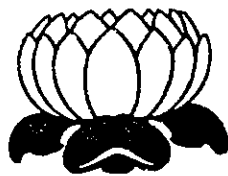
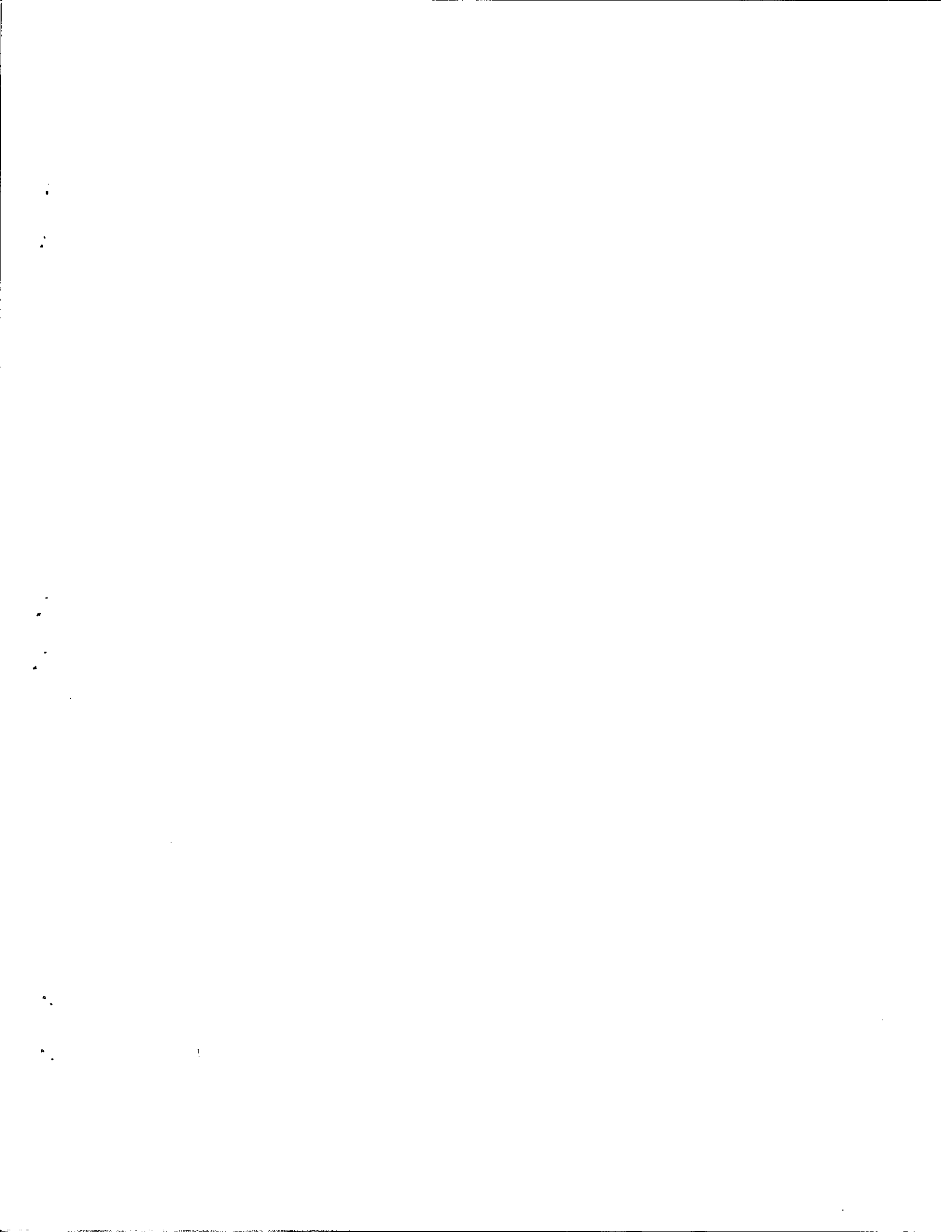




MARY  
UNVEILED





MARY UNVEILED: COMPLETE VERSION

A.P. Sinnett will always be remembered as one of the early notable pioneers of the Theosophical Movement. His first two Theosophical works, The Occult World (1881) and Esoteric Buddhism (1883) are classic expositions on Theosophy, Madame Blavatsky, and the Masters. These two works were the first simple explanations of Theosophy and did much to popularize Theosophy worldwide in the early 1880's.

