

**ECHOES FROM THE ORIENT:
A BROAD OUTLINE OF
THEOSOPHICAL DOCTRINES**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649373604

Echoes from the Orient: a broad outline of theosophical doctrines by William Q. Judge

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WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

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A BROAD OUTLINE

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BY

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE.

[OCCULTUS.]

Reprinted from Kate Field's Washington.



The Aryan Press.



NEW YORK:
THE PATH, 132 NASSAU ST.
1890.

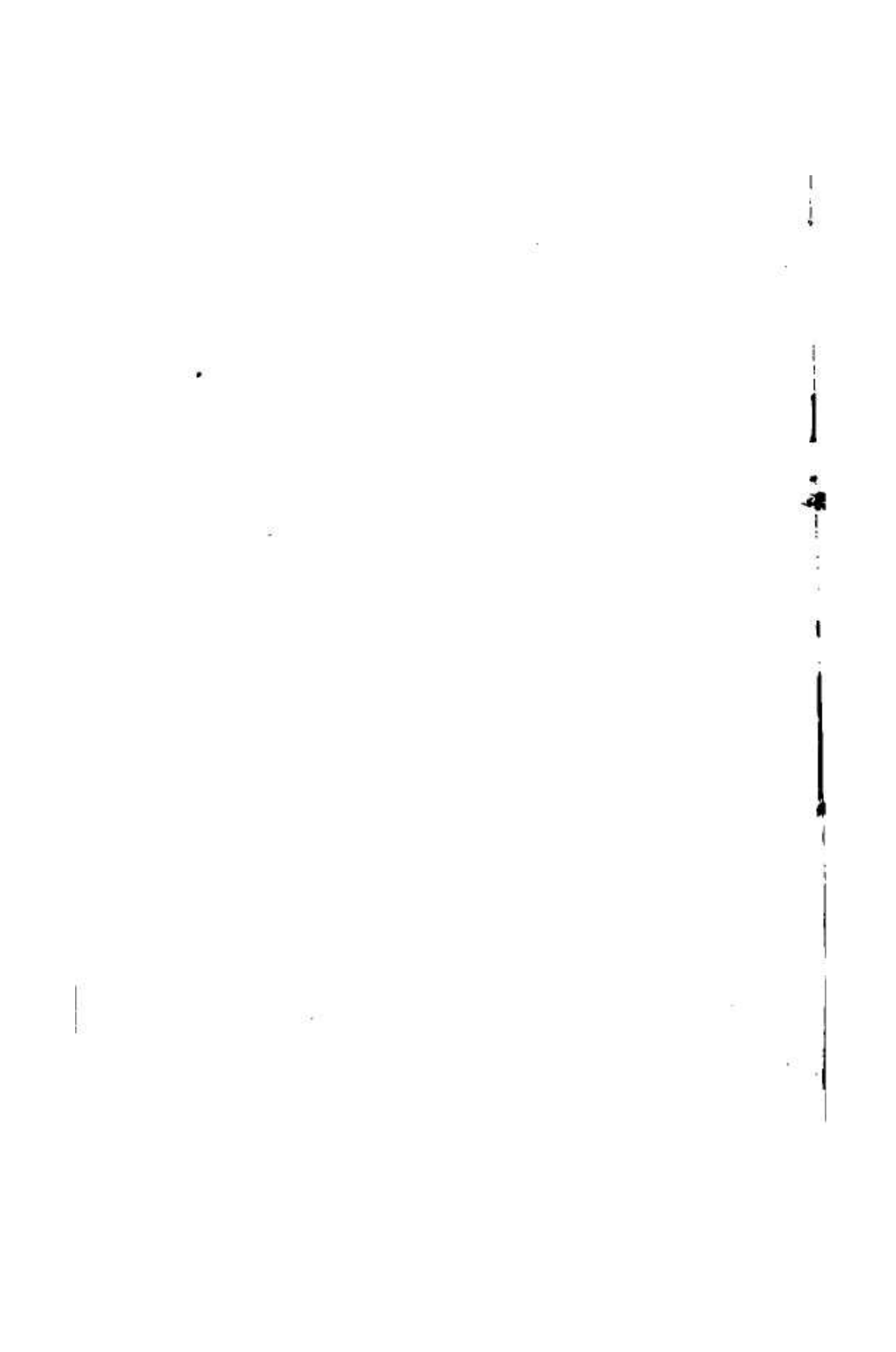
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D. C., by WILLIAM Q. JUDGE.

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DEDICATED TO
HELENA PETROVNA BLAVATSKY
WITH LOVE
AND GRATITUDE
BY
THE AUTHOR.



