

Bailey and Theosophy

by Niels Brønsted

Introduction

In esoteric circles it is a well known fact that the modern esoteric teaching originates from two chohans in the spiritual hierarchy, Morya (M) and Kuthumi (KH), who—with the consent of their superior or "chief," as they prefer to call him, the Mahachohan or Lord of Civilization of that time—founded the theosophical movement in the end of the 19th century.

In the book called *The Mahatma Letters* we find allusions to the hierarchical purpose of this movement and the "division of labor" between the masters and the exponents of the movement. These letters are not really written by the chohans. They are thought forms of the text precipitated on paper, and in most cases the chohan did not perform the actual precipitation himself but telepathically transferred the thought form to one of the senior disciples, as for instance H. P. Blavatsky, who then did the "magical" act. Master Morya writes: "On the 17th of November next the Septenary term of trial given the Society¹ at its foundation in which to discreetly "preach us" will expire. One or two of us hoped that the world had so far advanced intellectually, if not intuitionally, that the Occult doctrine might gain an intellectual acceptance, and the impulse given for a new cycle of occult research. Others²—wiser as it would now seem—held differently, but consent was given for the trial. It was stipulated, however, that the experiment should be made independently of our personal management; that there should be no abnormal interference by ourselves."³

The master Kuthumi writes about the purpose of The Theosophical Society: "The Chiefs want a 'Brotherhood of Humanity,' a real Universal Fraternity started; an institution which would make itself known

throughout the world and arrest the attention of the highest minds."⁴

And later he introduces a message from the "chief himself" with the words: "An abridged version of the view of the Chohan on the T.S. from his own words as given last night." This is the well-known Maha Chohan's Letter where we read the following excerpts: "The doctrine we promulgate being the only true one, must, supported by such evidence as we are preparing to give, become ultimately triumphant as every other truth. Yet it is absolutely necessary to inculcate it gradually, enforcing its theories, unimpeachable facts for those who know, with direct inferences deduced from and corroborated by the evidence furnished by modern exact science..."

"For our doctrines to practically react on the so-called moral code, or the ideas of truthfulness, purity, self-denial, charity, etc., we have to preach and popularize a knowledge of theosophy..."

"It is time that theosophy should enter the arena. The sons of Theosophists are more likely to become in their turn Theosophists than anything else. No messenger of truth, no prophet has ever achieved during his life time a complete triumph, not even Buddha. The Theosophical Society was chosen as the cornerstone, the foundation of the future religion of humanity."⁵

The Two Amanuenses

It is also well-known among esotericists that the masters KH and M gave the Tibetan master, Djwhal Khul (DK), the task of providing the necessary teaching, not only because he has been a close friend and "messenger" for centuries and the focal point of one of the subsidiary ashrams within KH's

major 2nd ray ashram, but also because he has specialized in occult philosophy and cosmic law. He planned his work in three phases, and as the first "amanuensis" the masters chose H. P. Blavatsky (HPB), a senior disciple in M's ashram. She was, as they said, far from being a perfect instrument but the best one available. The results were HPB's pioneering writings crowned by her monumental work *The Secret Doctrine*—which is regarded as the foundation stone of modern occultism—and the founding of The Theosophical Society (TS) as an organizational base for establishing a brotherhood of humanity and the promulgation of the ageless wisdom.

HPB was succeeded by other theosophical workers who carried on the work. But as the original impulse seeped down into "lesser minds" it was somewhat distorted, and the TS turned into a forum of psychism and an almost hysterical emotional worship of the masters. At the same time DK started focusing on his next "amanuensis," Alice A. Bailey (AAB), in order to proceed with the second phase of his planned work.

The question now arose: could the new phase of the teaching be integrated in the theosophical work or would the developments within the TS make it impossible? We will get back to that point later as it is the pivot of this article, but in my view this was a major test to the TS and probably one of the reasons why no "authoritative" statement from any of the theosophical leaders—who still had an open line of communication with the masters—was made concerning the work of AAB. The members should be free to choose or reject the new teaching on its own merit, and as we shall see they failed gloriously.

