

is to gather the oldest tenets together and to make of them one harmonious and unbroken whole. The sole advantage which the writer has over her predecessors, is that she need not resort to personal speculations and theories. For this work is a partial statement of what she herself has been taught by more advanced students, supplemented, in a few details only, by the results of her own study and observation. The publication of many of the facts herein stated has been rendered necessary by the wild and fanciful speculations in which many Theosophists and students of mysticism have indulged, during the last few years, in their endeavour, as they imagined, to work out a complete system of thought from the few facts previously communicated to them.

It is needless to explain that this book is not the Secret Doctrine in its entirety, but a select number of fragments of its fundamental tenets, special attention being paid to some facts which have been seized upon by various writers, and distorted out of all resemblance to the truth.

But 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, nor to Buddhism, Islām, 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 materialised.

It is more than probable that the book will be regarded by a large section of the public as a romance of the wildest kind; for who has ever even heard of the book of Dzyān?

The writer, therefore, is fully prepared to take all the responsibility for what is contained in this work, and even to face the charge of having invented the whole of it. That it has many shortcomings she is fully aware; all that she claims for it is that, romantic as it may seem to many, its logical coherence and consistency entitle this new Genesis to rank, at any rate, on a level with the "working hypotheses" so freely accepted by modern science. Further, it claims consideration, not by reason of any appeal to dogmatic authority, but because it closely adheres to Nature, and follows the laws of uniformity and analogy.

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; 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.

De minimis non curat lex.

LONDON
October, 1888.

H. P. B.

PREFACE TO THE THIRD AND REVISED EDITION

IN preparing this edition for the press, we have striven to correct minor points of detail in literary form, without touching at all more important matters. Had H. P. Blavatsky lived to issue the new edition, she would doubtless have corrected and enlarged it to a very considerable extent. That this is not done is one of the many minor losses caused by the one great loss.

Awkward phrases, due to imperfect knowledge of English, have been corrected; most of the quotations have been verified, and exact references given—a work involving great labour, as the references in the previous editions were often very loose; a uniform system of transliteration for Sanskrit words has been adopted. Rejecting the form most favoured by Western Orientalists as being misleading to the general reader—we have given to the consonants not present in our English alphabet combinations that approximately express their sound-values, and we have carefully inserted quantities, wherever they occur, on the vowels. In a few instances we have incorporated notes in the text, but this has been very sparingly done, and only when they obviously formed part of it.

We have added a copious Index for the assistance of students, and have bound it separately, so that reference to it may be facilitated. For the great labour in this we, and all students, are the debtors of Mr. A. J. Faulding.

LONDON, 1893.

ANNIE BESANT
G. R. S. MEAD

PREFACE TO THE FOURTH (ADYAR) EDITION OF *THE SECRET DOCTRINE*

It is fitting that the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of *The Secret Doctrine* should be marked by the issue from Adyar of a complete edition accessible to the general public in six very handy volumes at an exceedingly small price, practically the actual cost of publication.

For the making of such an edition possible, and for planning other publications of classic Theosophical literature, we have to thank the Blavatsky Foundation, an organisation dedicated to the spreading far and wide the great teachings of Theosophy in as accessible forms as possible.

Only at Adyar could such an edition of *The Secret Doctrine* have been prepared, for not only has it needed the expert care of members very well versed in Theosophy and in the history of the Theosophical Society, but even more the opportunity constantly to consult the Society's archives, where alone exists the original material necessary for the checking of the printed word with the written manuscript and letters, and for ensuring the production of an edition as conformable as possible to H. P. Blavatsky's original intentions.

No edition could in any case be complete without the inclusion of what has been called the third volume, which some have quite erroneously thought to have been no part of H. P. Blavatsky's own work. There is adequate internal evidence that this third volume forms part of a mass of material she had planned for future publication.

To facilitate study of this monumental work we have added the following:

How *The Secret Doctrine* was Written, compiled from the Archives and Records.

H. P. BLAVATSKY, a Sketch of her Life.

A BIBLIOGRAPHY accompanies each Volume.

A SHORT GLOSSARY has been added to the Index.

The INDEXES have been revised, and a completely new Index has been compiled for the fifth Volume of the new edition (former Volume III).

I am very fortunate that my term of office as President should be marked by the re-publication of the greatest revelation of the Eternal Wisdom extant in, and available to, the modern world, and I am most grateful to all who have made such re-publication possible. In very special measure I desire to thank Mrs. Josephine Ransom, one of the keenest students of, and an authority on *The Secret Doctrine*, for having consecrated herself entirely to the supervision of the new edition for some considerable time past. But for her the new edition could not have appeared. At every stage she has most carefully examined the smallest details so that every word on every page shall be as true as possible to its great author. Mrs. Ransom has, in particular, been able to blend into one the 1888 and 1893 editions, so that nothing whatever is lost from the 1888 edition, while the conveniences for reading which constitute the main difference between the two editions, such as changes in grammar and type-arrangements, are faithfully embodied in the Adyar Edition. Thus, the Adyar Edition is really two editions in one.

We should not have been fulfilling our duty to students of *The Secret Doctrine* had we ignored the erudite devotion of two of H. P. Blavatsky's greatest pupils—Annie Besant and G. R. S. Mead.

Quite a number of students have helped Mrs. Ransom in her most responsible work and to all of them our thanks are heartily given.

