

Alice Bailey and The Theosophical Society

Alice Bailey was a member of The Theosophical Society in America. She writes in her *The Unfinished Autobiography*¹ (1951) that in November 1919 she made her first contact with The Tibetan, the teacher who would later dictate books to her.

Mrs Bailey was for some time editor of *The American Theosophist* and her husband, Foster Bailey, was the National Secretary of the TS in America. Mrs Bailey contributed a number of articles to both *The American Theosophist* and *The Theosophist*, the international journal of the TS, even up to the time prior of her leaving the Society. Her articles on *Initiation and the Solar System*, which would later become part of her book *Initiation, Human and Solar*, were published by Annie Besant, then President of the TS, in the February, March and June 1921 issues of *The Theosophist*. A two-part article by her “Christ and the Anti-Christ” — appeared in *The Theosophist* in November and December 1928.

Mrs Bailey became critical of the leadership of the TS at that time, particularly of Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater. Having left the TS, in April 1923, with the help of her husband and other devoted colleagues, and at the suggestion of he whom she referred to as The Tibetan, she formed the Arcane School. Other organizations also started by her also came into being since that time. They include Lucis Trust, the World Goodwill and the Lucis Publishing Company. The Lucis Trust website states that “The Arcane School was created as a training school for adult men and women in meditation techniques and the development of spiritual potentiality. The School provides sequential courses of study and meditation, and practical training in group service.”

In her autobiography she declared that “as the result of twenty-seven years work with the Tibetan I can snap into telepathic relation with Him without the slightest trouble.” Published as an appendix to her autobiography is a text entitled “My Work” by The Tibetan. We reproduce below a statement from “My Work” as it bears upon the relationship between Mrs Bailey and the TS:

The Theosophical Society had taught the fact of the Masters, though H.P.B. (in her communication to the Esoteric Section) stated that she bitterly regretted so doing. This teaching was misinterpreted by the later theosophical leaders and they made certain basic mistakes. The Masters of the Wisdom they portrayed were characterized by an impossible infallibility because the Masters are Themselves evolving. The teaching given endorsed an engrossing interest in self-development and an intense focusing on personal unfoldment and liberation. The people who were indicated as initiates and senior disciples were entirely mediocre people with no influence outside the Theosophical Society itself. (p. 246)

In the May 1950 issue of *The Theosophist*, C. Jinarajadasa, then international President of the TS, wrote the following obituary of Mrs Alice Bailey:

¹ *The Unfinished Autobiography of Alice Bailey*, Lucis Publishing Company, New York, 1981, p. 246.

Mrs. Alice Evan-Bailey is well known to most Theosophists. Notification has come from her husband, Mr. Foster Bailey, that she passed away in New York in December last. Though Mrs. Alice Bailey drew apart from the Theosophical Society, yet in her early days before her career as an independent teacher she was closely associated with the Society. When the American Theosophical Headquarters was at the old Krotona in a suburb of Los Angeles, she was one of the household. Two of her articles, which later appeared as a book under the title *Initiation, Human and Solar*, were published by Dr. Besant in the February 1921 and a later issue of THE THEOSOPHIST. The articles were then signed Alice Evans. The latest development of her work is the creation by some of her followers of "Triangles" to be centres of goodwill and peace. There are throughout the world today many similar centres, and they are all an indication of the craving of the world for universal Peace.

One characteristic of the Theosophical Society is that it is like the meeting-place for caravans, which disperse after a period. In past lives many individuals have been teachers of varying degrees of importance, each with his own particular following. In this life they find the Society as the most ideal camping-ground in which to discover themselves and their ancient trends with the help of modern Theosophy. Not infrequently many of these pass into the inner school, the original "Second Section" of the Society, which H.P.B. revived in 1888, and find inspiration for a while in its atmosphere. Mrs. Bailey was a member of this inner school for several years. Then after a time, when they have specialized themselves and feel that they have a distinctly individual message, they start separate schools of their own, under various designations, but all fundamentally variants of Theosophy. Sometimes members show anxiety that there should be these migrations out of the Society. It is, however, inevitable, and it is a testimony to the value of the all-embracing nature of the Society and its work.

Compiled by Pedro Oliveira