Alice A. Bailey

Now, let us see how AAB entered the work. Fortunately we are in possession of her autobiography so we can base our description on her own words. She says: "It was whilst I was passing through the difficult time in which

I worked as a factory hand that I contacted Theosophy. I do not like the word in spite of its beautiful connotation and meaning. It stands in the public mind for so much which it essentially is not. I hope to show, if I can, what it really is. This marked the opening of a new spiritual era in my life."⁶

Here we get the first fleeting glimpse of AAB's attitude to theosophy—or perhaps we should say theosophists. This attitude is only natural considering the treatment she later received, but it is also a key point in this article, and we will later attempt to show how it has influenced many readers of her books. But let us return to the autobiography where she mentions two important books: "I had just made the acquaintance of her great book *The Secret Doctrine*. I was intrigued by it but completely bewildered. I couldn't make head or tail of it. It is a difficult book for beginners for it is badly put together and lacks continuity. H.P.B. starts with one subject, wanders off to another, takes up a third at length and—if you search—you will find her returning to her original theme sixty or seventy pages further on."⁷

"I had joined the Theosophical Lodge in Pacific Grove and was beginning to teach and hold classes. I remember the first book that I started to expound. It was the great book by Mrs. Besant, *A Study in Consciousness*. I knew nothing about consciousness and I could not possibly define it but I kept six pages ahead of the class and somehow managed to get away with it. They never discovered how little I knew. I know that no matter what the class learned I learned a great deal."⁸

We see that AAB right from the beginning realized the difficulty and complexity of *The Secret Doctrine* and also the clarity and usefulness of Annie Besant's work. But in 1918 a significant event occurred in her life which seems to have turned the plans for a continuous revelation of the esoteric teaching in a different direction than the one which may have been intended originally. On the surface, and considering later happenings as well, it

may not appear that important, but in my view it was the beginning of the division still existing today between the two major sources of esoteric teaching: Theosophy and the "blue books." AAB describes it in the following way: "It was during this year, 1918, that I discovered for the first time who it was that had come to see me in Scotland when I was a girl of fifteen. I had been admitted into the Esoteric Section (E.S.) of the Theosophical Society and was attending their meetings. The first time that I went into the Shrine Room I saw the customary pictures of the Christ and the Masters of the Wisdom, as the Theosophists call Them. To my surprise there, looking straight at me, was a picture of my visitor. There was no mistake. This was the man who had walked into my aunt's drawing room, and it was not the Master Jesus. I was inexperienced then and rushed to one of the senior people at Krotona and asked for the name of this Master. They told me that it was the Master K.H. and then I made a basic mistake for which I have since paid the price. Believing that they would be pleased and not intending in the very least to be boastful I said, in all innocence, "Oh, then, He must be my Master, for I've talked with him and been under His guidance ever since." This person looked at me and said, with rather a withering inflection, "Am I to understand that you believe yourself to be a disciple?" For the first time in my life I was up against the competitive technique of the Theosophical Society."⁹

At that time seniority and not merit seemed to be the basis of an evaluation of people, and the fact that a newcomer like AAB claimed that she was visited by the master KH personally, and had been a disciple ever since, was quite unbearable for the workers in the TS to whom such an event would be the most glorious thing ever to happen. From that point jealousy made a natural acceptance of AAB's work impossible, and the foundation of a barrier was laid from the theosophical side.

Nevertheless, AAB and her husband Foster

Bailey had risen from the ranks to prominent positions within the American section of the TS, and later, in 1921, they started the "back to Blavatsky movement." It was a reaction to suggestions made by theosophical key figures like Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater that students should read a great many books by themselves and other theosophical writers before trying to tackle HPB's far more difficult work. Although the "back to Blavatsky movement" was appreciated in certain quarters it did not improve the relationship to the members of the esoteric section (ES) of the TS who were (and still are) in power and who supported the views of Annie Besant. But the funny thing is that AAB in many ways had come to the same conclusion: that *The Secret Doctrine* was too difficult for beginners and that the works of (at least) Annie Besant were far better suited as an introduction to DK's teaching.¹⁰

In the meantime AAB had made her first contact with the Tibetan master, DK, and had started writing for him. This was not unproblematic for she was almost allergic to psychic work, so DK, and later her own master KH, had to convince her that writing for the Tibetan involved the use of mental telepathy—for which she had a special gift—and not the astral sensitivity which is usually termed psychic faculty. This aversion to psychic work is also a key point of this article, for in my opinion it swayed her attitude regarding another theosophical worker and fellow disciple in KH's ashram, C. W. Leadbeater (CWL), to such a degree that it strengthened the barrier between the ES members and herself—but this time from her side.

