheia]* “the breath of God.” SD p.1-2

* *[θεός: The Lambda is originally capitalized is not a noun, but representative of a philosophical idea. The meaning of the word then changes from "word" or "speech" to "law" or "order".]*



It is the one life, eternal, invisible, yet Omnipresent, without beginning or end, yet periodical in its regular manifestations, between which periods reigns the dark mystery of non-Being; unconscious, yet absolute Consciousness; unrealisable, yet the one self-existing reality; truly, “a chaos to the sense, a Kosmos to the reason.” Its one absolute attribute, which is itself, eternal, ceaseless Motion, is called in esoteric parlance the “Great Breath,”* which is the perpetual motion of the universe, in the sense of limitless, ever-present space. That which is motionless cannot be Divine. But then there is nothing in fact and reality absolutely motionless within the universal soul. SD p.2

***Nominalists**, arguing with **Berkeley** that “it is impossible. . . to form the abstract idea of motion distinct from the body moving”, may put the question, “What is that body, the producer of that motion? Is it a substance? Then you are believers in a Personal God?” etc., etc. This will be answered farther on, in the Addendum to this Book; meanwhile, we claim our rights of Conceptionalists as against **Roscelini**’s materialistic views of Realism and Nominalism. “Has science,” says one of its ablest advocates, **Edward Clodd**, “revealed anything that weakens or opposes itself to the ancient words in which the Essence of all religion, past, present, and to come, is given; to do justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly before thy God?” Provided we connote by the word God, not the crude anthropomorphism which is still the backbone of our current theology, but the symbolic conception of that which is Life and Motion of the Universe, to know which in physical order is to know time past, present, and to come, in the existence of successions of phenomena; to know which, in the moral, is to know what has been, is, and will be, within human consciousness. SD p.3

Nominalists: is primarily a position on the problem of universals, which dates back at least to Plato, and is opposed to realist philosophies, such as Platonic realism, which assert that universals do exist over and above particulars. One version denies the existence of universals — things that can be exemplified by many particular things (e.g., strength, humanity). The other version specifically denies the existence of abstract objects — objects that do not exist in space and time.