In general preparation and proof-reading, Mrs. Ransom herself has been in supreme charge. Mr. A. J. Hamerster and Mr. Sidney Ransom have assisted with the preparation. Upon Miss Ethelwyn M. Amery has fallen the chief burden of proof-reading with the help of some willing workers. Mr. Rohit Mehta has given his scholarly help in preparing the new Index, a task involving much tedious labour. Research work has been done by Miss G. Watkin, Librarian, the Adyar Library; by the Pandits of the Adyar Library, specially for Sanskrit, Tibetan and Chinese; by friends both here and abroad for Greek, Latin and Hebrew texts. Mr. Hirendranāth Datta, Vice-President of the Theosophical Society, has given valuable assistance in connection with matters relating to Hindu Philosophy, and I have also to thank several members of the Theosophical Society in England for arranging to check references of ancient works which are not available from the Adyar Library, and for modern scientific references.

The more definitely business part of the production of the new edition has been in the able hands of Mr. H. J. Nt. van de Poll, Honorary Manager of the Theosophical Publishing House at Adyar, and Mr. C. Subbarayudu, Superintendent of the Vasanta Press at Adyar.

Thus have we begun at the Headquarters of the Theosophical Society, the very home itself of H. P. Blavatsky, still fragrant with the potent atmosphere

she created and with so very much of the actual material of her work, a reincarnation of that mighty spiritual outpouring which was the creative activity of the two Inner Founders of the Theosophical Society and of Their principal agent in the outer world, and which took shape in 1888 in *The Secret Doctrine*. In the spirit of the Second Logos They created in 1875 the form—the Theosophical Society. In the spirit of the Third Logos they gave in 1888 the life—*The Secret Doctrine*.

In 1893 this life was renewed. In 1938 it is renewed once more.

So does H. P. Blavatsky remain for ever the original giver, under the Inner Founders, of the life which one day shall make the new world whole.

In the spirit of her messengership she has been persecuted and reviled. But the day will come when she shall be known for what she really was—Light Bringer of the new age.

GEORGE S. ARUNDALE,
President of the Theosophical Society.

ADYAR, 1938.

PREFACE TO THE FIFTH (ADYAR) EDITION

I deem it a great privilege to write this Introduction to the Fifth Edition of H. P. Blavatsky's monumental work, *The Secret Doctrine*. This Fifth Edition follows the Fourth, with only certain formal changes, as for instance the use of lower case instead of capitals for certain ordinary words. These changes have been made by Mrs. Josephine Ransom and Mr. Leslie Leslie-Smith, to both of whom we owe thanks for their painstaking labours. Mrs. Ransom unfortunately passed away in December 1960. The proof-correction has been carried out most carefully by Mr. Leslie-Smith, others assisting. The Hebrew script and renderings have been checked by Mr. Zeuger in Israel. I must mention with gratitude the collaboration of Mr. K. S. Krishnamurti, Manager of the Theosophical Publishing House at Adyar, and Mr. K. Ramanathan, Manager of the Vasanta Press.

We hope this Edition of *The Secret Doctrine* will help to make known further and disseminate widely the treasures of thought and insight which generations of readers—both Theosophists and non-Theosophists—have been increasingly discovering in it ever since it first appeared.

N. SRI RAM,
President of the Theosophical Society.

ADYAR, 1961.

H. P. BLAVATSKY: A SKETCH OF HER LIFE

HELENA PETROVNA BLAVATSKY was one of the most striking world-figures in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. She was too cataclysmic, too challenging to orthodoxies, whether of religion, science, philosophy or psychology, to be ignored. She was a true iconoclast—tearing to pieces the wrappings which hid the Real from view. But since the majority were attached to the conventional wrappings, and were unfamiliar with the Real, they attacked and reviled H.P.B. for her daring and courage, in unveiling what it seemed blasphemy to reveal. Slowly but surely the years justify her. However abused, she was content to work “in the service of humanity,” and showed her wisdom in leaving to future generations the judgment of her splendid worth.¹

Helena Petrovna von Hahn was born prematurely at the midnight hour between 30 and 31 July (in the Russian Calendar 12 August) 1831, at Ekaterinoslav in the province of Ekaterinoslav, S. Russia. So many strange incidents occurred about her birth-hour and her christening that the Russian retainers foretold for her a life of trouble.

Helena was a wilful child, born of a long line of powerful and imperious men and women. The history of her descent is the history of Russia. Centuries ago the nomad Slavs wandered over middle and Eastern Europe. They had their own forms of government, but when settled at Novgorod they were riven by feuds they could not adjust among themselves. They called in to aid them a leader of one of the roving bands of Northmen, who sought markets and power. Rurik came and built up in Novgorod the first civil government, a wealthy trading centre for East and West. In his lifetime his son Igor and his nephew Oleg consolidated his power in the west and the south. Kiev became a great Principality, and he who ruled there was virtually sovereign of Russia. Through the centuries the descendants of Rurik spread in conquest and authority throughout the country. Vladimir I (d. 1015) chose Christianity as the religion of his people and forced “paganism” to die out. Yaroslav the Wise (d. 1034) framed Codes and “Russian Rights.” In the 8th generation from Rurik

¹ See H.P.B.'s Preface to the 1888 edition, reprinted in this Volume.