The antagonism was reinforced by the fact that, through her affiliation with DK, AAB now produced esoteric material of a superior quality—so superior that Annie Besant's representative in the USA, B. P. Wadia, recognized it for what it was and decided to publish it in *The Theosophist*—the journal of the TS. AAB says: "Shortly after finishing the

first few chapters of *Initiation, Human and Solar* I showed the manuscript to B. P. Wadia. He got very excited and told me that he would publish anything that "came from that source" and printed the first few chapters in *The Theosophist*, published in Adyar, India. Then the usual theosophical jealousy and reactionary attitude appeared and no more was printed."¹¹

The whole situation became more and more unstable, and finally it resulted in a devastating convention where a new General Secretary of the American section was elected—a man who shortly after deprived Alice and Foster Bailey of their positions in the TS and thereby forced them to find other alternatives for their work together. This appears from the following quotation, but at the same time we see how intense her dislike of CWL really was: "All this time the situation at Krotona was getting more acute. Wadia had arrived at Krotona (as the representative of Mrs. Besant) and was stirring up trouble and we collaborated with him to the full in order to swing back the Theosophical Society to its original impulse of universal brotherhood. We collaborated because at this time Wadia seemed sound and sincere and to have the interest of the society truly at heart. The cleavage in the society was steadily widening and the line of demarcation between those who stood for the democratic point of view and those who stood for spiritual authority and the complete control of the Theosophical Society by the Esoteric Section was rapidly growing..."

"Articles were given up to the attack or the defense of some individual. A strong phase of psychism was sweeping through the society due to the psychic pronouncements of Mr. Leadbeater and his extraordinary control over Mrs. Besant. The aftermath of the Leadbeater scandal¹² was still causing much talk..."

"Books were being published at Adyar by Mr. Leadbeater that were psychic in their implications and impossible of verification, carrying a strong note of astralism. One of his major works, *Man: Whence, How and Whither*,

was a book that proved to me the basic untrustworthiness of what he wrote. It is a book that outlines the future and the work of the Hierarchy of the future, and the curious and arresting thing to me was that the majority of the people stated to hold high office in the Hierarchy and in the future coming civilization were all Mr. Leadbeater's personal friends. I knew some of these people—worthy, kind, and mediocre, none of them intellectual giants and most of them completely unimportant."¹³

"This was the situation which was rampant when the famous convention of 1920 took place in Chicago in the summer. I had never been present at any convention in my life and to say that I was disillusioned, disgusted and outraged is putting it mildly. Gathered together was a group of men and women from all parts of the United States who were presumably occupied in teaching and spreading brotherhood. The hatred and rancor, the personality animus and the political manipulation was so outrageous and shocking that I made a vow never to attend another Theosophical Convention again in my life."¹⁴

Charles Webster Leadbeater

From the above it appears that CWL was a key person in the subjective controversy between the TS and AAB, a sort of scapegoat personifying all that AAB was against and tried to oppose. Therefore it seems reasonable to devote some time and space to this controversial figure. So let us, as we did in the case of AAB, begin with CWL's own description of how he met with theosophy and entered the work. His autobiographical sketch is but a small booklet, but it will have to suffice for our purpose: "My first touch with anything that could definitely be called Theosophy was in the year 504 B.C., when I had the wonderful honor and pleasure of visiting the great philosopher Pythagoras..."

"Among other islands we¹⁵ called at Samos, and it was there that we found the great

Pythagoras, who was then a man of advanced age and very near his death...