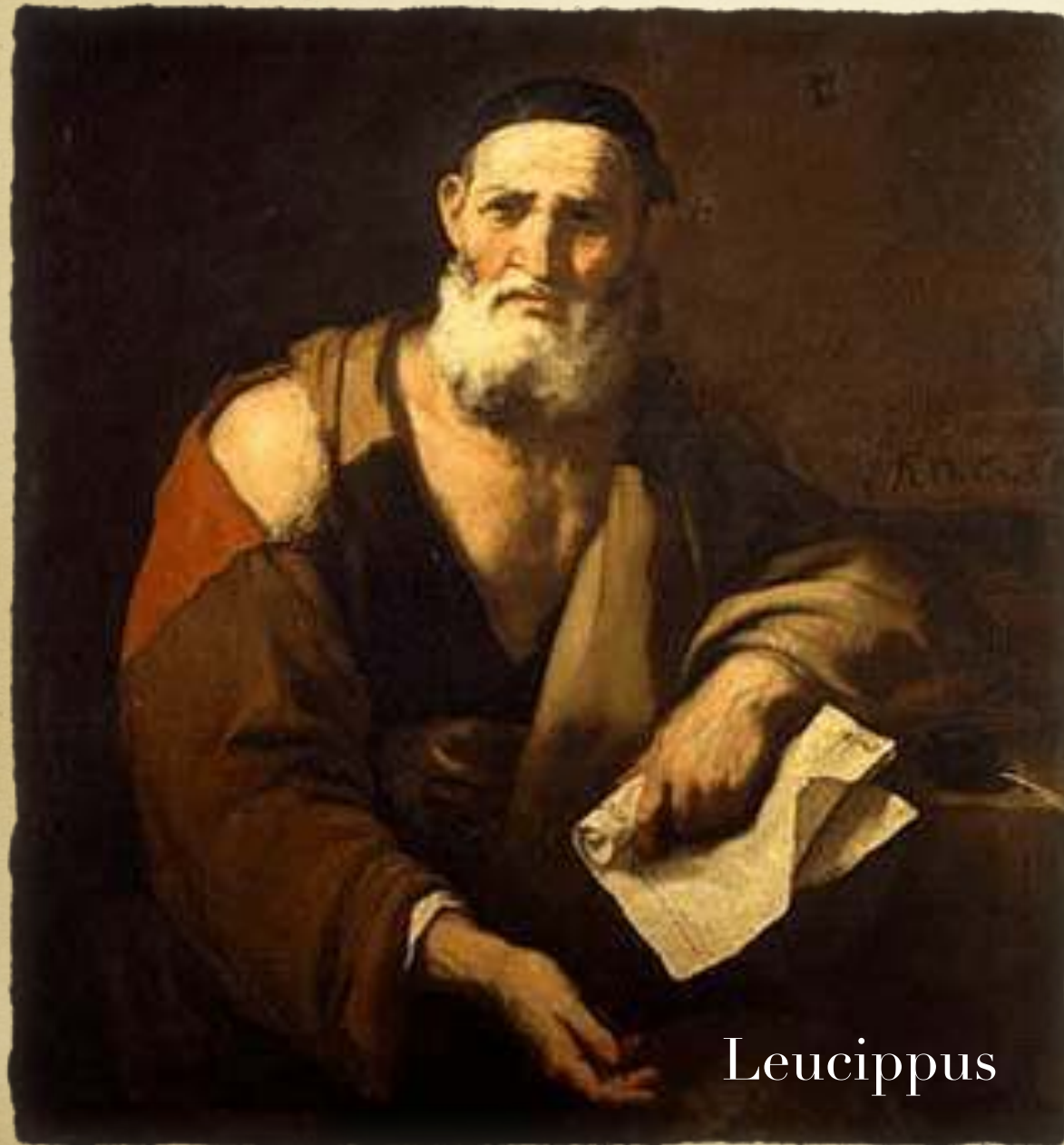
George Berkeley — an Irish philosopher whose primary achievement was the advancement of a theory he called "immaterialism" (later referred to as "subjective idealism" by others). This theory denies the existence of material substance and instead contends that familiar objects like tables and chairs are only ideas in the minds of perceivers and, as a result, cannot exist without being perceived.

Roscelin of Compiègne (c. 1050 — c. 1125), was a French philosopher and theologian, often regarded as the founder of nominalism. **Edward Clodd**: an agnostic and wrote that the Genesis creation narrative of the Bible is similar to other religious myths and should not be read as a literal account. He wrote many popular books on evolutionary science.



George Berkeley

Almost five centuries b.c. **Leucippus**, the instructor of **Democritus**, maintained that Space was filled eternally with atoms actuated by a ceaseless motion, the latter generating in due course of time, when those atoms aggregated, rotatory motion, through mutual collisions producing lateral movements. Epicurus and Lucretius taught the same, only adding to the lateral motion of the atoms the idea of affinity an occult teaching. SD p.2



Leucippus

Leucippus: c. 5th cent. BCE is reported in some ancient sources to have been a philosopher who was the earliest Greek to develop the theory of atomism the idea that everything is composed entirely of various imperishable, indivisible elements called atoms.

Democritus: meaning "chosen of the people";

c. 460 c. 370 BC) was an influential Ancient Greek pre-Socratic philosopher primarily remembered today for his formulation of an atomic theory of the universe.

Epicurus: "ally, comrade"; 341 270 BC taught that the universe is infinite and eternal; and events in the world are ultimately based on the motions and interactions of atoms moving in empty space.

Lucretius: c. 15 October 99 BC c. 55 BC was a Roman poet and philosopher. His only known work is the didactic philosophical poem *De rerum natura* about the tenets and philosophy of Epicureanism, and which is usually translated into English as *On the Nature of Things*.

From the beginning of man's inheritance, from the first appearance of the architects of the globe he lives in, the unrevealed Deity was recognised and considered under its only philosophical aspect universal motion, the thrill of the creative Breath in Nature.

