

H. P. BLAVATSKY

AS I KNEW HER



**ALICE
LEIGHTON
CLEATHER**

H. P. BLAVATSKY

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

H. P. Blavatsky : A Great Betrayal. A protest against the policy and teachings of the Theosophical Society introduced since the death of Madame Blavatsky.

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Richard Wagner's Music-Dramas. Embodying Wagner's own interpretations based upon his studies in Oriental Philosophy.

LONDON : METHUEN & Co., 4 VOLS.



AN EARLY PROFILE OF H. P. B.

Frontispiece.

H. P. BLAVATSKY

AS I KNEW HER

BY
ALICE LEIGHTON CLEATHER
One of Her Pupils

WITH AN ADDENDUM

BY
BASIL CRUMP
OF THE
Middle Temple, Barrister-at-Law

Illustrated

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FOREWORD

EXACTLY a year ago—in May 1922—I wrote the substance of my part of this book as a contribution to Mrs. Laura Langford's *Helena Petrovna Blavatsky: Personal Recollections by Old Friends*. We had hoped that her book would have been in the hands of the public about the same time as two books of my own, designed to justify H. P. B. and her Works, which were published last November. Owing, however, to unforeseen and unavoidable delays, Mrs. Langford's book is not yet in the hands of the publishers.

But these apparently unavoidable delays would now seem to have been providential in their nature; for at the end of last year a posthumous work by Mr. A. P. Sinnett¹—who died in 1921—was given to the world by the Theosophical Publishing House, Ltd., London, which is, of course, under the ægis of Mrs. Besant. The nature of the book itself makes the fact of its publication by this House a surprising and somewhat anomalous one, since it obviously aims at destroying entirely the *bona fides* of H. P. Blavatsky, and of holding her up to the scorn and reprobation of posterity as nothing more than an ordinary medium, and a fraudulent one at that. From Mrs. Besant's point of view, however (for we may, I think, dismiss the preliminary "Note" as a clumsy piece of camouflage), its appearance at this juncture in the history of her "Theosophical Church," as Lord Ronaldshay has

¹ *The Early Days of Theosophy in Europe.*

called it,¹ is far from inopportune and, from *that point of view*, explains much. This "Back to Blavatsky" Movement is becoming a substantial and growing menace to "Neo-Theosophy."

As Mrs. Langford is mentioned by Mr. Sinnett several times, under her then name of Mrs. Holloway, she will—owing to the delay in the publication of her book—be able to deal with his incorrect and misleading statements concerning herself, and situations in which she played a prominent part, far more effectively than could anyone else.

It has, however, been thought advisable, in these circumstances, to issue my contribution to her book in advance, in a modified and curtailed form. For it will at once be seen that much that I wrote, *a year ago*, has a direct bearing on the numerous malicious and untrue statements made by Mr. Sinnett about H. P. B., and serve also to prove his utter incompetence to pronounce even the most superficial judgment on one whom he was inherently incapable of understanding. I have, however, asked Mr. Basil Crump, Barrister-at-Law, one of my colleagues in this work, to deal with Mr. Sinnett's abominable production in an Addendum. He knew neither H. P. B. nor her latest traducer personally, and is consequently better fitted to treat the whole question from an impartial point of view. His long journalistic and legal training (he was Editor of the London *Law Times* for eleven years) have given him, moreover, the necessary experience in forming a balanced judgment of men and things.

This book will, it is hoped, form a fitting companion volume to my *H. P. Blavatsky: Her Life and Work*

¹ *Lands of the Thunderbolt*. Constable & Co., Ltd., 1923.

FOREWORD

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for Humanity, consisting, as it does, mainly of some of my own personal experiences with that great Soul, and therefore being complementary to the more general and world-wide aspect of her Work. Three of the illustrations are taken from photographs which have long been in my possession. The fourth is explained in the text.

KUMAON HIMALAYAS

A. L. C.

May, 1923.

NOTE.—Just as these pages go to press, I hear from Mrs. Langford that her book is now completed, and will be in the printer's hands not later than July.

The special importance of Mrs. Langford's work lies in the fact that, owing to Mr. Sinnett's posthumous attack on H. P. B., she has felt it to be her duty to add documentary and personal evidence of the greatest value, which otherwise she would never have given to the world.

FIRST MEETING WITH H. P. B.

“**C**OMPASSION speaks and saith: ‘Can there be bliss when all that lives must suffer? Shalt thou be saved and hear the whole world cry?’ . . . Thou shalt attain . . . and cross the gate of final knowledge but only to wed woe—if thou would’st be Tathâgata,¹ follow upon thy predecessors’ steps, remain unselfish till the endless end . . . Self-doomed to live through future Kalpas,² unthanked and unperceived by men; wedged as a stone with countless other stones which form the ‘Guardian Wall,’ such is thy future . . . Built by the hands of many Masters of Compassion, raised by their tortures, by their blood cemented, it shields mankind, since man is man, protecting it from further and far greater misery and sorrow.”—*The Voice of the Silence*. By H. P. Blavatsky.

¹ A title applied to every Buddha.

² Cycles of Ages.

CHAPTER I.

First Meeting with H. P. B.

THE opportunity offered by my friend Mrs. Laura Langford (whom we all knew so well in the eighties as "Laura Holloway") to contribute my recollections of H. P. B. to her forthcoming book was a very welcome one. I had always wished to testify publicly to my Teacher's greatness of Soul and her unique and wonderful personality. I say "her," but one felt no suggestion of the feminine in her, or of the masculine either, for that matter. Rather an overwhelming realisation that here was one of those rare Souls whose grandeur of purpose escapes lesser mortals, and who are consequently almost invariably misunderstood, and but too often hated. For of such a poor, mean quality is the stuff compounded which we call our "selves," being ignorant of *what our real "selves" are*; and this H. P. B. came to show us.

When Mrs. Langford's request reached me from America in my present Himâlayan home, I had just been reading once more Countess Wachtmeister's *Reminiscences of H. P. Blavatsky and "The Secret Doctrine."* We were fellow-members of H. P. B.'s Inner Group; I therefore knew her very well, and she was ever a good friend. In the present instance, I cannot do better than follow her example, and just try to write simply and clearly of some of my experiences with H. P. B. These are, many of them, never-to-be-forgotten; but with the passing of the years some of the outlines have become blurred, and the actual details less clear than they would have been had I written something of what I know soon after she left us.

Like the way that led up to the Countess's first meeting with H. P. B., my own path to her was strewn with obstacles. My husband and I, with our two children, were living at Eastbourne when H. P. B. came over to England from Ostend in 1887, having been practically driven from India in 1885.¹ I had met Mr. Bertram Keightley shortly after I joined the Theosophical Society, and from him received help and encouragement that was invaluable—as from an older to a younger member. He knew my keen desire to meet H. P. B., and kindly undertook to arrange it, if possible, while they were at Maycot, Norwood (a London suburb). But he warned me that it might be a difficult matter as “our old Lady” was apt to be—well, a little uncertain and capricious at times. I did not care the proverbial two pins what she was in those respects, if only she would *see me*. I had a profound conviction that I was approaching a crisis in my inner life, and that everything depended upon getting into touch with her. See her, therefore, I must and would.

We were not well off at this time, and a journey from Eastbourne to London, and back, was not easy to compass. I had a small sum at “the bottom of a stocking,” put by against a rainy day. This I now determined to use for my little pilgrimage. Indeed, I felt like a pilgrim, to an unknown goal; and I set out for London with no small excitement, and very definite high hopes. A friend had lent me a room for a couple of days, so I was spared that expense. Maycot was a small villa occupied at that time by Mrs. Keningale Cook (a well-known novelist, daughter of Mortimer Collins and niece of Wilkie Collins) better known to Theosophists by her maiden name, Mabel Collins, as the scribe of *Light on the Path*.

¹ H. P. Blavatsky : *Her Life and Work for Humanity*, pp. 45, 55, etc.

I well remember Mr. Keightley telling me on our way out to Norwood that, in their frequent "arguments," she and H. P. B. could be "heard halfway down the road"—when the windows were open! We walked from West Norwood station and, sure enough, when we got within about a hundred yards of Maycot, I heard loud and apparently angry voices floating—or rather ricochetting—towards us down the road. I was rather aghast, and Mr. Keightley's murmured remark that he was afraid "the old Lady" was in "one of her tempers" was not reassuring, particularly as he added that she would probably refuse to see me! *She did*: Nothing would induce her to, I could hear her saying so when Mr. Keightley went in (leaving me outside on the doorstep), and rating him soundly for bringing a total stranger to call at such an inopportune moment. In vain he reminded her that she herself had made the appointment, and that I had come up from the country on purpose to keep it. No, she was adamant; also angry (at least I thought so then). So I had to return sadly to London, and thence to Eastbourne, my "savings" gone, and my "high hopes" dashed to the ground. Truly I was greatly upset, as I imagined I must be "unworthy." All the same, I by no means abandoned my determination to see H. P. B. in the end—worthy or unworthy. Of course I was the latter; we all were; but we were all too tragically unconscious of it, and of the real nature and greatness of the being we so misunderstood and misjudged.

Later in the same year, 1887, I at last attained my heart's desire; and once more Mr. Keightley was the *Deus ex machinâ*. He obtained an invitation for me to 17, Lansdowne Road, and himself took me there late one afternoon. H. P. B. had moved into the West End of London from Maycot, and we had left Eastbourne for

Harrow, a North-western suburb, so journeys were no longer a difficulty. When we were ushered into the well-known double drawing-room on the ground floor my attention immediately became riveted on the figure of a stout, middle-aged woman seated with her back to the wall before a card table, apparently engaged in playing Patience. She had the most arresting head and face I had ever seen, and when she lifted her eyes to mine, on Mr. Keightley presenting me, I experienced a distinct shock as her extraordinarily penetrating blue eyes literally "bored a hole" through my brain. She looked steadfastly at me for a few seconds (most uncomfortable ones for me) then, turning to Mr. Keightley, remarked indignantly: "You never told me she was like this!"—absolutely ignoring his assertion that he had repeatedly done so. Exactly what "like this" indicated I never subsequently discovered.

Such was my introduction to the greatest incarnated Soul of our times; but at that early date I realised nothing more than that she took one's breath away; and that "life was never the same again." From that moment I became her devoted disciple—though here again I did not mentally so phrase my attitude—but I felt that if she would consent to teach me, my gratitude would know no bounds. Quite what I proposed to learn was not clear to me then, either. Certainly, it had nothing to do with phenomena—spiritualistic or otherwise—which had always seemed to me to prove nothing at all, except the survival of consciousness after the death of the body, and the existence of laws in Nature of which man had hitherto been ignorant. But I already firmly believed in all that. I think that I most wanted to learn the truth about *the Soul*, and the *Powers of the Soul*.

"Faith," as defined by the small boy in a Sunday School class, is the "power of believin' what yer know

ain't true ;" and although this quaint definition did not exactly apply to the quality of my own faith, I yet felt somehow—and had done so from the first moment I heard of her—that this extraordinary woman *could teach me* what I wanted to know ; *could*, if she would, *prove* to me that (to quote Huxley) "there are Intelligences in the Universe as far above Man's as Man's is above the black beetle's." I had believed in the existence of such Beings, *here, on earth*, for as long as I could remember, and had always determined to find Them, even if it took me many lives. For I already believed in "transmigration," as it was then called, and in the reign of immutable Law.

Without going further into the nature of my mental equipment, I may say that I had a fair knowledge of philosophy and metaphysics, and was therefore more or less *mentally* prepared to meet H. P. B. *Morally* I was not ; that is to say, my motives were all askew. I did *not* at that time desire only to serve my fellow-men ; I did *not* realise the dangers of acquiring knowledge without that basic *leitmotif* ; I did not in the least realise the awful mental and moral condition of the world ; the need for morality, ethics—call it what you will—but the *need* for the purification of heart and mind. I but vaguely comprehended all this. I, too, was a child of my day and generation ; selfish, and at any rate superficially materialistic ; though so little did I realise my own condition that I should have indignantly repudiated such imputations. All the same, it was true ; and at this distance of time I see it more clearly. H. P. B. alone gave me the key to my own nature, proved to me the scientific "necessity" for the practice of the highest morality. A "necessity" based on the conception of the essential *One-ness* of all living things.—"He who would profit by the Wisdom of the Universal Mind," she once

wrote, "has to reach it through *the whole of Humanity*" (*Practical Occultism*, p. 45).

My personal recollections of H. P. B. are so inextricably bound up with what she taught, and with what her teachings did for me, that to recall the one is inevitably to draw the other into one's conscious mind. H. P. B. and what she stood for, in short, are—to me—inseparable.

Many pens far more able and graphic than mine have described this "lion-hearted" woman, so I will not attempt a task beyond my powers. From the day I first met her she always showed me the very greatest kindness. I soon felt she knew "all about" me; read me like a book. I never remember having the very smallest doubt as to her ability to do this; or indeed anything else she chose. This because I believed most profoundly in the "psychical powers latent in man," but *not* "latent" in her; for her mere presence conveyed an overwhelming impression of power and knowledge, despite the apparently irascible temper, and the general puzzle which her personality presented to the ordinary mind. There was absolutely no merit in my attitude; simply, I had always "known," and could more easily have been made to doubt my own identity than that she was an "Initiate"; though I did not then make use of that actual word in my own mind. All I realised was that "she," or something behind "her," was entirely different from all those who surrounded her; that she belonged in fact to a *totally different world*, a world of which ordinary mortals have no conception. A much more *real* world than that cognisable by our senses which, as every schoolboy knows, deceive us "most" if not "all of the time". To *this* (inner) world H. P. B. really belonged. She once told us—"I work all the twenty-four hours; in this body all day, in another [more ethereal] one, all night. But *I* remember all I do [in

the latter] *you do not.*" There are plenty of so-called Theosophists nowadays, however,—self-styled "Initiates" (H. P. B never claimed to be, but *was*, an Initiate) who pretend they do "remember"; but the very nature of their utterances, so trivial, often contemptible and even unintelligent, give the lie to their pretensions. Out of their own mouths are they condemned.

CHAPTER II.

The Blavatsky Lodge.