"His principal disciple at that time was Kleineas (now the Master Djwal Khul); and Kleineas was exceedingly kind to us, and patiently answered all our eager questions, explaining to us the system of the Pythagorean philosophy. We were at once most strongly attracted towards the teaching expounded to us, and were anxious to join the school. Kleineas told us that a branch of it would presently be opened in Athens; and meantime he gave us much instruction in ethics, in the doctrine of reincarnation and the mystery of numbers. All too soon our vessel was ready for sea (it had fortunately required refitting) and we had regretfully to take leave of Pythagoras and Kleineas. To our great and awed delight, when we called to bid him adieu, the aged philosopher blessed us and said with marked emphasis: "We shall meet again." Within a year or two we heard of his death, and so we often wondered in what sense he could have meant those words; but when in this present incarnation I had for the first time the privilege of meeting the Master Kuthumi, He recalled to my memory that scene of long ago, and said: "Did I not tell you that we should meet again?"⁶

Now we leap forward some 2,500 years in order to reach the point in CWL's development where he starts to qualify himself for occult work. He is known to be one of the most prominent psychics of our time, and that is exactly the problem as seen from AAB's point of view. Not only did she mistrust his clairvoyant research work, but she also tendered the notion that he used his powers to gain control over other people—and notably Annie Besant. Therefore it is important that we come to some understanding of how he reached his point of evolution and how he used his abilities.

"It will be remembered that in a previous chapter I mentioned a letter that I had addressed to the Master Kuthumi... I received a reply eventually—but... not until the very eve

of Madame Blavatsky's departure for India...

"He suggested that I might go to Adyar for a few months, to see whether I could work with the Headquarters staff, and added the significant remark: 'He who would shorten the years of probation has to make sacrifices for Theosophy'...

"I wished to say in answer to this that my circumstances were such that it would be impossible for me to come to Adyar for three months, and then return to the work in which I was then engaged; but that I was perfectly ready to throw up that work altogether, and to devote my life absolutely to His service... I knew of no way to send this message to the Master but to take it to Madame Blavatsky, and as she was to leave England on the following day for India, I hastened up to London to see her. It was with difficulty that I induced her to read the letter, as she said very decidedly that such communications were intended only for the recipient. I was obliged to insist, however, and at last she read it and asked me what I wished to say in reply. I answered to the above effect, and asked her how this information could be conveyed to the Master. She replied that He knew it already, referring of course to the exceedingly close relation in which she stood with Him, so that whatever was within her consciousness was also within His when He wished it."¹⁷

And now to his unfolding of psychic powers: "It should be understood that in those days I possessed no clairvoyant faculty, nor had I ever regarded myself as at all sensitive...

"One day, however, when the Master Kuthumi honored me with a visit, He asked me whether I had ever attempted a certain kind of meditation connected with the development of the mysterious power called kundalini. I had of course heard of that power, but knew very little about it and at any rate supposed it to be absolutely out of reach for Western people. However, He recommended me to make a few efforts along certain lines, which He pledged me not to divulge to anyone else except with His direct authorization, and told me that He

would Himself watch over those efforts to see that no danger should ensue.

"Naturally I took the hint, and worked away steadily, and I think I may say intensely, at that particular kind of meditation day after day. I must admit that it was very hard work and sometimes distinctly painful, but of course I persevered, and in due course began to achieve the results that I had been led to expect... I worked at it for forty-two days, and seemed to myself to be on the brink of the final victory, when the Master Himself intervened and performed the final act of breaking through which completed the process, and enabled me thereafter to use astral sight while still retaining full consciousness in the physical body—which is equivalent to saying that the astral consciousness and memory became continuous whether the physical body was awake or asleep. I was given to understand that my own effort would have enabled me to break through in twenty-four hours longer, but that the Master interfered because He wished to employ me at once in a certain piece of work.

"It must not for a moment be supposed, however, that the attainment of this particular power was the end of the occult training. On the contrary, it proved to be only the beginning of a year of the hardest work that I have ever known... Several Masters were so gracious as to visit me during that period and to offer me various hints; but it was the Master Djwal Khul who gave most of the necessary instruction. It may be that He was moved to this act of kindness because of my close association with Him in my last life, when I studied under Him in the Pythagorean school which He established in Athens, and even had the honor of managing it after His death. I know not how to thank Him for the enormous amount of care and trouble which He took in my psychic education."¹⁸ But CWL is also known for another thing. Throughout the latter part of his life he was constantly slandered and involved in public scandals concerning his sex life. Here the most reliable

source of information is the only comprehensive biography that has been written about him, for the writer was given free access to the research library in the main centre of The Theosophical Society in Adyar, Madras, India. But when the biography was published it was not very popular in theosophical circles because the author, Gregory Tillett, not being a theosophist, was considered to be critical of, if not hostile to, theosophy in general and CWL in particular. The biography states very clearly what CWL was accused of: "First: the allegations. Initially he was accused of teaching masturbation to adolescent boys, though this was quickly extended to include teaching masturbation to prepubescent boys, and to giving some form of 'indicative action', though the precise meaning of that in euphemistic phrase was never explained. In later years he was further accused of committing sodomy with his pupils, and of engaging in mutual masturbation with them. Some of the allegations he admitted. In the 1906 trial he admitted that he had taught as opposed to condoning, masturbation. He also admitted that this might have occurred with prepubescent boys, and boys who had not sought his advice on sexual matters."¹⁹