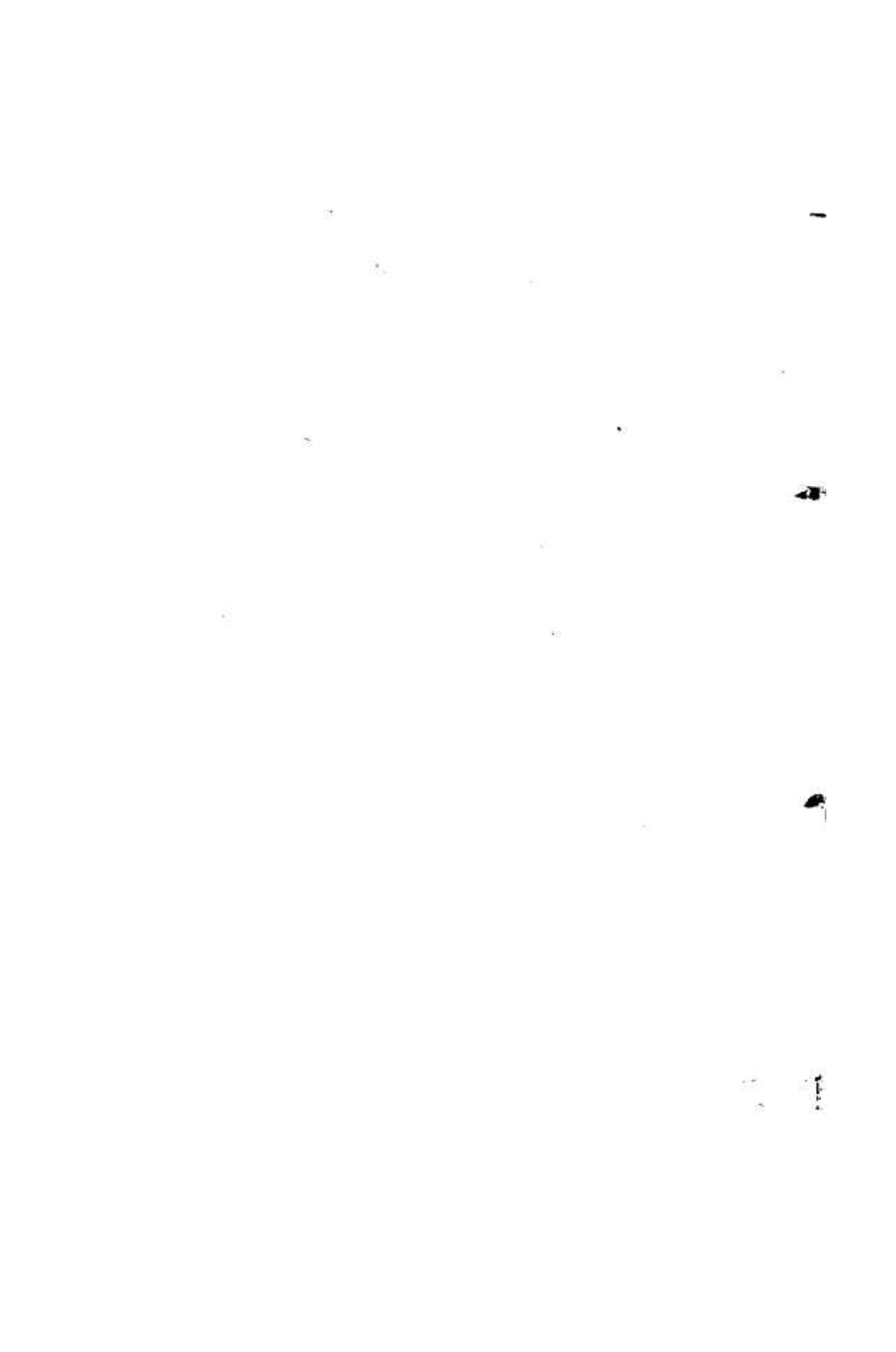
ANTECEDENT WORDS.

THE title for these articles was chosen by Miss Kate Field when they were first sent for publication in her new paper, *Kate Field's Washington*, in January, 1890, and to her belongs all the credit for an appropriate name. The use of the *nom de plume* "Occultus" was also the suggestion of Miss Field, since it was intended that the personality of the author should be hidden until the series was completed.

The restrictions upon the treatment of the subject growing out of the popular character of the paper in which they were published precluded the detail and elaboration that would have been possible in a philosophical or religious periodical. No pretense is made that the subject of Theosophy as understood in the Orient has been exhaustively treated, for, believing that millions of years have been devoted by the sages who are the guardians of Theosophical truth to its investigation, I think no one writer could do more than to repeat some of the echoes reaching his ears.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE.

New York, September, 1890.





ECHOES FROM THE ORIENT.

I.

WHAT appears to the Western mind to be a very strange superstition prevails in India about wonderful persons who are said to be of immense age, and who keep themselves secluded in places not accessible to the ordinary traveler. So long has this been current in India that the name applied to these beings is well known in the Sanskrit language: "Mahâtma," a compound of two words, *maha*, great, and *âtma*, soul. The belief in the existence of such persons is not confined to the ignorant, but is shared by the educated of all castes. The lower classes look upon the Mahâtmas as a sort of gods, and think most of their wonderful powers and great age. The pundits, or learned class, and educated Hindûs in general, have a different view; they say that Mahâtmas are men or souls with unlimited knowledge of natural laws and of man's history and development. They claim also that the Mahâtmas—or Rishées, as they sometimes call them—have preserved the knowledge of all natural laws for ages, not only by tradition among their disciples, but also by actual records and in libraries existing somewhere in the many underground temples and passages in India. Some believers assert that there are also stores of books and records in secluded parts all over that part of Thibet which is not known to Europeans, access to them being possible only for the Mahâtmas and Adepts.

The credence given to such a universal theory grows out of an old Indian doctrine that man is a