THIS Lodge was formed after H. P. B. had moved to 17, Lansdowne Road, London, W., and at first, like the T. S. constituted at Benares in 1879, was on an esoteric basis, with degrees, and diplomas for those degrees. When I became a member its weekly meetings were my Red Letter days. They were held in the evening, and admission for non-members was by card of invitation. Many such came to see, hear, and *be heard*. On one occasion some crank had obtained admission in order to air his own views. He waited for his opportunity, and, once having secured a hearing, started in on what promised to be a portentously dull exposition of some queer would-be philosophical theory of his own—so far as I recollect. H. P. B. stood it for a few minutes, and then, to the consternation of the chairman—a very conventional person—raised her voice in a stinging and sarcastic rebuke to the effect that people were invited to the meetings of the Blavatsky Lodge to listen to *her* views—*i.e.*, to Theosophical teaching—not to air their own. Tableau! The rooms were packed, and the crest-fallen and discomfited protagonist had to edge his way out as best he could.

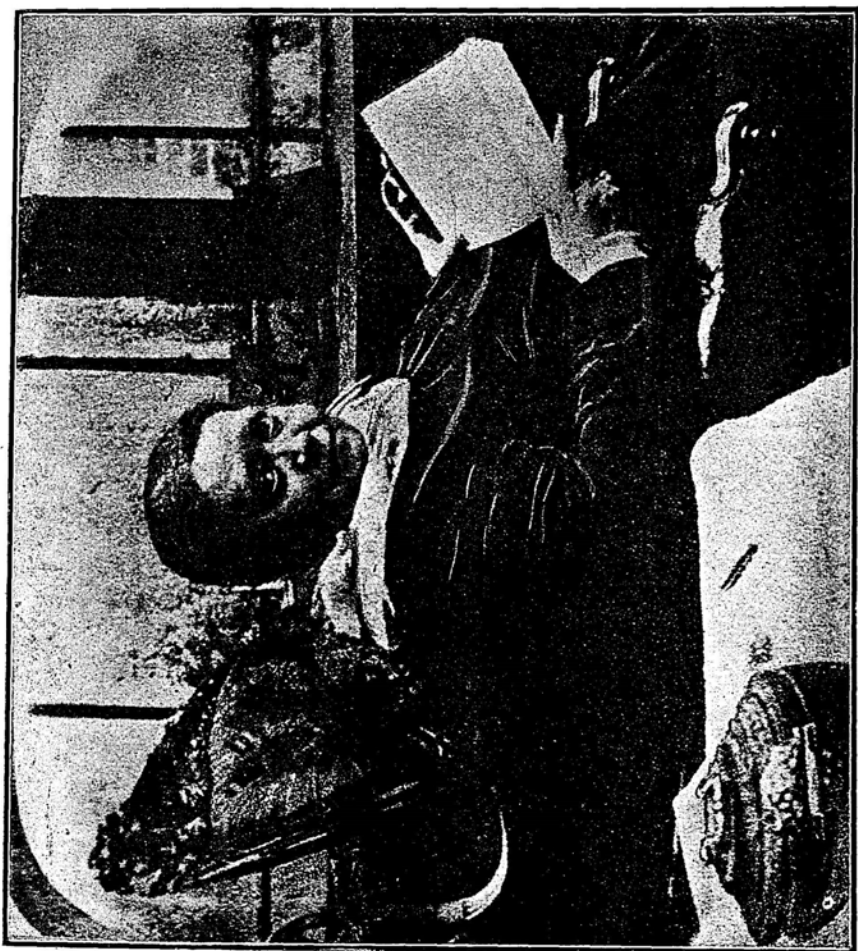
It was at this time, about 1887-8, that I lost the friendship of Mr. and Mrs. Sinnett, who had from the very first treated me with so much courtesy and kindness. They would neither of them ever consent to listen to my explanation of what had occurred. Incidentally, however, it showed me that [*neither of them really believed in*

H. P. B., or in the powers she possessed. Often I used to go to their house in Ladbroke Gardens (London, W.), on Mrs. Sinnett's "At Home" day—Tuesday—and take Lansdowne Road on my way back to the station, *en route* for Harrow. On one occasion I went to Mrs. Sinnett's rather earlier than usual. There was only a sprinkling of people present, and I was sitting on a sort of wide ottoman, with some one else *dos à dos*. At the moment I was not talking to anyone, but Mr. Sinnett was holding an animated conversation with the person behind me. Naturally I could hear nearly all he said, but not much of the replies made. He was speaking, with evident feeling, about the futility of H. P. B. having come to London and started another Lodge.

I should mention at this point that, when the Blavatsky Lodge was formed, he issued an ingeniously worded notice to the members of his "London" Lodge, to the effect that any who wished to join the new Lodge could leave his! Quite half the members, including myself, promptly left. How could we hesitate for a moment between H. P. B. and Mr. Sinnett? The idea was grotesque, and only a man completely blinded by his own colossal egotism could ever have failed to see it. I can remember well, on the afternoon in question, that such palpably obvious jealousy of H. P. B. astonished me very much; also it seemed to me not a little ill-bred and indiscreet to exhibit it so publicly. It was my first lesson in the extraordinary pettiness and narrow-mindedness of many of those who in early days received exceptional and priceless privileges at H. P. B.'s hands.

After I left the "At Home," I went on to Lansdowne Road to return a book the Countess had lent me, allowing myself time to catch the train for Harrow. H. P. B. was then working practically from 6 to 6, with breaks

only for meals. I thought myself safe, as it was only 5.30. Not at all; as I was passing through the hall on my way up to the Countess's room, I heard H. P. B.'s voice (the door was slightly ajar): "Is that you, Alice, my dear?" Hardly waiting for any reply, she continued: "Come in, come in." Now I had been wondering on my way from the Sinnett's exactly what might happen if H. P. B. "sensed" where I had been. So I was not at all surprised when she turned round from her desk and, in her most winning manner, said: "And where have *you* been, my dear?" Then I immediately realised that the fat was indeed in the fire! "To Mrs. Sinnett's At Home, H. P. B." I replied. "Ah! and whom did you see there? . . ." proceeding to put me through a long inquisitorial process. Had I spoken to Mr. Sinnett?—"Ah! And what did he say?" etc. My replies became more and more lame and confused; but finally, when she actually asked me *if her name had been mentioned*, I plucked up courage. Here at least I was sure of my ground, and, my worldly training coming to my aid, I boldly said "Yes," but that it was all too confused for me to be able to recollect clearly what had been said, and other similar ambiguities. At this she feigned to be quite angry, and dismissed me with "Well, if you *won't* tell me, I shall look in the Astral Light and find out for myself!" I well knew what she would discover there, and that *she* would "see" the replies to Mr. Sinnett's remarks which I had failed to catch. I rushed up to the Countess and told her what H. P. B. had said, but, being in a hurry to catch my train, I did *not* tell her what I had overheard at the Sinnett's "At Home." The Countess had only cold comfort to offer me, for she declared that H. P. B. would certainly "look," if she had said so. And we both knew, too, of her power to do what she threatened.



H. P. B. IN HER ARM-CHAIR AT "MAYCOT," 1887.

II

The sequel was somewhat startling. I went up as usual on Thursday for our Lodge meeting in good time, for I was all agog to find out if anything had happened, or if H. P. B. had dismissed the whole thing from her mind. Again, on my way upstairs, she called me in, and announced triumphantly that she *had* looked in the Astral Light, as she said she would ; and she forthwith "read" it all off to me, not only what I had heard, but with all the gaps filled in as well. The Countess had a very serious face, when I went on up to her room, and said : " Yes," H. P. B. had written down the whole thing that same evening (Tuesday), and had sent it off at once by a messenger to the Sinnetts. Early on Wednesday morning they had both come round and enquired of the maid who answered the door whether I had been there the previous afternoon. Hearing that I had, they went off immediately, without seeing, or asking to see, anyone. *That settled it*, in their minds: I had of course been round and "reported" (like a veritable spy) all I had heard. So, at least, it must have appeared to them ; and from that day they practically struck me off the list of their acquaintances, without even giving me the opportunity of explaining.

The worst part of it all, to me, was the discovery that neither of them really believed (*a*) in the Astral Light and its properties ; or (*b*) in H. P. B.'s power to "read" in it. Or, if they believed the former, they clearly doubted the latter. It was a great shock ; for rather, so it seemed to me, did they prefer to think I had intentionally made mischief, proving that they credited me with bad breeding and ingratitude—if no worse.

The whole incident was in itself a severe blow to my belief in human nature and in the value of friendship. But I needed the lesson, for at that time I was far too credulous and trustful, in an unintelligent and

undiscriminating way ; particularly where people who had been kind to me were concerned. But, as the Master K. H. wrote to a correspondent (Miss F. Arundale, then Hon. Secretary and Treasurer of the London Lodge) in the early eighties :—" Learn then to look at men below the surface, and to neither condemn nor trust on appearances." (*Letters from the Masters of Wisdom*, No. xx, p. 62.) This I had at least to try and learn, even if I could not actually succeed in doing so. That splendid *impersonality* which was, to a pre-eminent degree, H. P. B.'s, is a quality of the *Soul* and hard to attain by lesser beings (for women, indeed, almost impossible !) inhabiting a world where—as she wrote of the West—" Men think that their own likes and dislikes of other men and things are guiding principles for them to act upon, even when they do not make of them the law of their lives and seek to impose them upon others." (*Practical Occultism*, p. 19).

Others have written at such length, and with such a wealth of detail, of the marvels they saw H. P. B. perform that, even had I anything new to relate on these lines (which I have not), merely to chronicle such " signs and wonders " is, as I see it, somewhat barren of good and lasting results. H. P. B. did not come to dazzle our senses with such " feats." She came to *show us ourselves* ; our weaknesses, perhaps. Yes, but above and beyond all else, to show us our *inherent god-like potentialities*. And ever she insisted that the only path thereto was *the practice of Brotherhood*, to " live the life," which is—and has ever been—the sole condition for becoming one with the " God within."

During this period, before the formation of the Esoteric School and the publication of *The Secret Doctrine*, so much was always happening, so much emerges from my memory, so many, and such varied incidents,

that it is difficult to know what to select. Many of her pupils have written of H. P. B.'s methods of dealing with them; for instance, Countess Wachtmeister writes:—"I have no doubt now that the difficulties I experienced in getting access to Madame Blavatsky, and the delays that occurred before she came to the point with me, were calculated, and were of the nature of a probation, but I had no suspicion of this at the time." Exactly my own case; and I can here give another characteristic instance of such dealings.

An index was of course required, and was being prepared for *The Secret Doctrine*, for which many helpers were needed. Naturally I volunteered, and was given a number of page-proofs to deal with, as my share. I was quite elated, and felt that now I was really going to be of some use. I gave up hours a day to the work, and declined many otherwise most desirable (at that time they were so) engagements. For weeks I toiled at this new and somewhat uncongenial task, imagining I was acquitting myself quite creditably. I may have been; I never knew. A couple of days after I had sent the MS. up to Lansdowne Road I was there myself. H. P. B. called me into her room and, pointing to my not inconsiderable pile of MS. which lay on her desk, she flicked it contemptuously with her beautiful forefinger saying "This is not in the least what I wanted, my dear; it won't do at all." Thereupon she tore the sheets across and flung them into the waste paper basket. I nearly wept; but she took no further notice of me. Later I discovered that Indexing is an art, and that I knew nothing whatever about it. This little experience was, however, extremely good for me at that early stage.

The Blavatsky Lodge meetings were generally kept up till quite late in the evening, and had it not been

for H. P. B.'s personal kindness I should often have had to leave early, in order not to miss the last train back to Harrow. She made me stay the night many a time, and sleep on the bed-sofa in her sitting-room (the inner drawing-room), close to the door leading into her tiny bedroom, and up against one of its walls. How often did I try to remain awake all night, feeling convinced that I should "see" much. But No, when midnight approached sleep became imperative, and I always had to succumb; never could I keep myself awake after midnight, and H. P. B. would never explain why; though, later, she told us once that "Master goes His 'rounds' at midnight," which threw some light on the reason of my enforced sleep at that hour. She was then referring to the students of the newly-formed E.S., who had practically pledged themselves to Him, and was emphasising the necessity for all of us to be "in bed and asleep before midnight." Another thing she once said, I remember, was that *one* hour's sleep before midnight was worth four after it; owing to some magnetic change which takes place in the earth as midnight sweeps round its surface.

CHAPTER III.

Formation of the Esoteric School.

PASSING on to the time when the "Esoteric School of Theosophy" was formed in the autumn of 1888, I find the name of Mrs. Chowne immediately coming into my mind; for she was intimately bound up with the circumstances and events attending my admission into that body. She and her husband, Colonel Chowne, were personal friends of H. P. B., who had stayed with them in India, where he was stationed when she was there (from '79 to '85); and she had no more loyal or staunch adherents and supporters. I had met Mrs. Chowne when I first joined the T. S., and we became friends immediately. Indeed, I stayed with them more than once in their London house after Colonel Chowne had retired from the service.

In *Lucifer* for October, 1888, a notice had appeared to the effect that an "Esoteric Section of the Theosophical Society" was to be formed under H. P. B., and that those who wished to join and abide by its Rules should send in their names. Mrs. Chowne and I, also Colonel Chowne, if I remember rightly, at once responded; but for some time we heard nothing. Then, one day, Mrs. Chowne came down to Harrow to see me—I was ill at the time—bringing the E. S. T. Pledge from H. P. B. for me to write out and sign. She said that H. P. B. had told her that, on our sending in our signed Pledges, each one would be "tested" (*i.e.*, "examined for fitness") on inner planes, *by the Master*. Mrs. Chowne's exact words were, "taken out and tested." Our past lives would be called up, and upon what was there seen and known of

our *real selves*, would depend whether or not we were accepted as candidates. She told me later that when she handed our signed Pledges to H. P. B. she had looked very seriously—almost solemnly—at her, and said:—
“It is a great trust that you have given me.”