Mr. Sinnet first met Madame Blavatsky in December 1879 at Allahabad, India. In October of 1880 through Madame Blavatsky's agency, he was allowed to correspond with one of her teachers, Koot Hoomi. This famous correspondence covering the years 1880-1885 resulted in Sinnett writing the two above mentioned works. [The letters of the Mahatma K.H. were finally published in 1923 as The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett].

In April 1885, Sinnett received his last long letter from the Mahatma K.H.. This letter (M.L. 65) ends with the following words:

Once more, accept my blessing and parting greeting if they have to be my last.

K.H.

Although Mr. Sinnett may have received a few more notes from the Master K.H., Mahatma Letter 65 in effect marks the close of correspondence and communication between Mr. Sinnett and K.H.

During all the years of the correspondence, Madame Blavatsky was the primary "astral postman" for the letters. There are probably a number of reasons (some outlined in the M.L.) for the termination of the correspondence, but in this paper we will focus our attention on Mr. Sinnett's efforts to re-establish communication with the Mahatma K.H. without H.P.B.'s intermediation.

In Sinnett's recently published autobiography, he tells how he met a young woman whom he felt had psychic capabilities and was able eventually to serve as a "medium" between him and the Master K.H. He outlines that fateful meeting of April 1886:

We went...to meet a lady who was, desirous of making my acquaintance. I will not give her real name...because she played for a long while a very important part in my occult life and by marriage eventually became connected with a family, representatives of which may still be living when these lines are given to the world. As she became very intimate with us soon after we met her I will give her a fictitious name and call her Mary.

Sinnett also gives another reason for keeping "Mary's" identity a secret:

At this period and for many later years we were enjoying opportunities of frequent conversation with the Master K.H. in a way carefully concealed from Madame Blavatsky's knowledge...We had been told that if she came to know of our private privilege her occult powers would enable her to interfere in a way which would imperil its continuance. Her jealousy of anyone acting as an intermediary between the Masters and people on the physical plane was so intense ...that she would hesitate at nothing if her displeasure in this way was roused. <sup>2</sup>

Sinnett would perform mesmeric experiments on Mary and found her "unequivocally clairvoyant" <sup>3</sup> while in trance. Sinnett then relates "...next day, at the house of the friends with whom she was staying...I became convinced that she clairvoyantly saw the mountain region in Tibet where the Master K.H. resided. Whenever opportunity served for the next few weeks our mesmeric sittings were repeated and it became obvious that Mary might become a link between myself and the Master." <sup>4</sup>

During this period Sinnett and his wife Patience would frequently visit with Madame Blavatsky who was then living in London:

I used [to] frequently visit her there. Her devoted friends, the Keightleys, Mr. Harbottle and others formed with her co-operation the Blavatsky Lodge of the Theosophical Society. I was rather detached in my sympathy from all this enthusiasm by which she was surrounded and absorbed with my own work with Mary all knowledge of which was carefully kept back from the O.L. and her group. <sup>5</sup>

In February 1888, Mary wanted to meet Madame Blavatsky. According to Sinnett "this was at first discouraged by the Master who did not wish her (Madame Blavatsky) to be acquainted in any way with our private developments. If she did know about them they would become liable to contamination. However permission was at last given for a specific evening when he would take the necessary precautions, and we all went, but the O.L. took no notice of Mary and was quite unsuspecting of her characteristics." <sup>6</sup>

Mr. Sinnett's belief that he was again in contact with the Master K.H. comes under further examination in light of a letter that Colonel Olcott received from Master Koot Hoomi on board the S.S. Shannon. This letter gave him advice and instruction regarding some internal problems with the Theosophical Society:

Again, as you approach London I have a word or two to say to you...we employ agents--the best available. Of these for the past thirty years the chief has been the personality known as H.P.B. to the world (but otherwise to us). Imperfect and very troublesome, no doubt, she proves to some, nevertheless, there

is no likelihood of our finding a better one for years to come--and your theosophists should be made to understand it. Since 1885 I have not written, nor caused to be written save thro' her agency, direct or remote, a letter or line to anybody in Europe or America, nor communicated orally with, or thro' any third party. Theosophists should learn it. You will understand later the significance of this declaration so keep it in mind. Her fidelity to our work being constant, and her sufferings having come upon her thro' it, neither I nor either of my Brother associates will desert or supplant her.... this you must tell to all:--With occult matters she has everything to do. We have not abandoned her; she is not "given over to chelas". She is our direct agent. <sup>7</sup>