But at the same time he explained in considerable detail his motives and the occult background as to his behavior: "On 27 February Leadbeater wrote a long and extremely interesting letter to Alex Fullerton. In it he explained the principles behind his approach: 'The business of discovering and training specially hopeful younger members and preparing them for Theosophical work has been put into my charge. Possibly the fact that I have been associated with the training of young men and boys all my life (originally, of course, on Christian lines) is one reason for this, because of the experience it has given me. As a result of that experience, I know that the whole question of sex feelings is the principal difficulty in the path of boys and girls, and very much harm is done by the prevalent habit of ignoring the subject and fearing to speak of

it to young people. The first information about it should come from parents or friends, not from servants or bad companions. Therefore I always speak of it quite frankly and naturally to those I am trying to help, when they become sufficiently familiar with me to make it possible. The methods of dealing with the difficulty are two. A certain type of boy can be carried through his youth absolutely virgin and can pass through the stages of puberty without being really troubled at all by sensual emotions; but such boys are few. The majority pass through a stage when their minds are filled with such matters, and they surround themselves with huge masses of most undesirable thought-forms which perpetually react upon them and keep them in a condition of emotional ferment. These thought-forms are the vehicles of appalling mischief since through them disembodied entities can and constantly do act upon the child. The conventional idea that such thoughts do not matter so long as they do not issue in overt acts is not only untrue; it is absolutely the reverse of the truth. I have seen literally hundreds of cases of this horrible condition, and have traced the effects that it produces in after life. In this country of India the much abused custom of early marriage prevents all difficulty on this score. Now all this may be avoided by periodically releasing that pressure, and experience has shown that if the boy masturbates at stated intervals he can comparatively easily rid his mind of such thoughts in the interim and in that way escape all the more serious consequences. I know that this is not the conventional view, but it is quite true for all that, and there is no comparison in the harm done in the two cases even at the time quite apart from the fact that the latter plan avoids the danger of entanglement with women or bad boys later on'.²⁰

Although this counseling is not much different from that of thousands of psychologists today it raised a storm of indignation that never really stopped. Later the allegations escalated, as we have seen in

the quotation above, and the whole thing resulted in his resignation from the TS. It also affected his personal friendship with Annie Besant. First she tried to defend him, but later she started to dissociate herself from him and she even went so far as to suspect him of psychically "seducing" her. Eventually she forgave him and even reinstated him when she took over the office of General Secretary after Olcott. Let us see what the biography says: "By 27 September Mrs. Besant's attitude was again changing, and she wrote a much friendlier letter to Leadbeater. She was, however, still concerned that she may have been under a 'glamour', that is an artificial and illusory image, throughout her working with Leadbeater. This could explain why she thought she had done great things in the spiritual worlds with a man who was 'earthly, sensual, devilish'. Leadbeater's next letter to her, on 17 October, reassured her on this, implying that this sort of doubt was likely to have been fostered by the Black Powers."²¹

This question of whether or not Annie Besant was under a glamour is answered from another source. It is a biography of Henry Steel Olcott, the president and cofounder of the TS, and the quotation refers to the conditions around his deathbed. Naturally this may seem to be a dubious testimony to the skeptical reader, but I think we should remember here that we are dealing with a time when some of the masters showed themselves regularly, either in their physical bodies or in materialized astral bodies, in order to carry out their business in connection with the TS, and probably also to make a convincing impression on those who saw them—much the same effect which we see Sai Baba have today. Every time it happened the people involved would make a signed statement as to the reality of the event, and the archives of Adyar are full of such statements. So for a theosophist it is easier to believe that these things really happened than to explain a conspiracy to fraud involving so many different people. The book says: "On the evening of January 11 the two Masters paid

another astral visit to the bedroom of the dying President. This time it was to give guidance on another vital question. Marie Russak and Miss Renda were again present, and again the honorary secretary made a report for the records.