So we waited; days, even weeks passed, and nothing occurred. I had almost forgotten what Mrs. Chowne had warned me *might* happen, until, one Tuesday night, (it was Full Moon, I remember) I had the most wonderful experience, save one, that had ever happened to me. I knew I was myself, lying half awake, half asleep, in my own room at home. Yet I was also in an Egyptian Temple of extraordinary grandeur, and going through things quite unspeakable and most solemn. This experience began soon after 10 P.M., and almost exactly as a neighbouring church clock struck midnight I lost consciousness in an overpowering and almost terrible blaze of light, which seemed completely to envelope me. The next morning I recorded all I could remember in my diary, and on Thursday went up to Lansdowne Road as usual for the Lodge meeting. I was a little early, but H. P. B. at work in the inner room must have known who had arrived, for she called me in, and turning round, said most seriously: “Master told me *last night* that you are accepted.” Nothing more; but I at once realised vividly that my experience the previous Tuesday night had indeed been my “testing.” Thereupon I related the whole thing to H. P. B., who only nodded several times, but made no remark whatever about it.

Mrs. Chowne told me afterwards that she and her husband had had similar experiences, adding that only a few of the first applicants were so “tested”; that it did not, in fact, apply generally. Certainly I never heard from anyone else that they had been told what Mrs. Chowne told me. Members of the E. S. T. were all

known by numbers (the uneven ones), and the Chownes and myself, and two others, since dead (as is Colonel Chowne also), received the first five single numbers. It may or may not have been a "coincidence," but it is a curious fact that the school numbers of both my boys (one of whom died comparatively young) were multiples of the number H. P. B. herself gave me when she wrote out and handed me my E. S. certificate.

One of the clauses of the original E. S. T. Pledge ran thus:—"I pledge myself to support before the world the Theosophical Movement, its leaders and its members" Not long after the School was formed, I made one of a number of the House inmates and workers at Lansdowne Road who were gathered together one evening in the den of the Secretary (then Mr. Bertram Keightley) upstairs; there may have been six or eight of us. It was late (I was staying the night) and we were discussing an attack on H. P. B. in the *Westminster Gazette*, an evening paper, which had just come in. [It was this paper which in 1894 published the elaborate attack based on information furnished by Mr. W. R. Old (*a member of the Inner Group*) against Mr. Judge and his methods, which led to the disruption of the T. S. a year later.] Suddenly H. P. B.'s bell rang somewhat violently, and Mr. Keightley jumped up with some semi-jocular remark and ran downstairs to her room. I must confess that it had not occurred to any of us even to suggest replying to this attack, which, so far as I remember, was a scurrilous one. While Mr. Keightley was downstairs we just went on with our desultory talk; after a few minutes he returned with a very long face and serious manner. He said we were under severe reproof *by the Master*, who (unseen, of course) had been in the room while we were so light-heartedly discussing the newspaper attack on our "Outer Head." He had

descended immediately to H. P. B. in great displeasure, telling her to inform us that if *this* was our conception of keeping our newly-taken pledge we had better all resign at once. We—at least I can speak for myself—were terribly ashamed, and all with one accord sat down at once and wrote as good a defence and indignant protest as in us lay. I do not remember the sequel, but certainly one, if not more, of those letters were inserted.

This incident was the seed of what later became the Press Bureau, formed for the express purpose of keeping track of such attacks and criticisms on H. P. B. and the work generally, and of seeing that they were promptly and suitably dealt with. It became a most successful institution, and the various Press Cutting Agencies provided ample material and saved an enormous amount of search work. Mrs. Cooper-Oakley was in charge of the bureau, and sent out the cuttings to members most able to deal with them. I was one of the staff of writers; and later, under Mr. Judge, I had entire charge of the European Press Bureau. During this work I made a valuable collection of cuttings, including all the obituary notices of H. P. B.

Many a proof did I have of H. P. B.'s power of "hearing" and "seeing" at a distance; things mostly too personal to relate and usually connected with reproof or instruction. Countess Wachtmeister bears witness in her *Reminiscences* to these same powers in H. P. B.

One day, not very long before she moved away from Lansdowne Road, Mr. George Mead and I were with her in her little sanctum (the inner drawing-room). The *Voice of the Silence*—one of the most wonderful mystical works of this or any other time—had just been published, and she was looking at one of the first copies. Suddenly handing it to us (it may have been one each; I do not remember) she said something to the effect of How did

we like it? or, What did we think of it? I forget the exact words. She was her most serious self. I opened the little book, haphazard, and read one or two verses, and the tears started involuntarily to my eyes, such was the beauty and pathos of the words I had read. I looked up at H. P. B., and was almost certain I saw the glimmer of a tear in hers; but she abruptly changed the subject, and jumped down my throat about something or other. As I see it now, it was because to allow mere sentimental emotionalism to become linked with a theme too solemn and too deep for tears was dangerous. Too dangerous, I mean, for us Western people, with our "sensuous development of brain and nerves" (as she once wrote); and unworthy of the exalted nature of the subject-matter dealt with in the book. But I shall always believe I *did* see tears in her eyes at that moment—always.

Almost the last—in fact it was the very last—incident I recollect of the Lansdowne Road days is, to me, the most touching and tragic of all my memories of H. P. B. It was the day before she left for 19, Avenue Road, Regent's Park, N.W., and as it was a lovely warm afternoon the Countess had taken her for a drive in Hyde Park, in the fashionable hour. Never shall I forget her return from that drive; Mrs. Cooper-Oakley and I were in the double drawing-room when she entered, followed by the Countess, in what seemed to be almost a passion; but it was a passion of *grief*. She walked up and down the room, the tears streaming down her face, ejaculating from time to time:—"Not a Soul among them—not *one*!" It was a heart-cry of grief, a poignant illustration—and *my* first sight—of that "helpless pity for the men of Karmic sorrow" (of which I had only just read in *The Voice of the Silence*) felt by those Great Ones who through countless lives have worked for the redemption of humanity.

A trained Occultist, like H. P. B., can see more and far deeper than the mere semi-material aura visible to most clairvoyants, with its ever-changing colours and thought-images. Such an one sees whether the aura reveals the presence of *a Soul*. This is seen and known, also by colour—or vibration—but vibration on a far higher plane of consciousness than those reachable by ordinary psychic vision. We commonly take for granted that each person must “have” a soul. Yet our Teachers tell us in unmistakable terms that such is not the case. “We elbow soulless men and women at every step in life,” writes H. P. B. in *Isis Unveiled* (II, p. 369) ; and her Master tells us that “*He who defendeth not the persecuted and the helpless, who giveth not of his food to the starving, nor draweth water from his well for the thirsty, hath been born too soon in human shape.*” This is clear beyond a shadow of misunderstanding, and explains the nature of the grief felt by H. P. B.—grief called forth by pity and compassion for those helpless, soulless beings, “born too soon in human shape,” whom she had that afternoon seen in their hundreds, in Hyde Park. It was something entirely above and beyond my comprehension ; but it was divine—if ever anything was. It was Buddha-like.

CHAPTER IV.

The Inner Group.

WHEN it was settled that H. P. B. and the Lansdowne Road household should move into Mrs. Besant's house in Avenue Road, I experienced an unaccountable and curious sinking of the heart ; a sense of foreboding, of impending disaster ; and when the end came, less than two years later, I understood the reason. Moreover, once settled there, things seemed to change very much, in spite of H. P. B. being in the house. Her presence seemed in some subtle way to be withdrawn. Looking back, I can see more clearly than was then possible, that the real cause for this intangible, "un-seizable" change in the psychic atmosphere—the determining factor—was that it was *Mrs. Besant's* house, not H. P. B.'s. Mrs. Besant's masterful and somewhat intolerant personality gave, as it were, the tone to the house. In spite of her conversion to the tenets of Theosophy, the ineffaceable stain of Socialism and Atheism remained. Subsequent events have amply proved the danger to the Theosophical Movement of these and other elements in Mrs. Besant, who was destined to become its evil genius.¹

A lecture hall had been added to her house (a large detached one, standing in a garden) for the meetings of the Blavatsky Lodge, both public and private. It was also used for the meetings of the E. S. T. This hall was at the side of the house furthest from H. P. B.'s quarters, and she did not appear as frequently, nor was

¹ See my *H. P. Blavatsky : A Great Betrayal*.

she as accessible as was the case at Lansdowne Road. Failing health had much to say to this, but before she became almost entirely confined to her own rooms she would sometimes be present at the Lodge meetings. On such occasions her presence was both an inspiration and a "terror." Once, when Mrs. Besant was in the chair, and a rather lengthy and stupid paper was being read, the whole room could hear H. P. B.'s stage whisper of agonized appeal :—" Oh stop her, Annie—*stop her!* "

To the E. S. meetings H. P. B. rarely, if ever, came (in person, at least) ; and, on the formation of the Inner Group of the E. S., she was seen even less often outside her own rooms, save in her bath chair, in the garden at the back of the house.

The names of the twelve members of the Inner Group became subsequently so well known that there can be no indiscretion involved in giving them here. We were six men and six women ; of these latter Countess Wachtmeister and Mrs. Cooper-Oakley are dead. Both of them, together with Miss Cooper and Miss Emily Kislingbury, followed Mrs. Besant at the time of the disruption of the Society in 1894-5. Too late the Countess must have realised her mistake, for subsequently she left the Society, and an intimate friend who saw her on her death-bed told an old friend of mine that the poor Countess had wept long and bitterly over " the ruin which Mrs. Besant had wrought to H. P. B.'s work." No one more loyal and devoted to H. P. B. than Countess Wachtmeister ever lived, but personal loyalty and devotion do not, alas ! necessarily imply, or confer wisdom. Mrs. Cooper-Oakley, another tireless and devoted worker, died in Buda Pesth some years ago. Her sister, Miss Laura Cooper, married Mr. George Mead, who is now so well known in London through his magazine and Society, *The Quest*. Miss Kislingbury went back, I am



H. P. B. IN HER BATH-CHAIR AT AVENUE ROAD, 1890.

told, to the Roman Church, whence she came forth to join H. P. B. Whether she is still alive or not I do not know.

Of Mrs. Besant in this connection little need be said;¹ she belongs to the public, for she has always appealed unto Caesar. I, who write these brief memories, was the only woman out of the six who followed Mr. Judge in 1895, for the simple reason that we considered the conduct of the majority of our number to be a violation of the E. S. Pledge and of the First Object of the T. S. I say "we," because—with Dr. Archibald Keightley and Mr. Herbert Coryn—we formed a minority of three in England who declined to follow Mrs. Besant's lead. Of these two, the former is, I believe, still practising in London.² He married Mrs. Campbell Ver Planck, so well known to Theosophists as "Jasper Niemand," who died some years ago. No finer tributes to the real H. P. B. exist than those from her pen. Mr. Herbert Coryn is at Point Loma, California, with Mrs. Tingley, from whose organization (the "Universal Brotherhood") I resigned in 1899.

Of the four men remaining, Mr. Claude Wright³ had then been for some time in America with Mr. Judge, and naturally followed him. The three who followed Mrs. Besant were Messrs. Mead, Old, and Sturdy. The two latter took an active part in the preliminaries of the attack on Mr. Judge, and both soon dropped out of the Movement altogether. Mr. Sturdy, when I last ran across him, about 1904, had become a complete sceptic

¹ I have dealt elsewhere with her subsequent activities; see *A Great Betrayal*.

² Since this was written I have heard that Dr. Keightley has left England, and is now living in, or near, New York.

³ Mr. Wright's tragic and untimely death, by drowning, occurred early this year (1923), at Nicaragua. He was preparing a Life of H. P. B. from his own valuable data.

and spoke of H. P. B. as "a wicked old woman"! He had married the hospital nurse who had pulled him through a bad illness, before the Avenue Road colony was broken up. Mr. Walter Old also married, and still works at his astrology—as he has always done—under the pseudonym of Sepharial. H. P. B. used to call him "the astral tramp," on account of his habit of "roaming about in his astral body at night," as she put it.

There were two more members of the I. G. whose names did not appear, who were not under the same strict Rules as we were, and who never attended its meetings. One of them could not, for the very good reason that he was a native of India and lived there. The other was Dr. Wynn Westcott, the eminent Freemason and authority on the Kabala. He too, would appear to have lost faith and interest, if one may judge by the fact that his entire library of occult and Theosophical books was sold, shortly before he left for South Africa; so I am informed, at least.

The Inner Group was formed, and held its weekly meetings at 19, Avenue Road, in a room which had been specially built for it, leading out of H. P. B.'s bedroom; into it no one but herself and her twelve pupils ever entered. We had each our own place, and our own chair; and H. P. B. sat with her six men pupils on her right, and the six women on her left hand side, in semi-circular formation, during our instructions.

One rather interesting incident which occurred when the interior of the Lecture Hall was being photographed is perhaps worth mentioning. When the plate was developed a face appeared at a small upper window, or transom, partly open, about ten or twelve feet from the ground, where no human being could by any possibility have been standing, except on a ladder, and there were none on the premises. What, or rather Who could

it be? The face was a distinguished-looking one, of an oval shape; that of a man with a moustache and pointed beard. H. P. B. soon solved the mystery. It was the face of a Master known as "Hilarion," and she said that while the photographer was still in the hall the Master had "looked in on" her in her study, and had told her rather ruefully, that he had "just been caught by the camera." I have a copy of the photograph, and the face is perfectly distinct. Little things of this sort were of common occurrence.

CHAPTER V.

Causes of Degeneration in the T. S.

IN the spring of 1891 our beloved Teacher contracted a very severe form of influenza, and on May 8 her Soul was released from the suffering body. She was undoubtedly "recalled," as I see it now, because *we had all failed her*; even we, her own personal pupils; I do not hesitate to assert it—we could not "watch, even for one hour." We failed, too, on the most obvious and elementary point—the *practice of brotherhood*, for there were jealousies and dissensions even in the I. G. For H. P. B. it must have been heart-breaking. Time and again had she striven to form an inner body which would provide the one and only essential for the reception of the esoteric teachings she was commissioned to give out. As she wrote of just such a body as the I. G.: "*Unless the greatest harmony reigns among the learners, no success is possible.*" And we proved quite unable to provide that one indispensable condition. The E. S. T. came first, then its higher degrees, and finally the I. G. But all was of no avail; the material was bad, and so the Temple could not be reared; neither could the Corner Stone be found.

