

AN APPRECIATION OF C. W. LEADBEATER

By Geoffrey Hodson

Editor's note: This article was part of a small book entitled *C. W. Leadbeater: A Great Occultist* and published circa 1965. It was published in response to accusations made by E. L. Gardner against C. W. Leadbeater in a booklet entitled *There Is No Religion Higher Than Truth*. Gardner's booklet may be viewed on online at www.theosophical.ca/NoReligion.htm.

The reliability of the seership of C. W. Leadbeater has been challenged by E. L. Gardner, who has described the former's occult experiences as being mere unconscious "thought-creations." Since some members of the Theosophical Society have become very disturbed by this charge, I have decided, in response to many requests, to relate certain personal experiences which demonstrate to me that E. L. Gardner is in error.

One of the accusations made by Mr. Gardner is that C. W. Leadbeater's supposed contacts with the Masters of the Wisdom were largely imaginery, being the result of the unconscious projections of his own thoughts. It should be remembered, however, that C. W. Leadbeater received two letters from one of the Masters, both being in solid, objective form and transmitted occultly from beyond the Himalayas. This being the case, neither Mr. Gardner nor anyone else can truthfully say that C. W. Leadbeater's *first* contacts with the Masters were imaginary. The two letters were, and still are, physical objects now preserved in the archives of the Theosophical Society.¹

Although a very great deal of what C. W. Leadbeater said and described is beyond my own limited experience, I am able to offer the testimony that I have independently become assured of the truth of certain of his teachings. The existence of the human aura, for example, and of the changes and conditions produced in it by both temporary and habitual feelings and thoughts, are undeniable facts for me. It fell to my lot for some six years to make a special study of this subject, having been drawn into collaboration with certain medical men and used as an investigator and diagnostician in London from 1923 to 1929. Again and again in the course of my investigations I received evidence of the close relationship existing between the physical body and clairvoyantly observable psychological and mental conditions.

As I thus studied the subject I found that much which is written in *Man Visible and Invisible* and *Thought-Forms* concerning the aura, and the astral and mental bodies of man, is strictly in accordance with my own observations. I am therefore able to say that I know that the human aura exists, and that it is correctly portrayed in many of the descriptions and illustrations contained in these two books by C. W. Leadbeater.

The health aura,² to which C. W. Leadbeater also draws attention, was the first etheric phenomenon which I observed and later charted, noting the outflowing from the body of both unused and used *prana* and of certain electro-magnetic forces. I further remember sending a copy of my chart to E. L. Gardner and a group of students then gathered around him. I confirm, in addition, the existence and visibility of the vitalizing, life-energy from the sun, known in Sanskrit as *prana*, its absorption by the body, and its later distribution to different organs according to a very precise system of reception, individualization and circulation of that life-energy.

I am also able to support, from independent observations made throughout a great many years, C. W. Leadbeater's teachings concerning the existence of the Serpent Fire or *kundalini*.³ I have made a special study of this force in varying degrees of its activity, including its effects upon advanced occultists in whom it is fully aroused. The resultant increased functions of the seven force-centers or *chakras* in the etheric, astral and mental bodies of man have also long been a subject of study.

I pause at this point to assure my readers that the above and following observations concerning C. W. Leadbeater's seership are offered in response to special requests. It was thought that, as one who has carried out researches in the same field of study, I might be regarded as an acceptable witness.

Continuing, I am also able to confirm that one can be conscious and active in one's superphysical bodies whilst the physical body is asleep. In consequence, I have found that it is possible to serve effectively in this manner as helper, healer and protector of one's fellowmen.⁴

The existence of nature spirits and of the Angelic Hosts has become a reality to me and here again, C. W. Leadbeater's vision, far outranging my own, is to me a correct source of information concerning members of this other kingdom of Nature. He also wrote *Occult Chemistry*, a work admittedly not yet found to be in conformity with modern physics. The book consists both of coordinated and illustrated descriptions of presumed etheric counterparts of the atoms of the then known chemical elements, and of other expositions of occult physics. I was at one time invited to collaborate with a scientist who, without informing me of the statements contained in *Occult Chemistry*, requested that I should attempt clairvoyant investigation of certain elements. The existence of etheric structures similar to the geometrical figures which C. W. Leadbeater described were on numerous occasions also seen by myself.