'We three,' she writes, 'had been discussing the question of whether or not Mrs. Besant and Mr. Leadbeater had been under a glamor when they had been studying together...' 'Suddenly we saw a light at the foot of Colonel Olcott's bed, which gradually took shape into a form, but very indistinctly.'

Colonel Olcott asked: 'Who is there?'

Answer: 'Cashmere.'

H.S.O.: Oh! That is the name I always gave K.H.'

Answer: 'Yes, I am here—wait a few moments, the elements are troublesome.'

After a few moments both Master Morya and K.H. appeared most distinctly, and spoke clearly in natural voices. The Colonel asked the Masters if Annie Besant had been deluded, as she feared, about her occult work with C.W.L. The reply was most emphatic; there had been no delusion whatever, both she and Mr. Leadbeater had worked together on the higher planes under the Masters' instructions. What then about Leadbeater's teachings on sex? The Masters made it plain that they did not agree with such teachings. But they pointed out that if they were to wait for perfect human instruments before giving out some of the esoteric knowledge, no such knowledge would ever be given out.

H.S.O.: 'Has he (C.W.L.) been wronged?'

Master M.: 'Yes, but only in so far as the matter was made generally public.'

H.S.O.: 'I am so sorry, Master. What can I do about it?'

Master M.: 'Write and tell him that you regret the sorrow that has been brought upon him by the matter being made public...'

The Masters then went on to say that an article must be published for members of the Society, explaining fully that, as it was impossible for the Mahatmas to find perfect

instruments to do their work, they took the best available ones whose karma permitted it. Also it must be made quite clear that the Masters were still behind and supporting the Society—and that they had worked through both Mrs. Besant and Mr. Leadbeater, precisely as these two had believed.

Marie Russak ventured to tell the Masters that she felt Mr. Leadbeater would do anything, make any sacrifice, for the Society, and asked if something could be done to help reinstate him.

The Master M. replied: 'He will be put to the test;' then added in a kindly tone 'He has been a light in the Society'." ²²

Many investigations of CWL's behavior were conducted, and we will quote our source for one of the more serious ones: "Following the press allegations, the police undertook another investigation of Leadbeater and his activities. The results of their investigation have not previously been published, except in terms of general conclusions, and the documentary evidence collected by them seems to have been unknown to others writing about Leadbeater or the period. However, in the Archives of New South Wales there exists a file containing complete documentation of the police enquiry, and it makes very interesting reading. The interest of the police in Leadbeater was originally aroused in 1917 by Joseph Fusel, but their investigations then found no evidence to sustain charges. From May to June 1922 they undertook a very thorough investigation. Statements were taken from the Martens, Mrs. Kollerstrom, nine of Leadbeater's pupils, a domestic servant of the Marten's, as well as Jinarajadasa, Krishna and Nitya. As in 1917 Leadbeater was said to be too ill to be examined by the police. The bulk of the evidence was inconclusive and unconvincing. It revealed a man with distinctly eccentric views on sex, but one to whom his pupils were so dedicated that they were prepared to say nothing detrimental."²³

"From the evidence of the police enquiry—Leadbeater's pupils fervently denying any

sexual irregularity—one must assume either that they all, or at least some, were lying or that all the evidence accumulated by Leadbeater's enemies was a fabric of lies. The only boy to give even a hint of something suspicious was one who had been flown from Chinchilla in Queensland at the expense of the Loyalty League to give evidence. He said he had left the LCC because he had a feeling 'something was wrong' and 'undue familiarity' occurred between Leadbeater and some of his pupils. As far as the case against Leadbeater was concerned, it was a waste of the money spent on his traveling expenses."²⁴