In the preface to her first great work, *Isis Unveiled*, H. P. B. expressly declares it to be a direct challenge to all forms of ecclesiastical dogmatism, and "especially to the Vatican. . . ." Yet, in the face of this, we find Mrs. Besant proclaiming a new dispensation on what is practically a Roman Catholic basis, and steering the whole movement under her control towards Rome, *i.e.*, the very antithesis of all that H. P. B. taught and

worked for. The means used is an anomalous body called the Liberal Catholic Church, with Mr. C. W. Leadbeater and others as its "Bishops"; and dogmas like the Apostolic Succession are upheld, which H. P. B. denounced. The moral character of these "Bishops" is so notorious that I need not sully these memories by any but the barest mention. I shall deal more fully, later, and in a separate publication with this matter,¹ which constitutes an indelible stain on Mrs. Besant's Society in recent years.

Some twenty years ago, or more, I came to the conclusion that H. P. B.'s passing sounded also the death-knell of the Theosophical Society, as such. But from a personal and interior point of view, it was even more tragic. For I am absolutely convinced that, WHEN H. P. B. LEFT US, THERE WAS NO LONGER ANY POSSIBILITY OF DIRECT COMMUNICATION WITH THE GREAT LODGE OF MASTERS, except of course, for individuals who were capable of rising to Their plane by interior effort and aspiration. If this be not so, why—after her death—do we find Mr. Judge and Mrs. Besant, apparently unable to rely on interior guidance, turning to supposed chelas, psychics, and clairvoyants in their efforts to re-establish communication with the Masters? The answer is plain to anyone who has carefully studied what the Masters Themselves have written on the subject. In the long letter of rebuke to Colonel Olcott for his attitude towards H. P. B., received during his voyage to England in 1888, the Master K. H. writes:—"Since 1885, I have not written, or caused to be written, save through her [H. P. B.'s] agency, direct or remote, a letter or line to anybody in Europe or America, nor communicated orally with, or through any third party . . . *With occult matters she has everything*

¹ See *A Great Betrayal*, already mentioned.

to do. We have *not* abandoned her. She is *not* given over to chelas. *She is our direct agent.*"

Again, in a letter—evidently to Miss Arundale and written in 1884—the same Master writes:—"I take the opportunity, one of the last there are, to write to you directly, to say a few words. For you know, of course, that *once H. P. B.'s aura in the house is exhausted, you can have no more letters from me.*" (Italics are mine.) H. P. B. stayed with the Arundales in June and July of that year, when she came over from Paris on a short visit to adjust certain troubles in the London Lodge.

But there exists still stronger, direct, evidence as to this. In a letter to Mrs. Langford (then Mrs. Laura Holloway, one of the "Two Chelas" who wrote *Man*) the Master K. H. writes in 1884. ". . . to help the cause in its present very complicated situation, *we who are forbidden to use our powers with Europeans can act but thro' our chelas or one like H. P. B.* . . . Where are the chelas strong enough to help us without the aid of our own powers"? Incidentally it should be clear enough to anyone with a grain of intuition that H. P. B. was something much more than "a chela." Finally, H. P. B.'s Master Himself writes in relation to instructions (for the "Inner Circle" of the London Lodge) which, He says, "can pass only through the hands of Mr. Sinnett, as hitherto . . . remains the question, *what means there are to correspond even with Mr. Sinnett?*" H. P. B. will not undertake the sending on and transmission of the letters; she has shown her willingness to self-sacrifice in this direction long enough . . . Damodar K. M. has the same and even more unwillingness. — [name of another chela] *has not reached that stage of physiological development that enables a chela to send and receive letters. His evolution has been more upon the intellectual plane . . .*" (Italics are mine throughout.)

So we here see that *a certain stage of "PHYSIOLOGICAL development"* is an essential, and that only "one like H. P. B." or the Masters' own personal chelas—like Damodar—are capable of being intermediaries for "direct communication": and Damodar was, in consequence of his advanced "physiological development," able to go to the Masters, in Tibet, a year later. It is perfectly clear from these extracts, in short, that it was only possible for the Masters to communicate direct *through H. P. B.'s agency*, because as Their chosen Messenger she had been prepared by several years of training and instruction under Their direct personal guidance and supervision in Tibet. *Through her* They could act on this plane at any distance from her physical presence.

At that time it would not have been easy, or even possible, for those who found themselves left as leaders of the Movement—both exoteric and esoteric—to foresee all the ruin and confusion that would (and *did*) result from their taking for granted that, because H. P. B. was always in direct communication with the Masters, therefore the same would hold good in their case, bereft as they were of her guidance and, above all, of her *presence*. Mrs. Besant and Mr. Judge were duly appointed joint Outer Heads of the E. S. T. by the Inner Council, of which I was a member (Colonel Olcott never had any connection with the School); and as such felt themselves bound, in this high occult office, to act in the same way as H. P. B.—as "intermediaries" between the students and the Masters. Mrs. Besant looked to Mr. Judge (as intermediary) at first. He, in his turn, presumably feeling the lack of inspiration since H. P. B.'s death, committed the fatal error of seeking communication through mediums, psychics, and clairvoyants, and giving out these communications *as if they were received*

direct by himself. This I neither knew nor realised until after a long and painful experience of the character of Mrs. Tingley, his last inspirer, who was clever enough to persuade him to appoint her his successor. It was she herself who told me, personally, that she dictated the famous E. S. T. Circular headed "By Master's Direction," and signed by Mr. Judge, deposing Mrs. Besant from her position as joint Outer Head.

Mrs. Besant was then in India engaged, *inter alia*, in elaborating the charges against Mr. Judge, under the direction of the Brahmin who was her latest adviser and guide. Mr. Judge's circular was a characteristic Tingley counterstroke, and anyone familiar with her language and methods (as I subsequently became) can easily recognise it throughout. Mr. Judge's style was totally different and quite unmistakable. On the other hand Mrs. Besant was guilty of the very same thing of which she accused Mr. Judge—*viz.*, of "giving a misleading material form to messages from the Master." Equivocation of this kind was one of the fundamental causes of the catastrophe which overtook the T. S. in 1895. Working "from within without," the E. S. T.—the real heart of the Society—was divided by the separation of the two "Outer Heads," and the disruption of the T. S. followed as a matter of course.

This evil precedent had been created by Mr. A. P. Sinnett during H. P. B.'s lifetime, for he had claimed independent communication ever since he had enjoyed the great privilege, *through her agency*, of the long correspondence with the Master K. H. which formed the material for *The Occult World* and *Esoteric Buddhism*. Mr. Sinnett's persistence in the claim of the continuance of independent, direct communication with the Master led to the statement He made to Colonel Olcott which I have already quoted; and which He reiterated to

H. P. B. in 1890. This was in consequence of her having received a letter from Mr. Sinnett at that time, containing some rather impertinent (as from Mr. Sinnett to H. P. B.) statements about this Master, and again claiming that he was in direct communication with Him. That ever since 1885 *all* his alleged "communications" were received through crystal-gazing, mediums, and sensitives was told me by a member of his inner circle of students so far back as 1893. (See *post* p. 54 *et seq.*)

This sort of thing may be perfectly satisfactory to those who are able to believe that the Masters would employ such agencies; but it is quite another and, as I think, hardly an honest matter to give out information so "received" as "direct communications." Such an attitude—the possibility of being able to take such a point of view—shows a complete ignorance of the laws of Occultism governing the training of Adepts and the use of Their powers; also of the vital distinction (so often drawn by H. P. B.) between the trained seer and the more or less irresponsible medium or clairvoyant.

I had a recent confirmation of the very doubtful sources of Mr. Sinnett's so-called "occult" information from an English professor of an Indian University. Shortly after Mr. Sinnett's death in 1921, one of the sensitives whom he was wont to consult told this professor that on one occasion he had given Mr. Sinnett some "message" which he immediately decided came from the Master K. H.—"*He was so pathetically pleased, poor old chap, that I had not the heart to undeceive him,*" was the comment of the medium himself!

Had it not been for H. P. B., it is just possible that I myself might have figured as one of Mr. Sinnett's sensitives. I was seeing a good deal of both him and his wife, before H. P. B. moved into London from Maycot; and one day Mr. Sinnett suggested that I should allow

him to make the experiment of trying to "release" my soul from the body, as I might then have some interesting experiences. I thought so, too, although I then knew nothing of the dangers of such irresponsible practices. As a young girl I had been able to "turn tables," and to mesmerise people; but I never took any real interest in this sort of thing, because the natural bent of my mind was towards philosophy. However, on receiving from Mr. Sinnett the assurance that he would be able to bring my soul safely back again, I consented to submit to the experiment. His method proved to be the usual one. He asked me to lie down and close my eyes, and then proceeded to make mesmeric passes. He told me that I should soon "go off," and would then become conscious on "a higher plane." After what seemed to be about ten minutes, and I was beginning to wonder when "I" should be "released," Mr. Sinnett said in a low voice: "Now you can't move your right arm." Naturally I did so at once, and lifted my forearm, opening my eyes at the same time to look at him. I have rarely seen anyone so taken aback; he had evidently thought I was "off." He seemed also quite annoyed by the failure of the experiment, but said we would try again another day. We never did, however, for soon afterwards H. P. B. moved into London, and I happened to mention the incident to her. She was really angry, and absolutely forbade me to permit Mr. Sinnett, or anyone else, to try such experiments again. Later on, of course, I came to learn the extreme danger of such practices, and that in the wrong hands they are forms of Black Magic.¹

I relate these few incidents, out of many that could be cited, in order to show the very questionable basis

¹ See Addendum: "Dangerous Hypnotic Practices."

on which Mr. Sinnett's claim to "independent communication" rested. Although he had the inestimable privilege of association with H. P. B. in India, and she had put him in direct communication with the Master K. H., yet when this ceased, rather than admit it and be content to play a subordinate part, he declined to co-operate with H. P. B. in England, and resorted to these methods in a pitiful endeavour to maintain the high prestige he had acquired, *through her*. But his later writings are quite sufficient evidence that the source of his inspiration had long since ceased. Among these later writings must undoubtedly be included what he is pleased to call "A note of warning against too submissive an acceptance" of H. P. B.'s explanation [the true Occult one of course] of spiritualistic phenomena, which he quotes in his *Incidents in the Life of Madame Blavatsky*. This "note" he added to the Edition dated 1913 (see Chap. viii, p. 140), and for sheer effrontery, and baseless assertions about her, it would be hard to beat.

It may seem that much of the foregoing is in the nature of a digression, not germane to the subject of my memories of H. P. B. My answer is that I have to deal with those who—with the notable exception of Mr. Judge—drinking from the well of her wisdom; using her name, her powers, and gifts, to forward their own ambitions and desires, yet think it no shame to spurn "the hand that fed them," and "deny" the source of their inspiration. In my view, therefore, anything I can do in adducing testimony to prove how unfounded, disloyal, and ungrateful are the claims of such people, *is well done*. For they have shamefully misrepresented H. P. B. and her teachings; and, inasmuch as they were articulate and conformed to certain conventions, they have obtained the hearing denied to her by the

world she came to enlighten—and perchance to “save,” had it not rejected her Message.

I must explain the insertion, here, of a reproduction of the Diploma which H. P. B. insisted on having specially drawn, by hand, and presenting to Colonel Cleather. She always had the highest regard for him (and, incidentally, rolled him innumerable cigarettes!); while he, in his turn, never wavered in his affection for and belief in her, in spite of all the slanders which he had heard in India about her—though he would never join the T. S.

The first time I took him up to Lansdowne Road to present him to H. P. B., I shall never forget how, on leaving the house—after a wonderful talk—he brought his clenched fist down on the open palm of his other hand with an emphatic bang, ejaculating:—“Well! I’ll take my oath that woman never drank in her life!” I should add that one of the cruellest and most persistent of the Simla slanders which he had heard, was that she “drank like a fish.”

I give this reproduction of the diploma because I believe it to be unique and therefore of interest.



BLAVATSKY

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THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Hereby Admits

COLONEL WILLIAM BARGLEY GORDON CLEATHER

No. of the number of its

HONORARY MEMBERS

W. R. Mead Secretary

Admrs. H. P. Blavatsky

Anna Besant President

1885 1890.

COLONEL CLEATHER'S DIPLOMA.

CHAPTER VI.

The Passing of H. P. B.

I FIND that I digressed from my narrative at the time of H. P. B.'s death, on May 8th, 1891. Late that afternoon I received a telegram at Harrow announcing the bare fact, and adding "Come at once." So my husband and I went straight off to Avenue Road. There we found everything quiet and calm, as was the "mortal coil" of our beloved Teacher, lying so peacefully in the shell of light wood destined for the crematory flames. The impression which stands out more clearly than any other in my recollections of that sad evening is the feeling I had that *H. P. B. had completely gone*. There was much talk at the time of her being still there in spirit, and so forth; but, for me, it *never seemed to be true*. I did not venture to suggest such an idea to my colleagues; but it was an absolutely real one, and, at this distance of time, I am more than ever convinced of its truth. In fact, the influence of the Great Lodge, of which she alone had been the representative, was completely withdrawn, because the Society had definitely failed on inner planes of being and consciousness. It only remained for the result to work out on the material plane—as indeed it very soon did.

I am well aware that hardly any of my contemporaries, now living, will agree with this view. In fact, the only one who ever definitely expressed it to me was Mrs. Chowne. Meeting her again (she was then living out of England) in London about the time of the disruption of the Society in 1895, she expressed herself most emphatically on the subject. "Do *you* believe H. P. B. would

have left us if she could have carried the Movement through into the next century"? she said,—“Not for a moment!” And I had to confess I agreed with her absolutely.

The newspapers were full of H. P. B. at this time, and some of the obituary notices did her a certain measure of justice, though scarcely any showed real understanding of her and her work. The saddest reading of all, looking over them again after the lapse of thirty years, is the collection of articles written immediately after her death by some of her pupils and admirers. Nearly all of the former still living have turned away from her; “they all forsook her,” in the literal sense of these words.

H. P. B.'s body was cremated at Woking on May 11th, and Mr. Mead's address on that occasion was deeply moving and beautiful, spoken from the heart. He and I drove across London that evening from Waterloo Station to Avenue Road with the urn containing the ashes—all that remained of her mortal body. I then recalled that it was we two who had received the first copies of *The Voice of the Silence* from our Teacher's hands, at Lansdowne Road, barely two years earlier, and shortly before she left it for Avenue Road.