Occultism sums up the "One Existence" thus: "Deity is an arcane, living (or moving) fire, and the eternal witnesses to this unseen Presence are Light, Heat, Moisture," this trinity including, and being the cause of, every phenomenon in Nature. Intra-Cosmic motion is eternal and ceaseless; cosmic motion (the visible, or that which is subject to perception) is finite and periodical. As an eternal abstraction it is the ever-present; as a manifestation, it is finite both in the coming direction and the opposite, the two being the alpha and omega of successive reconstructions. Kosmos the **noumenon**

has nought to do with the causal relations of the phenomenal World. It is only with reference to the intra-cosmic soul, the ideal Kosmos in the immutable Divine Thought, that we may say: "It never had a beginning nor will it have an end." With regard to its body or Cosmic organization, though it cannot be said that it had a first, or will ever have a last construction, yet at each new Manvantara, its organization may be regarded as the first and the last of its kind, as it evolutes every time on a higher plane

SD p.3

noumenon: The true essential nature of being as distinguished from the illusive objects of sense.

A few years ago only, it was stated that:

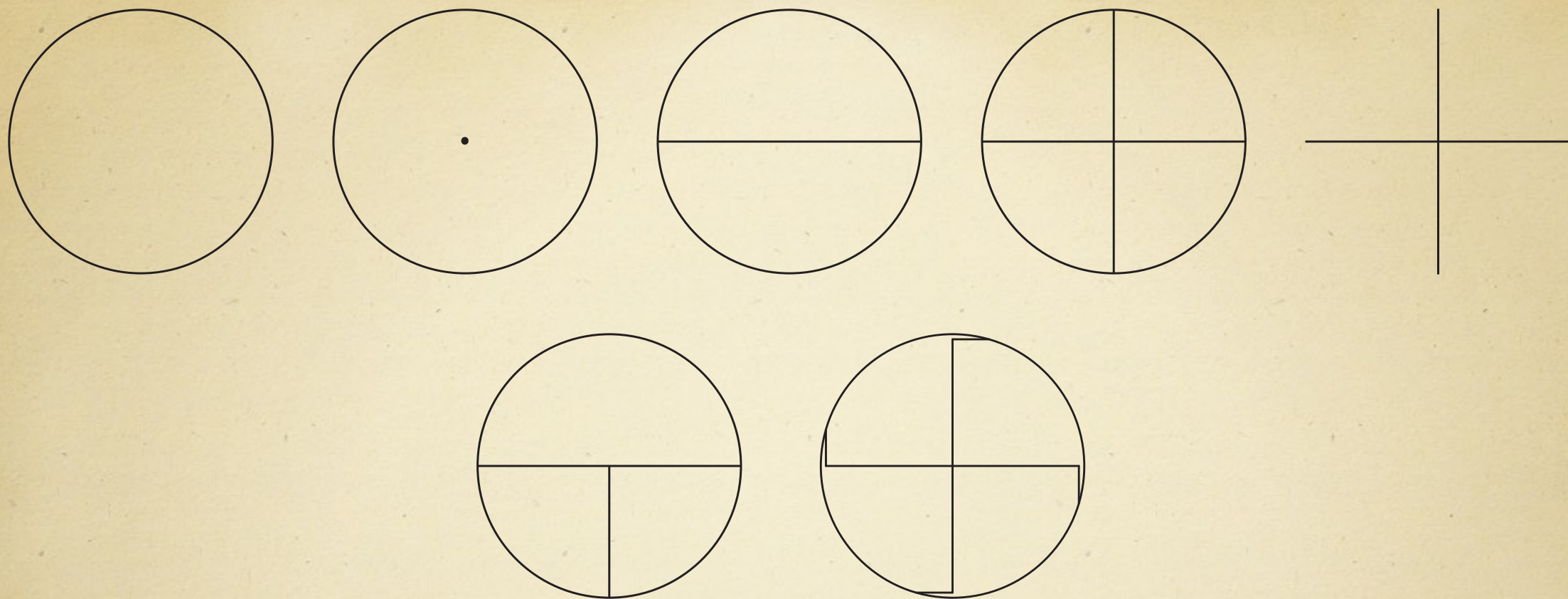
“The esoteric doctrine teaches, like Buddhism and Brahminism, and even the Kabala, that the one infinite and unknown Essence exists from all eternity, and in regular and harmonious successions is either passive or active. In the poetical phraseology of Manu these conditions are called the “Days” and the “Nights” of Brahmâ. The latter is either “awake” or “asleep.” The **Svabhâvikas**, or philosophers of the oldest school of Buddhism (which still exists in Nepaul), speculate only upon the active condition of this “Essence,” which they call **Svâbhâvat**, and deem it foolish to theorise upon the abstract and “unknowable” power in its passive condition. Hence they are called atheists by both Christian theologians and modern scientists, for neither of the two are able to understand the profound logic of their philosophy. The former will allow of no other God than the personified secondary powers which have worked out the visible universe, and which became with them the anthropomorphic God of the Christians the male Jehovah, roaring amid thunder and lightning. In its turn, rationalistic science greets the Buddhists and the Svabhâvikas as the “**positivists**” of the archaic ages. If we take a one-sided view of the philosophy of the latter, our materialists may be right in their own way.