The Master K.H. seems well aware of Sinnett's attempts at communication via a third party and gives the letter a prophetic postscript:

Prepare, however, to have the authenticity of the present [letter] denied in certain quarters. <sup>8</sup>

One "quarter" which denied the authenticity of this letter was Mr. Sinnett himself. In letters addressed to C.W. Leadbeater, written in October of 1888 Sinnett expresses his disbelief:

One queer thing: Olcott has got with him a letter apparently from the Master K.H. received while he was on his voyage home. After making rather a mystery of it at first he ultimately showed it to me--and I do not feel at sure of it...<sup>9a</sup>  
I do not want to raise a fresh storm by impugning the authenticity of the letter--which moreover has no direct reference to me--tho' it reads as tho' in a certain sense written at me, again a circumstance which makes it suspicious under the circumstances, as I know in my own heart that my inner loyalty to the Master and his ideas as far as I can interpret them is an unchangeably perfect as ever...Of course, Olcott in his simple guileless way takes the letter as entirely genuine without a thought of questioning it and he is not to be blamed for doing so...I have not thought it of the least use to tell Olcott that I do not believe in the authenticity of the letter."<sup>9b</sup>

C. Jinarajadasa, later to be President of the Theosophical Society (Adyar) had this to say about Mr. Sinnett and his involvement with Mary.

Mr. Sinnett, even in 1889, when I joined his household, never realized that he had broken his link with the Master. Though he received no more letters, he was thoroughly convinced that the Master still communicated with him, through a lady, a clairvoyante, whom he used to put weekly into a trance, whenever she stayed with his wife and himself (for this lady who lived in Ireland, came to London only once or twice a year....There was in Mr. Sinnett a strong belief, which it was the business of none of us to challenge, that if ever the Master determined to communicate, he would do so with him first, and only through him...<sup>10</sup>

Mary's psychic powers or "characteristics" apparently didn't go unnoticed by C.W. Leadbeater. In 1890, Leadbeater had come to stay with the Sinnett's to tutor their 12 year old son Denny. Mary who had been visiting her family in Ireland had come back to London and stopped to pay a visit to the Sinnetts.

[Sinnett] had been careful never to say a word to Leadbeater about the development with her. He happened to be in the drawing room with my wife when Mary, having spoken in passing to me in the library, rushed upstairs and burst in upon them. In a few minutes Leadbeater came down to me in a highly excited state. "Do you know?" he asked. I guessed what he meant and said yes. He had seen the blaze of Mary's unusual aura and had instantly recognised her as one far advanced in occultism.<sup>11</sup>

Meanwhile Mr. Sinnett was finding it hard to hide Mary from his friends. After the death of Madame Blavatsky in 1891, he felt freer to reveal her identity to some of his Theosophical co-workers. In 1892 he formed a group made up of members from the London Lodge "for special work in which the Master undertook to help us."<sup>12</sup> The group included Count Bubua, William Scott-Elliott, Miss Arundale, Mr. and Mrs. Varley, C.W. Leadbeater and Mary. Sinnett reveals, "for a long time, --up till about now, we had kept the secret of Mary's faculties and development, but for the group these became known."<sup>13</sup>

In 1893, on one of her many visits to the Sinnett's and "under urgent pressure from her higher self, whom we called She got herself engaged to be married."<sup>14</sup> Sinnett doesn't reveal the name of her fiance, "indeed there is much connected with the engagement that I cannot deal with freely.... Her destined husband was a man for whom both my wife and I had a very high regard, one our intimate theosophical friends."<sup>15</sup> Sinnett was very apprehensive about the marriage because he felt "the proposed marriage would put an end to the conditions that had so

far regulated our intercourse with Mary." 16

As Sinnett predicted, his relations with Mary had begun to change after her marriage:

For a time no startling change in Mary's relations with ourselves were apparent. Her husband did not oppose himself in any way their maintenance on the old footing. Mary would sometimes come to us to dine, have a trance and stay the night...But I gradually noticed, as her cheerful acquiescence in the new life became more apparent, that her former intensity of interest in our London Lodge meetings and my lectures, slackened off by degrees. She would neglect them for the sake of social pleasures, while formerly they would have taken precedence of everything." 17

The occult relationship steadily deteriorated to the point in 1898 Sinnett and Mary "remained affectionate friends but the occult relationship faded away, as Mary became more and more absorbed by the worldly interests of her married life." 18

Even though Mary would no longer act as an intermediary for communications with the Master K.H., Sinnett still continued to pursue his attempts at contact with K.H. According to C. Jinarajadasa, after Mary "could no longer act as the Master's mouthpiece (so Mr. Sinnett firmly believed), he sought another, and later another. And when I saw him last, the latest medium was a man [King]. And Mr. Sinnett never doubted the genuineness of these communications received through these channels." 19

So ends an interesting historical footnote to what must have been a frustrating period in Sinnett's life. No longer receiving letters from the Master, he would go to any means to open the channels for any communications.