One more incident remains to be told. I broke down in health about this time, and went up to London to consult H. P. B.'s clever physician, Dr. Z. Mennell. It was a memorable visit, lasting nearly two hours (he kept a roomful of patients waiting while we talked). Very little was said about my own health, so far as I remember, except that I had “not a drop of good blood” in my body but would probably live, “by will,” till I was eighty! But we talked much of H. P. B. He told me what an inspiration she had been to him in his medical work; how much she had taught him about the nature of the body and its powers—*particularly the brain*. Some

of the things which she had demonstrated with her own organism, were so far beyond anything then known to medical science, that it would have been useless to lay them before the College of Physicians, of which I believe he was a distinguished member. He told me that he *had* brought one instance before them, but was met with such hopeless and determined scepticism that he never repeated the attempt.

As I have tried to show, in my *H. P. Blavatsky : Her Life and Work for Humanity*, she was one of the true Saviours of the race ; one of that deathless band of Great Ones " whose hands hold back the heavy Karma of the World "—who " remain unselfish to the endless end."

ADDENDUM

BY

BASIL CRUMP

THE MASTERS OF WISDOM ON H. P. B.

“Those who do not understand her had better not try to explain her.”

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“*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.*”

ADDENDUM.

A Posthumous attack on H. P. B.

WHEN Mr. Sinnett's *Early Days of Theosophy in Europe* was published by the London House of the Adyar T. S. at the end of 1922, I received a letter from a brother journalist and fellow-student of those days, in which he said: "It is the most crisis-provoking thing that has appeared for years. They will all have to take their stand on that. It cannot be explained away, or dodged, or camouflaged in any way, and I cannot imagine what tempted A. B. to publish it [I can—B. C.] It has done more to consolidate us here than anything else. It reveals the whole treachery from 1889, and shows who was behind the scenes in all that occurred, [A. B. must have missed this point, which I shall deal with fully.—B. C.] . . . To me it is unspeakable, and if I had attempted to characterize it I would have gibbered. So I thought it wiser to take it dispassionately and draw inferences for the unread." He is referring to the task of reviewing it for the magazine of his Section, and his opinion is the more striking in that he occupies a leading office in the Besant Society. While feeling more free than he, having left that body in 1895, I trust I may succeed in being as impartial as is humanly possible for one who accepts H. P. Blavatsky's own account of herself and her Mission, has the highest regard for her personal character, and considers that her books contain teaching and information of unique and inestimable value.

Mrs. Cleather had two years experience of Mr. Sinnett, as a member of his London Lodge, before H. P. B. came to London for good in 1887, and thus was able to

form an impartial opinion of his attitude towards her at that critical period. All that she says about him in the present reminiscences, and in *H. P. Blavatsky: Her Life and Work for Humanity*, should be read and compared with Mr. Sinnett's statements and my analysis of them.

On the one hand we have Mrs. Cleather, as a devoted pupil, finding in H. P. B. the one person in the world who was able to give her the key to the problems of life for which she had sought in vain in philosophy and religion in the West, and taking no interest in psychic phenomena; on the other we see Mr. Sinnett, eagerly interested in phenomena, and treating H. P. B. merely as a means of securing information with which he might startle the Western world. Which of the two was the better qualified to estimate the Sphinx known as H. P. B. at her true worth cannot be doubted. In everything Mr. Sinnett has ever written he has shown his lack of understanding, obviously due to his personal limitations; but his present book goes far beyond anything he ventured to put in print during his lifetime, and constitutes one of the most striking examples of self-revelation I have come across in a fairly long experience on the Press and in the Law Courts of England.

Mr. Sinnett was eighty years of age when he set himself to write what he is pleased to call "a plain truthful narrative" in order to correct the "mythological conceptions of new adherents," included in whom are Mrs. Cleather and her contemporaries, termed "blind devotees" because they did not hesitate to give their preference to the Master mind, rather than to one who was not even a pupil, but merely a very faulty and rebellious exponent of the few fragments he was permitted to receive and give out. He died in 1921, and the most charitable thing one can say is, that in his dotage he

must have forgotten what he has not distorted concerning H. P. B. and her work. As the final message of a man prominent for forty years in a Movement professing high ideals, one would have expected a fairly comprehensive and accurate history of that portion, at any rate, in which he was more directly concerned. Colonel Olcott's *Old Diary Leaves* is far from satisfactory as an avowedly "True History," especially as regards H. P. B.; and the account, attempted in the magazine *Theosophy*, of Los Angeles, is vitiated by the untenable assumption that Mr. Judge was on an occult equality with H. P. B. Only one who thoroughly understood H. P. B. and her Mission, her teaching both exoteric and esoteric, and possessed all the salient facts, could undertake such a task with any hope of success; and it is unlikely that such a person is now alive. I feel, like my friend, that it is difficult to characterise Mr. Sinnett's book with anything like judicial calmness; yet the unpleasant, nay revolting, task must be faced for the sake of the revered Teacher here so vilely traduced, misrepresented, and uncomprehended by one to whom she gave perhaps greater opportunities for doing real good than any other in the whole history of the movement.

If it should be thought by some that Mrs. Cleather has been unduly severe on Mr. Sinnett, they must surely feel after reading his book and this review that she is now more than justified out of his own mouth. The best way, I think, will be to group the principal passages that call for comment or explanation under definite headings, in order to bring out clearly certain important points.

MR. SINNETT'S PERSONAL AMBITION AND DUBIOUS METHODS.

Mrs. Cleather, whom I have known since 1892, when I discarded psychic investigation for H. P. B.'s

teaching, has always recognised his personal motives, and in this book I find them revealed all through, but especially in his attempts to get into communication with Master K. H. independently of H. P. B. The lengths to which he went in pursuit of this desire are almost incredible, especially in a man who continually professes his anxiety to do the correct thing according to the European social code, and does not hesitate to express his disapproval of H. P. B.'s violations of it. Thus, when H. P. B. first visited the Sinnetts at Simla in December, 1879, and gratified his insatiable thirst for phenomena, he says (p. 27) :

“The manifestations of occult power then freely given had a profound effect on my own mind. I felt that those who exhibited such marvellous power over natural forces unfamiliar to physical science must possess knowledge to correspond.” Observe he does not credit H. P. B. with the power to perform them *herself by her own trained will*, but from the first cannot resist adopting the Spiritualistic theory that she was a medium, albeit a very unusual one, despite her own statements and proofs to the contrary. “I wished,” he continues, “to get into communication with one of the ‘Brothers’ she talked about. I felt sure they would be more reasonable to deal with than herself. Conversation showed that she thought this might not be impossible, and I wrote a letter addressed to ‘A Brother’ and gave it to Madame Blavatsky for transmission. In due course I received a reply, and this was the first of a long series of letters from the Masters K. H. and M. which led to the preparation of ‘The Occult World’ and afterwards to ‘Esoteric Buddhism.’” He follows this precious avowal with the statement that Madame Blavatsky altered and added to the letters in transmission, and that “long after she passed away” and his

methods of communication assumed "new and improved conditions," the Master had told him they were a "travesty" of his meaning. Mrs. Cleather has shown, and I will quote him later to prove, that as early as 1885 he was endeavouring to communicate through other "intermediaries," because the Master had closed the correspondence; and that in 1889, two years before H. P. B.'s death, he was using C. W. Leadbeater for that very purpose. So much for his "truthful narrative" at the very beginning.

Here we see his extraordinary conceit and bad taste, as well as his total inability to see beyond the mere personality and comprehend the status and Mission of the chosen and trained Agent of the Masters. Because to his extremely limited, conventional, and materialistic vision, H. P. B. seemed to show "curious inaptitude," he at once begins to try and go behind her (his own guest, at the time!). Evidently he thought he was much better fitted himself, and practically says so more than once. Yet H. P. B. forthwith put him in direct communication with the Master K. H., a priceless privilege that any of the Indian aspirants of that time would have made any sacrifice to secure. But, as he has to admit, the communications had to pass through H. P. B., for she was the only prepared instrument on the physical plane who was able and willing to do it. (See extracts from the Masters' Letters quoted by Mrs. Cleather *ante*, p. 27). That she *was* willing only shows the nobility and selflessness of her character, for she must have foreseen the inevitable consequences—in all the years of suffering and obloquy that followed Mr. Sinnett's misuse of his opportunity. As editor of the *Pioneer*, his journalistic instincts scented a big "scoop," while his abnormal egotism and personal ambition grasped eagerly at the chance of becoming the Avatar of a great religio-scientific revelation

to the Western world. This becomes quite plain later in the book, when he goes to England.

It was a little too much, however, even for H. P. B., when, as he relates (p. 36), on hearing of the Maha Chohan (the great Initiate at the head of the Trans-Himálayan Brotherhood, whom he irreverently styles "the Old Chohan"), he and Mr. Hume "determined to try the experiment of addressing a letter to him declaring that if we were to do any good in connexion with the spread of theosophy we must be somehow enabled to work quite independently of Madame Blavatsky. Looking back from my present point of view, I know this was an absurd course to take, but it brought matters to a crisis. Ridiculous as the situation was, the only way of sending the letter was, to give it to the person of whom it complained—Madame Blavatsky;" and he actually handed it to H. P. B. who "put it in her pocket without looking at it." That it was in the worst possible taste, to use no harsher term, never seems to have occurred to him. Naturally, when H. P. B. came to transmit the letter she became aware of the enormity of the affront, both to the Brotherhood and to herself as Their representative. She had a stormy interview with Messrs. Sinnett and Hume which led to the latter's eventual estrangement, after behaviour which called forth a strong protest from twelve Hindu Chelas of the Brotherhood, two of whom were actually resident with Them in Tibet (See *H. P. Blavatsky: Her Life and Work*, p. 33, in which it is followed by the magnificent letter of rebuke from the Maha Chohan Himself). Such is the man who presumes to call H. P. B. "impossible to work with," and to criticise her manners—she who came of a noble Russian family, and could when she saw fit behave like an Empress, as Mrs. Cleather has often told me.

Mr. Sinnett omits to mention that H. P. B. and Colonel Olcott visited Simla primarily to lay their papers before the Government in order to be relieved of espionage. In a letter dated Simla, October, 1880, to a native gentleman, she says they had come "at a great expenditure of time and money to plead our cause with the English," and quotes one of the officials as saying: "You have done that in eighteen months which we English have not been able to achieve in years. You are creating a better understanding between the two races and gradually filling up the gap between them." This was part of the real work planned for India, which was defeated by the craze for phenomena and the resultant charges of fraud and trickery; but with this aspect of the matter I will deal in detail further on.

The next step taken by Mr. Sinnett to realise his ambition is related at p. 38. The *Pioneer* having dispensed with his services, "both my wife and I had grown tired of the Indian life and wished to be back in England." Such a feeling might seem strange in one who was enjoying a unique opportunity of being so near the Masters as he then was, for at that time They were only just the other side of the Himâlayas in the Karakoram range (see *The Occult World*, p. 82), and Their Representative was² on the spot and ready to help him in every way. I could name a dozen Orientals and some Europeans who would have given anything for such a privilege. But Messrs. Sinnett and Hume were typical European intellectuals without the least glimmering of the sacred relation between *Guru* and *Chela* (Master and Pupil) in Eastern Occultism. Mr. Sinnett is self-revealed as desiring above all to go to England with the information he had so far obtained, establish a society there on his own lines, and pose as the bearer of the new message in place of the "impossible" H. P. B.

Hence we find him, in 1883, established in the West-End of London, lecturing to the "upper levels of Society," and receiving the following encomium from Mr. Myers of the Society for Psychical Research, which exactly expresses what he was aiming at: "We gratefully recognise the very acceptable choice which the Adepts have made in selecting Mr. Sinnett as the intermediary between us and them. They could hardly have chosen anyone more congenial to our Western minds." (p. 50.)

One might ask on what authority he was thus accepted as "intermediary" for the West? H. P. B. certainly never gave it, and the evidence from the Adepts Themselves is quite to the contrary. (See letter quoted *ante*, p. 27.) In view of this alluring prospect he is naturally filled with "dismay" on hearing early in 1884 that H. P. B. is on her way to England with Colonel Olcott, and an Indian *Chela* of the Master K. H., Mohini Chatterji (translator of Sankaracharya's "Crest Jewel of Wisdom," who collaborated during his stay in England with Mrs. Laura Holloway, an American *Chela* of the same Master, in *Man; Fragments of Forgotten History*). Mr. Sinnett relates how H. P. B. arrived, unexpectedly, one evening in the middle of a lodge meeting, and offered explanations of obscure passages in *Isis Unveiled*; but the company was not interested in the philosophy, and asked for information about "astral apparitions of the Mahatmas." This is a typical example of the misconception of H. P. B.'s real mission, and the persistent demands for phenomena that led to the subsequent troubles.

Mr. Sinnett's snobbery and fear of social discredit through H. P. B. and Colonel Olcott comes out again and again. For instance, on p. 47 he says his plan was that the new teaching should take root in "the upper levels of Society and filter downwards with social authority

behind it, instead of beginning on lower levels and trusted to filter upwards as it could. Unhappily this programme was defeated by Madame Blavatsky's return to England." He even makes the preposterous and abominable assertion (p. 63) that "she came to Europe to bathe in a flood of adulation," but Mr. Judge, who came over from America at this time to meet her in Paris, wrote from there to a friend that she had been suddenly ordered by her Master to go to London to try and adjust certain serious difficulties which had arisen in the London Lodge. The letter was printed with others of that period in *The Word*, of New York, March 1912. Mr. Sinnett adds that Colonel Olcott's tactless behaviour in a lecture he gave before the S. P. R. made "the leaders of that Society anxious to shake themselves free from theosophical associates liable to bring social discredit on their undertaking." In fact, if Mr. Sinnett is correct in this case, the changed attitude of the S. P. R., which led to the infamous Report of 1885, after a favourable and sympathetic preliminary one (see *H. P. Blavatsky: Her Life and Work*, Chap. VI), was dictated entirely by this ignoble motive, and reveals them in an even more despicable light than hitherto seemed possible.