So it seems that CWL may have been wrongly persecuted. But whatever the truth is there is no doubt about his close relationship with his own master, KH, and the Tibetan master DK. From the time he unfolded his clairvoyant faculties, and the rest of his life he was closely affiliated with DK's ashram (as we shall presently see), and could always ask the advice of DK in regard to his occult research work. This is why many of his books are considered esoteric classics—they are still the best in their fields although they can of course not compare to DK's teaching. This is confirmed by still another source: "One possible origin for some of the material in (Leadbeater's) *The Masters and the Path*, and for material on the Occult Hierarchy and Initiations lies in a wholly unexpected source. Although she was regarded as 'misguided' because she had both left the TS and claimed to be inspired by a Master, Alice Bailey held a fascination for some Theosophists from the time she began her independent career outside the Society in 1920-1. Leadbeater owned, read and regarded highly her earlier works, and although she was criticized officially within the Society for 'falsely' claiming to be in communication with D.K. and others, Leadbeater did not criticize her. The material in her first 'inspired' book, *Initiation, Human. and Solar*, bears an interesting similarity to some of Leadbeater's work, in content though not in style. One wonders which came first. "In fact, the

question is apparently foreseen and replied to in the fifth volume of Alice Bailey's *A Treatise on. the Seven Rays, The Rays and The Initiations*,²⁵ where it is written:²⁶ "If these new phases of the teaching have been later given to the public by other occult groups, it will have been because the information was gained by those who have read the books put out by A.A.B. for me or who are directly and consciously in touch with my Ashram. An instance of this is that book by C.W. Leadbeater on *The Masters and the Path* which was published later than my book, *Initiation, Human and Solar*. If the dates of any given teaching are compared with that given by me, it will appear to be of a later date than mine. I say this with no possible interest in any controversy among occult groups or the interested public, but as a simple statement of fact and as protection to this particular work of the Hierarchy'."²⁷

But the "ultimate" statement as to the integrity of CWL comes from the Tibetan master himself, and I have often wondered how AAB could maintain her strong animosity towards Leadbeater after receiving the following statement from DK: "Many advanced occultists have mistaken the raising of the sacral fire or of the solar plexus force to a position above the diaphragm for the gifting of the kundalini' and have therefore regarded themselves or others as initiates. Their sincerity has been very real and their mistake an easy one to make. C. W. Leadbeater frequently made this mistake, yet of his sincerity and of his point of attainment there is no question."²⁸

Conclusion

It has been the purpose of this article to throw new light on what I call the "intermediate" theosophy—that is the theosophy "between" HPB and AAB—and particularly on one of its spokesmen, for it seems to me that many modern readers of AAB's works have adopted her attitude (or

dare we say prejudice:') towards C. W. Leadbeater without questioning it, and that seems to be a contributory cause of the very unfortunate breach between the two major aspects of the esoteric teaching today—aspects which should really constitute one integrated whole. Asked about theosophy many Bailey students answer: H. P. Blavatsky and *The Secret Doctrine*—and nothing more. So we really have two categories of esoteric readers: those who read theosophy but wouldn't dream of reading AAB, and those who read AAB but refuse to acknowledge the value of the intermediate theosophy.

But ideally we should be able to discriminate between the teaching itself and the people who have been channels for that teaching. There is no question in my mind that the teaching is a continuous revelation where each step forward rests on the previous steps. This means that theosophy is the basis of the Bailey teaching—whether we like it or not—and that it is necessary to have some comprehension of basic theosophical ideation in order to fully comprehend the “blue books.” Many fundamental concepts are neither defined nor explained by the Tibetan because knowledge of them is taken for granted. And here it is important to realize that today, more than a hundred years after its publication, *The Secret Doctrine* does not offer satisfactory explanations to most of the basic concepts, and it is therefore not an easily accessible introduction to the more advanced presentation—the new theosophy—in the books by Alice A. Bailey. AAB herself stresses this point: “In many ways today H.P.B.'s book *The Secret Doctrine* is out of date and its approach to the Ageless Wisdom has little or no appeal to the modern generation. But those of us who really studied it and arrived at some understanding of its inner significance have a basic appreciation of the truth that no other book seems to supply.”²⁹