Who was Mary? A few Theosophical works mention her as Mary but as far as the present writers are aware, Mary's true identity has never been disclosed. The clues to her identity are to be found in the Autobiography itself.

Sinnett relates that Mary married one of their "intimate Theosophical friends" on October 10, 1893. Following this lead, we consulted the London Times and found on page 1A of the October 11, 1893 edition the following marriage announcement:

Scott-Elliot:Boyle Travers. On the 10th October at Christ Church, Lancaster-Gate, by the Rev. M.R. Neligan. William eldest son of William Scott Elliot, of Arkleton, Dumfrieshire to Maude, only daughter of Robert Boyle-Travers, F.R.C.S. of Farsid, County Cork.

This piece of information clearly points to the real





have not read the writing & Master [told me] to send it on to you by an early post. He told me not to precipitate but to write myself. I am greatly excited over it as it is the first time I (as She) have ever moved the body to do anything while asleep. It was a queer sensation this morning to know it had been so. I am in a great hurry as I am going to the dentist. I got your note & am so sorry you have a cold. So keep that window more closed--I am sending you more birds today. Glad you like them. We are off on Friday Castle New Strathdon Aberdeenshire for first week. Then Candaeraie rest of address the same. Punch is not so well again but they go on Wednesday. Do write me a line before I go. Percy will be much interested in this new way of getting a message. He seems all right and enjoying himself with D. [Denny]. Goodbye dear love.

Ever your own  
Maude

The second letter is headed at the top "written at dictation of Master K.H.", a transcription of that letter follows (ff. 272-4).

If the Master answers your letter in this way instead of with his own hand believe that he does so not from any unwillingness on his part to write to you but for the reasons he has given me for you.

It is quite true as you have been told that [it is] not "entirely your own lower nature" that builds a barrier between your consciousness of higher planes and the physical plane meaning thereof nor is it merely your state of health which dulls your recollection. This sense of separation and its' cause are among the trials which all who enter on the path must undergo and for some they become a terrible danger and Dwellers on the threshold. It is at this point that many a neophyte falls away overcome by the sense of vacuity & loneliness.

You feel as if you had come to a standstill and a weary restless impatience seizes you and the heights of spiritual peace seem far off, unattainable. Your soul is like an unfolded seed seeing in itself no sign of what it is growing to nor of the light that shall draw forth its beauty. It is a waiting time, a probation. Be patient be believing, unconsciously you are day by day, preparing for what shall be. Again and again. We repeat, it is not in the recollection of higher planes nor even in spiritual comfort that progress is marked.

He understands and sympathizes with your higher self, rather the seeming aloofness of all other help has strengthened the bond between the higher and lower nature as even you yourself must recognise.

Be brave, be patient working on fo Him and with Him. He will be glad that you should again write to him whenever you wish, for though he is precluded by his new responsibilities from frequent

direct communications with his pupils yet He is as continuously watchful over them as ever and he bids me give you this message from your affectionate friend and Master.

K.H.

There are still many unanswered questions about Maude's life and her involvement with the Sinnetts and the London Lodge. Our research into Maude Travers is fragmentary at best, but it does seem to suggest that Mr. Sinnett craved some interaction with Master K.H. that he was no longer receiving through correspondence. Maude was just one of the "psychics" that Sinnett employed in his attempts at contact.

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16. Ibid. p. 45.
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18. Ibid. p. 46.
19. Jinarajadasa, C. The "K.H." Letters to C. W. Leadbeater. With a Commentary by C. Jinarajadasa. Adyar, Madras, India: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1941. p. 74.

20. Letter dated April 5, 1946, written by C. Jinarajadasa. Found in the Adyar Archives by Michael Gomes. Photocopy of letter supplied to us by Mr. Leslie Price, Theosophical History Centre.