Yet, despite Mr. Sinnett's "social" scruples at that time, we find him, in the face of the Leadbeater scandals of 1906, resuming the office of Vice-President of the Adyar T. S., and holding it until his death (p. 117). Here and elsewhere he asserts that it was he who "had the privilege of launching the theosophical movement in Europe," and but for the coming of H. P. B. (when finally driven from Adyar by the fears of Colonel Olcott and the Council in 1885, as she relates in her letter "To My Brothers of Aryavarta" in 1890, quoted in the *Life and Work*, Chap. V) he would certainly have developed the English branch of the movement entirely on

his own lines of intellectual psychic investigation. For, as the Master K. H. wrote to him and Mr. Hume, in response to their request for independent instruction in Occult Science; the Simla Eclectic must be a branch of the parent body, and promote its "leading idea of a Universal Brotherhood, and in other practicable ways . . . Yet you have ever discussed, but to put down, the idea of a Universal Brotherhood, questioned its usefulness, and advised to remodel the Theosophical Society on the principle of a college for the special study of occultism." (*Life and Work of H. P. B.*, Chap. III.) Both in this and the esoteric foundation of the movement embodied in the Benares Constitution of 1879 (which, like Olcott, he ignores) he ran directly counter to the Masters' plans from the very beginning, evidently justifying this course by regarding them as interpolations by H. P. B.

TRAINED OCCULTIST OR IRRESPONSIBLE MEDIUM?

One of the most astonishing features of this book is, that, although the author has always admitted that H. P. B. underwent several years of the strictest occult training in Tibet under the Masters, nevertheless again and again in actual practice he acts as if she were just an ordinary untrained person, full of glaring faults, continually making serious mistakes, and often little better than an irresponsible medium capable of the crudest and most contemptible lying, deception, and trickery. On the very first page he brackets her with Colonel Olcott in stating that in 1875 the intentions of the Masters were "imperfectly comprehended" and "dimly realised"; although, as she states in more than one place, Colonel Olcott, Mr. Judge, and one other European were taught by her in America before *Isis Unveiled* was written. Mr. Sinnett's confused ideas

about H. P. B. are strikingly revealed in the following statements, on page 18 :

- (1) Madame Blavatsky "knew of her own knowledge" that the Masters were beings of flesh and blood, for she had been in Tibet with two of them.
- (2) "She herself had faculties of a super-physical order that kept her in touch with them wherever she might be."
- (3) "She knew she had a mission to fulfil . . ."
- (4) "She must have been conscious of possessing wonderful powers."

Yet, after recognising all this, he ends the paragraph with the absurd and wholly gratuitous assertion that in *Isis Unveiled* she showed that

- (5) "she was quite ignorant even of what we came later to regard as the A. B. C. of Theosophical teaching."

Her own explanation that she was not permitted to give out then to the public much that she was teaching privately (under the usual pledge of secrecy) he of course ignores ; just as, later, he treats her *magnum opus*, *The Secret Doctrine*, as if it were of rather less importance than one of his own productions. That she actually possessed, or had direct access to, all the extraordinary wealth of learning and occult knowledge which are exhibited in her later books (*vide* evidence of the learned Mason Dr. Buck, and the Scientist Dr. Carter Blake, cited in the *Life and Work*, p. 79 *et seq.*), and in her *Instructions* and oral teachings for her students of the Esoteric School, appears to be unthinkable for him. In his view she is merely "a link," and had to be put up with because the Masters "could not find a better."

Moreover, by reason of lack of training and a naturally materialistic mentality, Mr. Sinnett misunderstood some of the information he was *permitted* to publish, and H. P. B. had to correct certain points in her "Introductory" to Vol. I of *The Secret Doctrine*. One striking misconception was in regard to Mars and Mercury, which he always persisted in calling two of the planets of our Earth's Septenary Chain. This is obviously impossible if we accept the statement in the *S. D.* that "Everything in the Universe follows analogy," for only the physical or lowest aspect of any septenary chain can be visible to our earthly vision, just as we can only see our physical bodies, and not the astral, or the still more ethereal vehicles. As H. P. B. states, in dealing with Mr. Sinnett's error in the *S. D.*, p. 164 (1st Edn.): "Neither Mars nor Mercury belong to *our chain*. They are, along with the other planets, septenary Units in the great host of 'chains' of our system, and all are as visible as their upper globes are invisible." That Mr. Sinnett was unable to see this obvious and fundamental principle, that everything is septenary, and that only the physical aspect of any septenary can be visible on the physical plane, conclusively shows what a profoundly stupid man he was, and how entirely unfitted for the study of the Esoteric Philosophy. He repeats the error in the present book (Chap. IX), also in his previous one, *Collected Fruits of Occult Teaching* (1920), in which he presumes to put forward an astonishing collection of totally unsupported and disconnected assertions as "expanded knowledge," superior to the *S. D.*, which he dismisses as an "earlier book" subject to "correction" and "enlargement." If, as H. P. B. states in her "Introductory," only "the outline of a few fundamental truths from the Secret Doctrine of the Archaic Ages is now permitted to see the light, after

long millenniums of the most profound silence and secrecy," it is entirely improbable that a mere student like Mr. Sinnett would be permitted, especially by means of "intermediaries" like Leadbeater, to discover and give out any more. In any case it was the great importance of the cycle ending about 1897-8 that permitted the Masters to reveal as much as They did through H. P. B.; and the fact that she was withdrawn six years before that date shows, as Mrs. Cleather demonstrates, that no more could be given until 1975.¹

Again, on page 49, Mr. Sinnett has the supreme effrontery to say that, in 1883, when he was seeking further teaching, H. P. B. could not help him because "wonderful as were her powers, she possessed none of

¹ How rapidly Western Science is now leaving the Darwinian theory and approximating to the teaching of the Esoteric Philosophy is shown in Professor Arthur Keith's recent book *The Antiquity of Man*. When H. P. Blavatsky published her *Secret Doctrine* in 1888, Huxley had not ventured to assign a greater age to man than 100,000 years, whereas Professor Keith places his origin in the Eocene Age, which he estimates to have been some 4,500,000 years ago. Curiously enough, these figures are very close to those of the great Indian Epic, the Mahabharata, in which four great Ages of human evolution are recorded, amounting in all to 4,320,000 years. In the *Secret Doctrine* (II 710, 1st Edn.) the Esoteric Geological Chronology covers 320,000,000 years, and H. P. B. there says: "The Tertiary Atlantean part-cycle, from the 'apex of glory' of that Race in the early Eocene to the great mid-Miocene cataclysm, would appear to have lasted some 3½ to four million years." Professor Keith also suggests that man and the anthropoid ape sprang from a common ancestor, the *Homo primigenius*, as distinguished from the *Homosimius precursor* of Owen and Darwin; in fact, he all but suggests that man was the first anthropoid. The *Secret Doctrine* not only asserts this, but goes much further in stating that man was the first of all the animal creation, and that the anthropoid apes were a degraded offshoot from the human stock in Eocene times, owing to misuse of the divine procreative function after the dawn of mind and the separation into sexes in the Third or Lemurian Race at a much earlier period. H. P. B.'s prophecy that the Twentieth Century would witness the confirmation and justification of the *Secret Doctrine* is therefore already within measurable distance of fulfilment. See "Human Ancestry," by M. N. O., in *The Statesman*, Calcutta, June, 1923.

the detailed knowledge we now call theosophical teaching. [Presumably the "Neo-Theosophy" of the Adyar Society.—B. C.]. She picked it up as the letters from the Masters addressed to me passed through her hands, and was able to expand it a good deal in the light of her general occult knowledge."

Yet the marvellous sweep of knowledge displayed in the *S. D.* was poured forth in a steady stream during the next five years, most of it while moving from place to place on the Continent, with no access to libraries, and constantly harassed and worried by the troubles caused by the follies and misconceptions of her followers. The *Psychical Research* attack was a direct result of the undue prominence given to phenomena, at the expense of the philosophy and ethics, by foolish enthusiasts, and Mr. Sinnett was one of the chief offenders in this respect. The contents of the *S. D.* were certainly not "picked up" from anything Mr. Sinnett got, and his attempt here and elsewhere to put himself on the same level in this respect, and to claim that he got further and greater knowledge than she possessed, through his later "intermediaries" (*i.e.*, ordinary psychics and mediums), is not only grotesque but downright dishonest. I say so advisedly, because he misled the public for years by letting it be inferred that he had found better "intermediaries" than H. P. B., through whom he was getting "expanded occult knowledge" independently, and even without her cognisance.

INCEPTION OF THE GREAT BETRAYAL.

One of these "intermediaries" was evidently the now notorious C. W. Leadbeater (see Mrs. Cleather's exposure in *A Great Betrayal*), for Mr. Sinnett brings a new fact to light of the first importance in the history

of the degeneration of the T. S. since H. P. B.'s death. He relates quite accurately that Leadbeater joined in 1883 and went to India in 1884 with H. P. B.'s party on their return from England. He remained for a year or two at Adyar as Secretary, and was then sent to Ceylon by Colonel Olcott to look after his Buddhist schools. And now we come to a very significant sentence (p. 94) : " Mr. Leadbeater kept up a correspondence with me, and many of his letters showed plainly that he was very miserable in this uncongenial employment, although, as I learned afterwards, the period was associated with the great development of his psychic faculties and with consciousness in the physical brain of his relations with the Master K. H."

It will thus be seen that even at that early date, as soon as he got away by himself, Mr. Leadbeater began to make capital out of certain psychic faculties of a quite ordinary character, and to persuade Mr. Sinnett that he was able to communicate direct with the Master from whom he was so eager to get further information for his work in England. The question immediately presents itself here : If he were being specially trained by H. P. B. for the future work, as Mrs. Besant has recently asserted (*Theosophist*, March 1922), why did he not stay with her and follow her back to England and work under her there with her other pupils ? Instead of that, he goes to Ceylon, and from there writes constantly to Mr. Sinnett, of all people, until he persuades him to engage him as "resident tutor" for his son, the real bait being the chance of securing a good "intermediary" as we shall see presently. Mr. Sinnett was evidently not then aware of that dominant feature in Mr. Leadbeater's character which subsequently produced a series of storms in the T. S. the latest being now in progress in Australia : *viz.*, adopting certain boys and training them according

to his own peculiar ideas, which are fully dealt with in *A Great Betrayal*.

"The Master," writes Mr. Sinnett, "had specially directed him to take care of a certain native boy in whom he—the Master—for reasons of his own, was interested. Leadbeater could not leave Ceylon and come to England *without bringing that boy with him!*" Of course the Master was invoked simply to ensure not parting with the boy, whose name was Jinarajadasa. So he was brought to London, grew up under Leadbeater's tutelage, and finally succeeded Mr. Sinnett as Vice-President of the Adyar T. S. Mr. Sinnett omits to mention that in 1906, when the first Leadbeater scandal arose, Colonel Olcott "expelled C. Jinarajadasa from the T. S. because of his campaign in defence of Leadbeater's sex 'teaching'" (see *Dawn*, May 1, 1923, p. 14). A worthy pupil of such a master, together with whom he was evidently reinstated by Mrs. Besant when she succeeded Colonel Olcott in 1907.

An eminent Sinhalese who was well acquainted with Leadbeater's true character, even at that time, in Ceylon, told me he was in the house when the boy's father came with a revolver, intending to shoot Leadbeater unless he gave up his son. My informant, being a devout Buddhist, feared violence, and persuaded him to desist, with the result that he lost his son, who was removed to a ship by his determined mentor. Another of the Leadbeater boys, J. Krishnamurti, was kept from his father despite the ruling of Mr. Justice Bakewell, of the Madras High Court, in 1913, that he and his brother should be restored to him, and that Mr. Leadbeater was "certainly an immoral person and highly unfit to be in charge of the boys." Mrs. Besant contrived to evade the order, because Mr. Leadbeater had designated Krishnamurti as the chosen vehicle in which the coming "World-

Teacher" of the Neo-Theosophists would incarnate. Thus he and the new Vice-President are direct products of the Leadbeater training! What hope, then, can there be of reforming a Society thus carefully prepared and officered? Only the late Lord Fisher's celebrated advice—"Sack the lot!" would be of any avail.

It will hence be seen that Leadbeater had begun to lay the foundations of his elaborate scheme several years before H. P. B.'s death, and Mr. Sinnett here reveals for the first time that it was *he* who gave him the opening he was looking for. Established in the house as tutor, what more natural than that he should become a psychic "intermediary" for Mr. Sinnett's circle! One can see from all that has happened since what use he made of the opportunity, and how, with his low order of psychism, his fertile invention, and the unhealthy imagination of his type, he played to the full on the credulity of Mr. Sinnett and his students.

In fact, from this date (1889) would seem to have begun the fatal and treacherous process which led, after H. P. B.'s death, first to the Besant-Judge "Split" in the T. S., in 1895, and then to the steady alteration, perversion, and degradation of her teachings by the leaders of both factions, especially on the Besant side under the guidance, first of Chakravarti, and then of Leadbeater. A notable fact in this connection is revealed here by Mr. Sinnett, which supplies the key to Mrs. Besant's subsequent policy and close association with Leadbeater. He relates that, after Mrs. Besant's first visit to India in 1893, where with Chakravarti and Olcott the *Case against W. Q. Judge* was formulated, she joined his circle, having "realised the importance" of his "private methods of communicating with the Master K. H." then "in full progress." Through Leadbeater, of course, who was fooling Sinnett to the top of his bent; and Mrs.

Besant, seeking with like eagerness for the "communication" she could not obtain direct (as every *real* chela must do before he can qualify as such), joined the group which forthwith "became the real vortex of the theosophic teaching of the period." What this teaching was, and how completely it departed from what H. P. B. was empowered to give out, is evident to anyone who has had the patience to dip into the mass of material, mainly consisting of irresponsible psychic twaddle, poured forth from this tainted and disloyal source ever since.

Both here and elsewhere Mr. Sinnett states that these "private methods" of communication were without H. P. B.'s knowledge, and with the Master's connivance and consent. Mrs. Cleather has related a striking instance of his absolute lack of belief in H. P. B.'s ability to read anything she wanted in the Astral Light (*ante*, p. 11), preferring to believe that Mrs. Cleather had deliberately made mischief, which in itself showed a complete misunderstanding of her attitude to her Teacher, and her sense of honour towards her friends. And this in the face of all that he has written about H. P. B.'s wonderful occult powers. No less does he misunderstand the nature of a Master, whom he can believe capable of conniving with him in secret communications behind the back of His own Agent, and in the face of the Master K. H.'s statement in a letter of rebuke to Colonel Olcott in 1888 for his attitude to H. P. B.: "Since 1885 I have not written, nor caused to be written save through her agency, direct or remote, a letter or line to anybody in Europe or America, nor communicated 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. As I once before remarked, *ingratitude* is not among our vices. . . . But 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*."