It is the theosophical workers succeeding HPB who, basing their ideas on *The Secret Doctrine*, extended the teaching through their

own occult research and presented their findings and conclusions in a language far better suited to the modern scientific and technological minds of our time. It is the work, not only of Annie Besant, C. W. Leadbeater and Geoffrey Hodson, but also prominent writers like Bhagavan Das, I. K. Taimni, J. J. van der Leeuw or Laurence & Phoebe Bendit which, pieced together, form the best background as an introduction to the Bailey work. But at the same time we should also be aware that these writers do not have the same spiritual depth as HPB and AAB and that their concepts therefore tend to be somewhat “clear-cut”—too materialized to use the words of DK. Here too AAB partly agrees: “The indebtedness of the world to Mrs. Besant for the work that she did in making the basic tenets of the T.S. teaching available to the masses of men in every country, is something that can never be repaid. There is absolutely no reason why we should overlook the stupendous, magnificent work she did for the Masters and for humanity.”³⁰

So if the student wants firm ground under his esoteric feet he needs to study the intermediate theosophy, because here concepts like a chakra, an aura, a plane, a round, a chain, a race or a manu are defined and explained in a way that is quite indispensable for those who seek to establish a clear picture of the overall teaching. This may not seem so important to people who primarily see the teaching as a means to service. But we know that the life of the disciple is also meditation and study and that these three disciplines are really interlinked and indispensable to each other. In other words, the teaching is also a science, and the deeper our comprehension of it is, the better our service becomes.

Naturally this does not mean that we need not study *The Secret Doctrine*. On the contrary, for in many ways this work is still one of the most profound and spiritual books ever written. It simply means that first things come first, and that it is our responsibility as ambassadors of the teaching to make this clear

to our fellow students. To ignore theosophical writers like Annie Besant, C. W. Leadbeater or Geoffrey Hodson who worked "between" HPB and AAB would correspond to ignoring a Torkom Saraydarian, a Douglas Baker, a Michael Robbins, or a Gordon Davidson between AAB and the disciple who is going to continue the work of DK in the beginning of the next century.

Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater were initiated disciples who worked in close collaboration with the masters at a time when some of these chose to be easier to contact physically than they are today. And Geoffrey Hodson, being an initiate of the third degree and having many of his works dictated by the master Polidorus Isurenus,³¹ takes up a position in connection with the revelation of the teaching corresponding to that of AAB. Moreover he was directly instrumental in bringing about a closer relationship between the human and angelic kingdoms in line with what the Tibetan has said about the participation of the devas in the preparation for the externalization of the Hierarchy and the reappearance of the Christ.

Literature

For those who want to explore the practical consequences of this article I append a list of the theosophical works I consider to be the most important as a preparation for the study of the Tibetan's work through Alice A. Bailey. The list does not include the works of H. P. Blavatsky and The Mahatma Letters, which may be regarded as the primary sources of teaching in the first phase of the theosophical movement.

But the list does include *Man: Whence, How and Whither* despite the "review" given by Alice A. Bailey in her *Unfinished Autobiography*. Naturally, some of what AAB says is quite true, but there are mitigating circumstances. Firstly: The book is really written by Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater together, which means that the occult research

involved is checked by both. Secondly: Exact reading of the akashic records is said to be exceedingly difficult as regards the identification of souls and time periods—there are no nametags or signposts. Both writers knew that and therefore they did not claim the information to be entirely correct. Thirdly: The book deals primarily with the past—and not the future as AAB suggests. It means that there is a wealth of images of actual sceneries which are probably described in a reasonable manner, and therefore the book gives us an atmosphere of past time cycles that no other book (to my knowledge) conveys. The section about the future is also fascinating although, of course, more uncertain. But the Tibetan does actually substantiate the information about a future "colony," so maybe Leadbeater wasn't all that wrong: "Other groups will work entirely in what might be termed preparatory work for the future colony."³² "Disciples and advanced egos receive instruction at this time for two purposes: (1) To test out their fitness for special work in the future, the type of that work being known only to the guides of the race. They test for aptitude in community living, with a view to drafting the suitable ones into the colony of the sixth sub-race..."³³

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 The Evolution of Life and Form
 The Pedigree of Man
 The Seven Principles of Man
 The Spiritual Life
 Theosophy and the New Psychology
 Thought Power

Annie Besant & C. W. Leadbeater

Man: Whence, How and Whither
Occult Chemistry
Thought Forms

C. W. Leadbeater

Clairvoyance
Invisible Helpers
Man Visible and Invisible
Some Glimpses of Occultism
The Astral Plane
The Chakras
The Devachanic Plane
The Hidden Life in Freemasonry
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The Masters and the Path
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 10. See the quotations from pp. 137 & 138 above.
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