C. W. Leadbeater's teachings that the *akashic* records—or memory of Nature—exist, as also does man's power to read them, are demonstrably true for me. I have, for example, under the direction of a scientist, clairvoyantly examined fossil bones of apemen and men-apes, and was later taken into the cave where these relics were found. The palaeontologist concerned confirmed in a written statement the correctness of

most, but not all, of that which I had described. Interestingly enough, he tested the possibility of mind-reading by verbally giving me faulty information, and at the same time projecting into my mind a wrong thought-form concerning a specimen. I was not, however, aware of either of these actions and, as he later testified, saw and described the correct owner of the fossil—in this case an ape. Thus the two ideas advanced by C. W. Leadbeater—the existence of the *akashic* records and of the faculty of reading them—are, I repeat, in this instance demonstrable facts to me.

The discovery of Krishnamurti, and the prophecy that he had been selected to be a vehicle for a great Teacher, have an important place in E. L. Gardner's book. He assumes that since the manifestation did not occur in the manner expected, the prophecy was in error. Whilst this subject is referred to in another part of this booklet, I here describe certain experiences of my own in relation to the prophecy.

As I have elsewhere written, I attended several of the Star Camps in Holland and was present when there was evidence of remarkable, if brief, supernormal manifestations. On more than one occasion some two thousand people from many parts of the world were gathered at Ommen to hear Krishnamurti. Each evening, all were seated in concentric circles round a large camp fire. Krishnamurti would arrive, take his place for a time, and then rise and apply a torch to the camp fire. As the flames arose against the evening sky he would chant a *mantram* to the god *Agni*, and return to his seat. Thereafter he would begin to speak, and on more than one occasion a noticeable change took place in him. His voice altered and his hitherto rather iconoclastic utterances gave way to a wonderful tenderness of expression and thought which induced in those present an elevation of consciousness. The Talks were followed by prolonged meditative silences. Many of those present, myself among them, bore testimony to the sense of divine peace which had descended, to a realization of the Presence of the Lord, and to an assurance that the prophecy had begun to be fulfilled.

These phenomena occurred during some few successive years, the events being so marked that Krishnamurti himself thereafter changed the Objects of the Order of the Star in the East from, in effect, "To prepare for the coming of the Lord" to "To serve the World Teacher now that He is in our midst." I, myself, more than once heard Krishnamurti affirm that the great Teacher was now here and that the "Coming" had actually occurred. Even now when he is speaking, with others I discern a spiritual influence emanating from him, as if a great Being were still using him as a vehicle. This, however, does not constitute a complete fulfillment of the original prophecy.

The foregoing and many other experiences prevent me from allowing to pass unchallenged an attack upon the seership of C. W. Leadbeater. I am convinced that his occult experiences were no mere projections of his own thought-creations, and it

should ever be remembered that he himself never assumed total accuracy; neither did he ever ask his readers to believe his observations merely because they were made by him. He wished them to be judged on their merits alone, after application of the tests of reason and intuition. Indeed, recalling C. W. Leadbeater's presence, the clarity of his mind and the stamp of authority and greatness in him, I deny that he was a self-deceived, deluded man. E. L. Gardner himself recognizes this in the remarkable perception and pre-vision exhibited by C. W. Leadbeater in his discovery that an apparently normal Indian boy was, in fact, the reincarnation of an advanced human being, as has since been proved to be the case; for Krishnamurti is today recognized throughout the world as a great teacher and helper of mankind, large numbers of people flocking to hear him wherever he goes.

Finally, I think it would be a great tragedy if, because of E. L. Gardner's attack upon C. W. Leadbeater, less notice were taken of the latter's valuable writings, especially those which expound basic Theosophy, for he always wrote with rare lucidity. His unique contributions to the literature upon the spiritual life, the Path of Discipleship, the Masters of the Wisdom and the Great White Brotherhood of Adepts upon Earth, are not likely to be equaled in their power to transform people's lives in this period of world history. With so many other revealers of spiritual and occult wisdom to mankind, he has been—and by E. L. Gardner is now—decried and assailed. For me, however, C. W. Leadbeater was a giant amongst men, a great teacher and light-bringer to mankind, and I am indeed grateful for this opportunity of adding my testimony to that of others who knew him far more intimately than ever was my own privilege.

—Geoffrey Hodson.

¹ *The K. H. Letters to C. W. Leadbeater*, C. Jinarajadasa.

² *The Etheric Double*, A. E. Powell.

³ *The Chakras*, C. W. Leadbeater

⁴ *Invisible Helpers*, C. W. Leadbeater.