Even the most ordinary notions of rectitude and loyalty, as between principal and agent, would revolt at such underhanded double-dealing, and in such an exalted being as a Master it is simply unthinkable. Mr. Sinnett's book is full of these inconsistencies and contradictions which completely invalidate his case for occasional fraud and trickery. In fact, it is difficult to account for them on any other hypothesis than that someone desiring to discredit H. P. B. has tampered with his manuscript; for never during his lifetime did he suggest deception of any kind, and only in later years, after her death, regarded her more as a medium than as a trained Occultist, due no doubt to the warping of his judgment by the associations of that period.

To anyone in the least familiar with the various phenomena of Spiritualism and Hypnotism, and the wide difference between the medium, or sensitive, and the trained Occultist, it is clear enough that nothing obtained by the methods employed in the Sinnett circle was reliable, since they could in no case penetrate beyond the delusive lower levels of the astral realm.

"When Mrs. Besant joined our group," proceeds Mr. Sinnett, "she became intimately acquainted for the first time with Mr. Leadbeater, whose wonderful clairvoyant faculties were of immense importance in our studies." As this *first* meeting took place some three years after H. P. B.'s death, Mrs. Besant's recent statement that they were *both* specially trained by her (*Theosophist*, March, 1922) clearly has no foundation, as Mrs. Cleather rightly contends in *A Great Betrayal*.

Otherwise, Why was he sent to Ceylon soon after he reached Adyar, Why was he so eager to return to England, and Why did he carefully avoid the London Headquarters as long as H. P. B. was alive and devote himself "exclusively" (p. 111) to the Sinnett group? Obviously he believed in her no more than Mr. Sinnett did, and, like him, was scheming for his own hand, and only waiting until she was out of the way to secure a dominant position. In Mrs. Besant he found as easy a dupe as Mr. Sinnett, and we find her losing no time in giving him a post at Headquarters. Thus she secured his very dangerous and doubtful services for her own guidance, and only two years later came the first of the great crises that have marked his career in the Society.

It should here be made quite clear that from the very first, in seeking to get into direct communication with the Masters independently of their accredited Agent, Mr. Sinnett broke one of the cardinal rules of Occultism. Thereafter he found himself involved in a network of deception in his attempts to continue communication by means of untrained psychics, hypnotised sensitives, and even charlatans of the Leadbeater type. All her life H. P. B. warned her pupils of the danger and delusion involved in such methods; and I realised this fully from my own experience of Spiritualism before I read her books. The Master K. H. had to terminate communication with Mr. Sinnett in 1885, and make the definite statement to that effect already quoted. No doubt Mr Sinnett regarded it as a fraud by H. P. B. due to her "jealousy," although this particular letter was received direct by Colonel Olcott on his voyage to England in 1888, when H. P. B. was in London. Mrs. Cleather has shown (*ante*, p. 31) how easily Mr. Sinnett was deceived by any medium good at personation, or by "masquerading entities" so common in mediumistic phenomena.

DANGEROUS HYPNOTIC PRACTICES.

There was also another source of self-deception of some importance in diagnosing Mr. Sinnett's case. He quotes (p. 104) an article by his wife in which she says that he was a student of "the higher aspects of mesmerism." She calls his method the "pure and more spiritual form" by which "the true Ego, by the effort or assistance of the mesmerist, is really cleared of close connection with the lower principles," but "still, of course, in close magnetic touch with the operator." If the reader will compare this with Mrs. Cleather's account (*ante*, p. 32) of Mr. Sinnett's abortive attempt to hypnotise her, in order to "release her soul," it will be clear that he was, at the time he lost direct touch with the Master K. H. through his treacherous and disloyal attitude towards H. P. B. (in 1884-5), endeavouring to regain it by getting hypnotic control over suitably sensitive organisms. It is well known that women usually make the best subjects, but the dangers are in this case far greater. Hence H. P. B.'s anger when she heard of his attempt on Mrs. Cleather, who was fortunately for herself much too positive; and it is evident from Mr. Sinnett's account that she also at once put a stop to his attempt to make use of Mrs. Holloway, for he says (p. 61) she was "angrily jealous" and "insisted on Mrs. Holloway leaving us and coming back to the Arundales" (with whom H. P. B. was staying). Mrs. Holloway (now Mrs. Langford), who is very indignant at what she terms "the falsity of Mr. Sinnett's assertions," is dealing with them fully in her book, and is also printing several letters she received from her own Master, and H. P. B.'s, at that period. I will therefore only quote one other passage concerning Mrs. Holloway, as typical of Mr. Sinnett's attitude.

In August 1884, H. P. B., Mrs. Holloway, and others, left London to visit the Gebhards, who had formed a lodge at Elberfeld, Germany. Mr. Sinnett, who was also on the Continent at the time, was invited by telegram, and his version is that H. P. B. had "got into disgrace with the higher powers, for the Masters sent communications over her head, without her knowledge, through Mrs. Holloway, whose psychic condition enabled them to deal with her in this way" (p. 73). He suggests that he was telegraphed for because his "presence might obviate some risks" due to Madame Blavatsky being "under bad influences"; but the real truth, as I now learn, was that he had expressed a wish to come, through his wife. I might add that Mrs. Holloway, being a recognised chela of one of H. P. B.'s Masters, and possessing the requisite psychic and other qualifications, could quite properly be so used, when desirable, but certainly not without H. P. B.'s knowledge and approval. Further, Mr. Sinnett relates that, when H. P. B. left for Flushing, accompanied by Mrs. Holloway and Rudolph Gebhard (strange she should go with Mrs. Holloway if she had been used "over her head"; which, according to Mr. Sinnett, made her frantically jealous!), she left her dispatch box behind and Rudolph returned to get it. This provides him with a further opportunity to insinuate that the box was full of compromising documents, including "Tibetan envelopes" and other evidences of trickery; and adds the astounding aspersion on Mrs. Gebhard that she "exercised heroic self-control in refraining from an examination" of its contents—the private papers of her own guest! But perhaps it is no less than we can expect of the man who could himself treat H. P. B. as I have already related, when she was his guest at Simla. Mrs. Langford's version is of course entirely different, and she is

particularly indignant concerning Mrs. Gebhard, who was an Englishwoman, widow of an Army Officer, and a lifelong friend.

The real reason for H. P. B.'s anger at Mr. Sinnett's hypnotic practices was that they were sheer **Black Magic**, fraught with grave moral and psychic danger to the subject. In her *Esoteric Instructions* she explains what happens to the Ego under such control, which will be seen to be quite different from Mrs. Sinnett's description. Under the head of "Colours, Sounds, and Forms" in *Instruction No. I* she says :

"A good clairvoyant, moreover, if he had an opportunity of seeing a Yogi in the trance state and a mesmerised subject, side by side, would learn an important lesson in Occultism. He would learn to know the difference between self-induced trance and a hypnotic state resulting from extraneous influence.

"In the Yogi, the 'principles' of the lower Quaternary disappear entirely. . . . Nothing [visible] but hardly perceptible vibrations of the golden-hued Prâna [Life] principle and a violet flame streaked with gold rushing upwards from the head, in the region where the Third Eye rests, and culminating in a point. . . .

"On the other hand, in a subject in an artificially produced hypnotic or mesmeric trance, an effect of unconscious when not of conscious **Black Magic**, unless produced by a high Adept, the whole set of the principles will be present, with the Higher Manas paralysed, Buddhi severed from it through that paralysis, and the red-violet Astral Body entirely subjected to the Lower Manas and Kama Rupa (the green and red animal monsters in us)."

Observe that, far from the Higher Ego or Soul (Higher Manas) being freed from the body, as Mrs. Sinnett describes it is "paralysed" and the unfortunate

subject is left at the mercy of the lower nature and the hypnotiser's will.¹ Note further that H. P. B. says this effect may be produced even by "unconscious," as well as "conscious, Black Magic." Richard Wagner, who had considerable knowledge of magic, gives an exact and terrible illustration of this process in his symbolical music-drama, *Parsifal*. The plastic elemental female principle is there personified in Kundry. Awake she is the humble serving messenger of the Grail Brotherhood; but, unknown to them, the black magician, Klingsor, can throw her into a hypnotic trance and compel her

¹ In view of the alarming spread of indiscriminate and ignorant practices of self-healing by Auto-Suggestion, Christian Science, and kindred branches of Self-Hypnotism, it is important to mention here that H. P. B. never permitted her pupils to employ them, and that the rules of Eastern Occultism forbid their use in any case for the disciple's personal benefit. Even medical science is beginning to perceive their danger, and the popularity of the Coué system has led Dr. Frumusan, a French physician, to utter the following warning which is in complete agreement with H. P. B.'s teaching: "To make use of the subconscious powers in all cases, even in those where there is organic lesion, without a knowledge of such lesion, and without treating it by suitable therapeutic measures, is often equivalent to stabbing in the back the very patient whom the operator is trying to save. For auto-suggestion is a miraculous lever which has caused curvature to disappear, has vanquished insomnia, has subjugated pain, and has spread over advancing ruins the brilliant cloak of an optimistic imagination." This is absolutely true in Occultism, which teaches that the human will is virtually omnipotent and can accomplish anything if a way can be found to train it and put it in action. Hence the stern rules for first purifying the motive and the moral nature. Dr. Frumusan proceeds: "Then, after the lapse of a certain time, the anæsthesia of suggestion ceases to act [*i.e.*, the will effort weakens] and there is a sudden and cruel awakening. The hidden ravages have silently and rapidly progressed under the shelter of this organic disarmament until the physician is helpless to stay them. This is why psychotherapy is a dangerous weapon which can be handled advantageously only by the physician." H. P. B. would say "only by the trained Occultist," as she does above in the quotation from her E. S. *Instructions*. See also Mrs. Cleather's account of her visit to Dr. Mennell *ante*, p. 36.)

to serve his nefarious ends. At the beginning of Act II he is seen calling up her "red-violet Astral Body" while her physical body lies in a hypnotic sleep under a bush in the Grail's domain, exactly as H. P. B. describes above. He forces it by his will to assume the form of a beautiful temptress in his magic garden of illusion, by means of whom he lures the Grail Knights, wounds their King, and gets possession of the Sacred Spear.

The terrible danger to sensitive and hysterical women of being subjected to this process by an unscrupulous male hypnotiser cannot be exaggerated; and men like Sinnett, who have recourse to such evil practices in the pursuit of their selfish ends, are black magicians of the worst description, and are a menace to humanity. Unfortunately he is by no means a solitary instance, for, besides Leadbeater's operations with boys, there have latterly been some deplorable developments involving the perversion and ruin of young girls by self-styled "initiates," whose superior wisdom is considered to override the accepted moral code, no less than that of true Occultism. Those who have witnessed *Parsifal* will remember that redemption is effected by the intervention of the true Ego, or Higher Self, personified in the "Pure Fool" (*Parsifal*), who, as the embodiment of Compassion ("Alaya's SELF,") pierces the illusion, resists the tempting shade, regains the Sacred Spear, and regenerates the Brotherhood.¹

The whole may be taken as a drama of the Theosophical Society, which may now be said to be under the dominion of Klingsor, and still awaiting the coming of its *Parsifal* who can shatter the vast fabric of psychic illusion. No lesser being than the next "Torch-Bearer

¹ See *Parsifal, Lohengrin, and the Legend of the Holy Grail*. By Alice L. Cleather and Basil Crump.

of Truth" due in 1975, is likely to be strong enough for such a task in the Black Age. And has not that same fatal plasticity of the feminine nature been most effectively used to achieve its downfall?

Mr. Sinnett attributes the financial ruin that overtook him in later years to "the dark powers" plotting his downfall. If it was so, surely those powers were of his own lower nature—the black magic of hypnotism—and he had only himself to thank for his punishment: which could, in fact, be said scarcely to "fit the crime."

A striking example of the dangers attendant on this form of Black Magic was given me by one of the early members of the T. S., now deceased, who was addicted to the necromantic side of occult study. He wished to ascertain the contents of a certain occult book in one of the secret chambers of the Vatican Library, and tried to achieve his object by hypnotising a female subject and commanding her to go there. She told him that "a wall of fire" barred the way; but he ordered her to go through it, whereupon she uttered a loud shriek and fell down in a fit. He had the fright of his life in restoring her to normal consciousness.

CHARGES OF FRAUD AND TRICKERY.

I come now to the most unpleasant part of my task, and will deal with it as briefly as possible. It is, as I have said, a new aspect of Mr. Sinnett's attitude towards H. P. B. in his public writings, and involves him in a tangle of inconsistencies and false reasoning from which he tries in vain to extricate himself by an untenable theory of "multiple personality."

Even in the very first trifling phenomenon H. P. B. performed at his request at Simla, he showed his inability to form a balanced judgment. As the Editor of the

Occult Review points out (April, 1923) he quite failed to appreciate the fact that the cigar-holder she produced out of her pocket at his suggestion was the most unlikely thing any woman would have about her; and H. P. B., being a Russian, smoked cigarettes without a holder. That Mr. Sinnett describes himself as speechless at the inadequacy of the test, only shows his own lack of intelligence. Further on (Chap. VI) he begins to accuse H. P. B. of fabricating letters from Masters when their contents do not suit his plans; as, for instance, when he was trying to use Mrs. Holloway as an "intermediary." In discussing the S. P. R. Report, he now for the first time states his belief that "she sometimes stooped to simple cheating" and even "employed the Coulombs, husband and wife, as confederates in trickery." Yet, in the same breath, he declares he is "absolutely sure that she possessed powers over matter entirely eclipsing those possessed by ordinary mankind, no matter how deeply versed in science." Then he relates absurd examples of childish trickery in delivering letters from Masters, such as asking M. Coulomb to drop it through a crack in the roof, or someone else to put it in the person's pocket unobserved! That these Coulombs were utterly discredited employees who had to be discharged for causing serious trouble at the Adyar Headquarters, and sold fabricated evidence to the Madras missionaries, as Mr. Sinnett has shown in previous writings, now counts with him for nothing, although on page 40 he states his firm belief in the genuine character of the celebrated "Shrine" which (as altered by M. Coulomb) figured so prominently in the S. P. R. Report as a trick cupboard with a trap door behind it.