Svâbhâvat: is the world substance and stuff, or rather that which is behind it — the spirit and essence of substance. The name comes from *subhâva* and is composed of three words — *su*, good, perfect, fair, handsome; *sva*, self; and *bhâva*, beeng or state of being. From *Svâbhâvat* all nature proceeds and into it all returnns at the end of the life-cycles. In esotericism it is called ‘Father-Mother’. It is the lastic essence of matter.

Svabhâvikas: The oldest existing school of Buddhism. They assigned the manifestationn of the universe and physical phenomena to Svâbhâva, or the respective nature of things. According to Wilson the Svâbhâvas of things are “the inherent properties of the qualities by which they act, as soothing, terrific or stupefying, and the forms *Svarupas* are the distinction of biped, quadruped, brute, fish, animal, and the like.

The Buddhists maintained that there is no Creator, but an infinitude of creative powers, which collectively form the one eternal substance, the essence of which is inscrutable—hence not a subject for speculation for any true philosopher. Socrates invariably refused to argue upon the mystery of universal being, yet no one would ever have thought of charging him with atheism, except those who were bent upon his destruction. Upon inaugurating an active period, says the Secret Doctrine, an expansion of this Divine essence from without inwardly and from within outwardly, occurs in obedience to eternal and immutable law, and the phenomenal or visible universe is the ultimate result of the long chain of cosmical forces thus progressively set in motion. In like manner, when the passive condition is resumed, a contraction of the Divine essence takes place, and the previous work of creation is gradually and progressively undone. The visible universe becomes disintegrated, its material dispersed; and ‘darkness’ solitary and alone, broods once more over the face of the ‘deep.’ To use a Metaphor from the Secret Books, which will convey the idea still more clearly, an out-breathing of the ‘unknown essence’ produces the world; and an inhalation causes it to disappear. This process has been going on from all eternity, and our present universe is but one of an infinite series, which had no beginning and will have no end.” (See “Isis Unveiled;” also “The Days and Nights of Brahmâ” in Part II.)

This passage will be explained, as far as it is possible, in the present work. Though, as it now stands, it contains nothing new to the Orientalist, its esoteric interpretation may contain a good deal which has hitherto remained entirely unknown to the Western student. SD p.4



The first illustration being a plain disc, the second one in the Archaic symbol shows a disc with a point in it the first differentiation in the periodical manifestations of the ever-eternal nature, sexless and infinite “Aditi in that” (Rig Veda), the point in the disc, or potential Space within abstract Space. In its third stage the point is transformed into a diameter. It now symbolises a divine immaculate Mother-Nature within the all-embracing absolute Infinitude. When the diameter line is crossed by a vertical one, it becomes the mundane cross. Humanity has reached its third root-race; it is the sign for the origin of human life to begin. When the circumference disappears and leaves only the cross it is a sign that the fall of man into matter is accomplished, and the fourth race begins. The Cross within a circle symbolises pure Pantheism; when the Cross was left uninscribed, it became phallic. It had the same and yet other meanings as a tau inscribed within a circle, or as a “Thor’s hammer,” the Jaina cross, so-called, or simply Svastika within a circle. SD p.4-5