After all this he makes a very lame attempt to explain the problem by a theory that H. P. B. was apt to be "careless" about her body, and sometimes left

it unguarded, so that an evil entity got in, "who designed the sham phenomenon to bring discredit on her and possibly to disgust myself." This sort of thing reminds one of the ridiculous and far-fetched explanations that some of the earlier scientific sceptics had recourse to when confronted with Spiritualistic phenomena, many of which are now being proved genuine under strict scientific tests. Even the "bladders and muslin" that have figured so often as an explanation of materialisations, and were also applied to the "astral apparitions of the Mahatmas" (S. P. R. Report), have now to give way before the scientific evidence of a plastic astral substance called "Ectoplasm," which is stated to have been weighed, photographed, and even analysed in certain laboratories.*

* "During the past twelve months psychic research has made tremendous—fascinating—strides," writes Mr. Horace Green in an article on Sir A. Conan Doyle's American lectures (*New York Times Magazine*, April 8). The *Scientific American* has not only established a special Psychic Committee of Investigation, but, at the suggestion of Sir Arthur, has sent its Associate Editor Mr. J. Malcolm Bird to Europe to investigate, and his first report of English phenomena appears in the May number, in which the editor announces: "Mr. Bird will probably go to Paris to meet the leading French investigators and to take part in their sittings. Also, if the necessary arrangements can be made, he will visit Munich, where Willie S., who is said to be the most remarkable medium yet discovered, has convinced over one hundred prominent German scientists of the objective reality of Ectoplasm, according to reports." Mr. Bird's English report so far shows nothing more than the usual Spiritualistic phenomena that I experienced thirty years ago, and which apparently satisfy men like Conan Doyle and Oliver Lodge; but in 1874 H. P. B. gave the true explanation of Occult Science, and this is being more and more confirmed by the scientific researches in the Continental laboratories, on which Mr. Bird's reports will be awaited with great interest.

Just as these pages reach me in proof I also receive the *New York Times Magazine* for April 22nd, which reports Mr. Bird's return, and says he was most impressed by the work of Fritz Grunewald, at Charlottenburg, in accordance with whose methods the New York tests are to be conducted.

A letter from H. P. B. herself to Mr. Sinnett is quoted (p. 80) without any sort of comment, or the least realisation of its application to the futility and absurdity of his own attitude. The following extract speaks for itself :

“Of course you all who believe and respect the Masters cannot without losing every belief in them think me guilty. Those who feel no discrepancy in the idea of filthy lying and fraud—even for the good of the cause—being associated with work done for the Masters are congenital idiots. One capable of believing that such pure and holy hands can touch and handle with no sense of squeamishness such a filthy instrument as I am now represented to be—are natural born fools or capable themselves of working on the principle that ‘the end justifies the means’ Had I written *even one* of those idiotic and at bottom infamous interpolations now made to appear in the said letter ; had I been guilty once only of a deliberate purposely concocted fraud, especially when those deceived were my best, my truest friends—no love for such a one as I. At best but pity or eternal contempt.”

In the relation she held with the Masters H. P. B. could scarcely have been of a lower occult status than what is known as an “Accepted Chela,” which is no more than she herself claimed to be. The Masters Themselves called her “Our Brother H. P. B.” which certainly implies a higher status. As she wrote to Dr. Hartmann in 1886, “the Adepts would never divulge themselves fully to anyone, unless one did as I did—passed seven and ten years probation and given proofs of absolute devotion, and that he, or she, would keep silent even before a prospect and a threat of death. I fulfilled the requirements and am what I am.” Among the qualifications necessary for such a chela are :

Absolute physical and mental purity,* unselfishness of purpose, truthfulness and unswerving faith in the law of Karma, and a courage undaunted in every emergency, even by peril to life." (See "Chelas and Lay Chelas" by H. P. B.). And in an article on "The Theosophical Mahatmas," she says: "Ever since 1851 that I saw my Master bodily and personally for the first time, *I have never once denied or even doubted Him*, not even in thought. Never a reproach or a murmur against Him has escaped my lips, or entered even my brain for one instant under the heaviest trials. . . Unswerving devotion to Him who embodies the duty traced for me, and belief in the Wisdom—collectively, of that grand mysterious, yet actual Brotherhood of holy men is my only merit, and the cause of my success in Occult philosophy."

* The late Russian Minister, Count Witte, having in his *Memoirs* revived the old slander that H. P. B. led a wild life in her youth, the learned Dr. Mario Roso de Luna y Bover, Editor of the Spanish review *Hesperia*, in an able refutation, cites the little known medical certificate given to H. P. B. at Wuerzburg by the celebrated doctor, Oppenheim. The French translation, certified by Mr. Gebhard, is as follows: "Le soussigné, selon la demande qui lui a été faite, dit que Mme. Blavatsky, de Bombay-New York, Secrétaire Correspondante de la Société Theosophique, est présentement soignée par la soussigné. Elle souffre d'*Anteflexio Uteri*, très probablement depuis le jour de sa naissance car, ainsi que l'a prouvé un examen minutieux, elle n'a jamais porté d'enfant ni souffert d'aucun maladie de femme.—Dr. Léon Oppenheim, Wuerzburg, 3 November, 1885. Attestation de la signature du Dr. Léon Oppenheim: Le Médecin royal du district, Docteur-médecin Røder." (*Hesperia*, Madrid, November, 1921, p. 13). With regard to the old imputation that H. P. B. made money out of her credulous followers, it may be mentioned as one point to Mr. Sinnett's credit that he describes her, from the first as being "hard at work earning her living by writing for Russian periodicals" (p. 14). Moreover, Mrs. Cleather testifies (*ante*, p. 9) that during her last years in London H. P. B. was working from 6 A.M. to 6 P.M. at her books, all the proceeds of which went to the Society's funds. Therefore, far from taking money, she gave all she earned and every minute of her time to the Society, literally dying in harness.

This is the devoted being whom Mr. Sinnett can conceive capable of fraud, deception, and even jealousy ; and can suggest that she could be capable of such " carelessness " as to permit her body to be occupied by " an evil entity " apart from the fact that her Master's protection, due to that unswerving faith, would make it impossible. As to her " violent temper " and other characteristics to which he takes exception ; if he had studied and understood her better and more impersonally, as many others were able to do, he would soon have discovered that everything she did had a definite purpose. He mentions her " rough language " to, and " tyranny " over, Colonel Olcott, omitting to add that he was her occult pupil and, as such, his very strong and troublesome personality had to be severely disciplined if he was to be of any use for real work. He himself confesses that some of the Adepts who took him in hand gave him up in disgust ! The fact that she treated others, such as Dr. Keightley or Mrs. Cleather with uniform kindness, and while not neglecting her duty as to discipline, never got really angry with them, proves that she gave to each what was best suited to their individual needs. The testimony of Dr. Keightley and Mr. Charles Johnston (See *Life and Work*, p. 73) form a striking contrast to Mr. Sinnett's essentially petty and personal point of view. Dr. Keightley says : " I am positive from long observation of her actions that there was a purpose in all her acts and words, and that it depended on the observers how much they might profit by the lesson."

Mr. Sinnett obviously failed to see this, and so profited not at all, because from the very first he persisted in regarding H. P. B. as an ordinary person possessed of exceptional powers rather than as a trained Occultist who had achieved by years of terrific effort complete mastery of her instrument, and used it always with

conscious responsibility and sure knowledge in the fulfilment of her mission. Is it conceivable that the Masters could possibly entrust such a tremendous task to one less qualified?

One other point should be touched upon. Mr. Sinnett, like Colonel Olcott, always opposed the esoteric basis of the Society, first embodied in the Benares Constitution of 1879, which both of them studiously ignore. (See *Life and Work*, Chaps. V and VIII.) Mrs. Cleather has there shown that when H. P. B. was driven from India in 1885 the Society quickly degenerated, and "*proved a dead failure on all those points which rank foremost among the objects of its original establishment [i.e., the Benares Constitution].*" Thus as a 'Universal Brotherhood.' . . . it had descended to the level of all those societies whose pretensions are great, but whose names are simply masks—nay, even SHAMS. . . ." (p. 48). There was no hope of its "redemption," as H. P. B. saw, save in the formation of "a group in which all the members, even if unacquainted with one another, work for each other, and by working for all work for themselves—that the great Exoteric Society may be redeemed and made to realise that in union and harmony alone lie its strength and power." . . . (p. 66). Thus she revived the original ideal of the Masters, and formed the Esoteric Section at London, in 1888.

Mrs. Cleather's own personal experience when she joined (*ante*, p. 16) proves what a very real thing it was *under H. P. B.* That it has become degraded and misused for base and worldly ends since her death is no fault of the *principle* in itself, but of the unworthy and unfitted who obtained control of it. It is quite evident from the provisions of the Benares Constitution that the Masters wished to make the Society fundamentally an Esoteric School for the training of earnest aspirants,

under the Eastern rules, for the Path of Adeptship. Hence the three Sections: for Initiates (including the Masters Themselves), Accepted, and Probationary Chelas, respectively. But the worldly, intellectual element represented by Olcott, Sinnett, and others, thrust all that into the background, and insisted on an exoteric body, even removing the words "Universal Brotherhood" from the title, and substituting the formation of a mere "nucleus," as the "First Object."

Mr. Sinnett's narrow view (p. 14) was, that Universal Brotherhood was "adopted in India to attract natives of that country apt to be sore about the prestige of the European residents"! How different is H. P. B.'s conception: "Our Society is the tree of Brotherhood sprung from a seed planted in the world by the angel of Charity and of Justice, on the day when the first Cain killed the first Abel. During the long centuries of the slavery of woman and the misery of the poor, this seed was watered by all the bitter tears shed by the weak and the oppressed. Blessed hands have replanted this seed in one corner of the earth and another, and in different climes, and at epochs far apart . . . 'Love one another, and love every living creature,' preached the Lord Buddha to his Arhats. 'Love one another,' was repeated like a faithful echo in the streets of Jerusalem." And we who live in the East see the great precept actually *lived and practised* day by day among the Buddhist peoples, who have never waged a war in the name of their religion, as we are continually doing.

As to the Esoteric School, which also bases its training on this great fundamental principle, Mr. Sinnett loses no opportunity of sneering at it, and tries to make out that it was simply a device of H. P. B.'s to undermine Colonel Olcott's "autocracy" and put herself at the head of a separate body in England (p. 90). That very

real and valuable Occult instruction was given to the students is unquestionable ; but Mr. Sinnett will no more admit it than he will recognise the value of *The Secret Doctrine*, or indeed that H. P. B. knew more than the mere "A. B. C. of Theosophical knowledge." It is as if some new officer of the Great War, writing thereon, presumed to state that Marshal Foch only knew the A. B. C. of "our modern expanded military science."

And yet, while regarding H. P. B. thus, Mr. Sinnett could turn to an "intermediary" who is all, and much worse, than anything that he now alleges of her, and simply swallow without question everything he says, no matter how fantastic. The trail can easily be traced all through his later books, and we find Leadbeater constantly referred to in such extravagant terms as "brilliantly endowed with super-physical senses," etc. Mr. Sinnett's much vaunted "clairvoyant research" depends on "improved channels" of this description ; but unfortunately for those who depend on this clairvoyant's alleged visions, some of them have been traced to obscure books which doubtless he believed were forgotten.* That many thousands have followed Mrs. Besant and Mr. Sinnett in accepting such a channel as infallible for anything—from the life on Mercury to the constitution and shape of the Atom—is only one more example of the illimitable depths of human folly and credulity.

* *Vide* Mr. Loftus Hare in the *Occult Review*, for January 1923, and subsequent correspondence in which he declares himself "unable to endure Mr. Leadbeater's inventions to go unchallenged any longer" (April No.). Mr. Loftus Hare, it should be added, has held important official positions in the Besant-Leadbeater T. S., including Director of Studies in Comparative Religion and Philosophy from 1916 to 1919.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR. UNIFORM WITH
THIS VOLUME.

H. P. Blavatsky : Her Life and Work for Humanity. A Vindication, and an Exposition of her Mission and Teachings. The main tenets of *The Secret Doctrine* are clearly summarized, the legal unsoundness of the charges formulated by the Society for Psychical Research in 1885 is conclusively demonstrated, and many new and important facts are given concerning the Theosophical Movement.

“ It is a wonderful record, and I, who have had the priceless privilege of knowing most of those who were in touch with H. P. B., and are still alive, can find few words to express my gratitude for the book. It is written with the blood of the heart ; it is aflame with the high inspiration that was aroused by the Teacher in the pupil's heart, and which has never grown less in the years and the disappointments that have followed the Teacher's passing . . . I shall love and prize this volume because it has made me new-hearted in my defence of H. P. B.”—Mr. John M. Prentice, in *Dawn*.

“ This book, like Mrs. Cleather's talks, illuminates, and is illuminated by H. P. B., who becomes more than ever a “ vision splendid,” and the chapter which summarizes the leading conceptions of *The Secret Doctrine* can only be regarded by students as one of the finest things in our Theosophical literature.”—From an Editorial account of Mrs. Cleather's visit to Australia, in *Dawn*, March, 1923.

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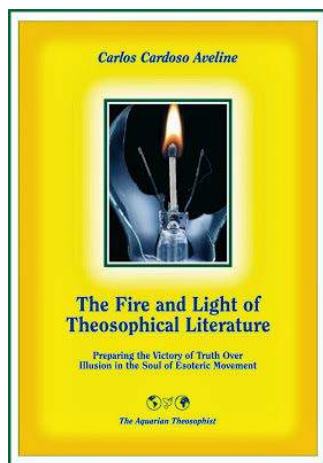
LONDON : W. THACKER & Co., 2, CREED LANE, E.C.4, 1923.

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In September 2016, after a careful analysis of the state of the esoteric movement worldwide, a group of students decided to form the **Independent Lodge of Theosophists**. Two of the priorities adopted by the **ILT** are learning from the past and building a better future.

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On the role of the esoteric movement in the ethical awakening of mankind during the 21st century, see the book “**The Fire and Light of Theosophical Literature**”, by Carlos Cardoso Aveline.



Published in 2013 by **The Aquarian Theosophist**, the volume has 255 pages and can be obtained through [Amazon Books](#).

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