

THE BLAVATSKY FOUNDATION

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To promote public knowledge of the life & works of Helena P. Blavatsky

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A SPECIAL NOTICE

TO ALL PUBLISHERS, EDITORS, ENCYCLOPEDISTS, AND BOOK REVIEWERS

Among non-profit American research and education services, The Blavatsky Foundation (unendowed) alone is dedicated exclusively to the purpose of promoting public knowledge of the true facts concerning the life and works of Helena P. Blavatsky (1831-1891), chief founder (in 1875) of the modern Theosophical movement and literary source of the best in present-day Occult Philosophy. From time-to-time, as circumstances require, the Foundation freely issues reports and press releases prepared as corrective to misinformation that has appeared in the Press and news media concerning Madame Blavatsky. This is one such critique. It is primarily directed to those who, now or in the future, may have need to evaluate a book, an article or a manuscript dealing in some way with questions about the career and writings of "HPB." With the current growth of public interest in the so-called Occult, such questions promise to arise with increasing frequency; and when they do, The Blavatsky Foundation-insofar as its resources permit- is always ready to marshal its unique facilities and the recognized expertise of its research department to freely provide answers to serious inquiry from the information media or publishing world. Our Founder-Secretary (see pp.48-9, the *Biographical Dictionary of Parapsychology*) has had more works published on the controversies surrounding Mme

Blavatsky than any other living historian. And upon request to our address, any Editor may obtain a free copy of the most important book yet written in her defence, *Obituary: the "Hodgson Report" on Madame Blavatsky: 1885-1960*, by Adlai E. Waterman, currently our Director of Research. (For more on this book, see page 4, below.)

The following is our analysis of one indefensible and inexcusably irresponsible attack on Mme Blavatsky. Like others of its kind, it not only libels the self-defenceless dead, in effect it wantonly denigrates the good sense and intelligence of the largest non-Judaic-Christian minority living within the American religious community, viz., the 250,000 organized Theosophists, Rosicrucians and Spiritualists who comprise only a part of those drawings some measure of inspiration from the life and teachings of Mme Blavatsky. This attack need never have been printed, had the publisher exercised so trifling and elementary a precaution as to check the reliability of the source of authority for an estimated 99-percent of its author's "facts" in this instance. As we show (p. 3, below), his "research" for this was no more than his reading a current paperback picked up from the corner-store book-rack! While, as can be seen, the author has concealed from his readers the identity of this source, this subterfuge does not relieve his publisher from the latter's responsibilities.

In his "Introduction," the author warns that "Theosophists are not going to like what I have to say about Madame Blavatsky..." This wholly beside the point; the issue is not the "likes" or "dislikes" of anyone, but simply whether the author has founded his observations and opinions on verifiable fact or on myth and falsehood. What kind of research has he done? Are his sources of information *reliable*? Is his reporting accurate and *trustworthy*? In a chapter of 44 pages the book under scrutiny gives more space to HPB than to any other "master of the occult." Certainly among the numerous attacks directed against H.P. Blavatsky during this period, this production

is the longest, most extensively detailed and most pretentious sketch of HPB newly published anywhere during the last 25 years. One can predict it will have wide and enduring circulation (already we have found a copy on a shelf at the local public library). For this-if for no other reason-it deserves more than our passing notice. And in giving it the attention it deserves, we also expose the kind of phony research and biographical fakery replete with fraudulent claptrap no self-respecting publisher needs knowingly foist upon an unsuspecting public.

We of the Blavatsky Foundation stand ready at any time to do our best to help *you* avoid making *this* kind of error.

MASTERS OF THE LIE

DODD, MEAD & COMPANY PROMOTE A BIOGRAPHICAL HOAX

DECEPTIVE ADVERTISING

AS IF TO HOODWINK UNWARY READERS, especially those who in growing numbers are turning towards things “occult,” Dodd, Mead & Company, publishers of the new book, *Masters of the Occult*, designed its advertising debut as though it were an invitation to a sympathetic discussion of “occult powers.” An audience, largely consisting of believers-in-the-occult, was (via *Fate Magazine*) promised a book about “famous people who have possessed occult powers. Among them readers will find... Helena P. Blavatsky, founder of theosophy...” But the book itself makes no concession to the possibility of “occult powers” or paranormal phenomena.

Daniel Cohen, its author and “former managing editor of *Science Digest* magazine,” is an adamant disbeliever. While counting Mme Blavatsky as one who “would almost certainly be included in anybody’s list of occult masters,” Cohen insists (p. ix) “The masters of the occult... do not possess the powers they claim.” In fact, he goes so far as to say (p. viii) that “None of these powers or phenomena are testable by means that could reasonably be defined as scientific.” This rash pronouncement not only places a preposterous limitation on human ingenuity and the capabilities of scientific method, it puts wholly beyond the pale of “Science” the findings of present-day Parapsychologists together with the cumulative experiment and investigation into ESP and PK by almost one-hundred years of Psychical Research! Although said to be “one of the speakers at an International, Conference of the Parapsychology Foundation.” Cohen does not accept even the evidence for Extra-Sensory Perception gathered by Dr. J.B. Rhine at Duke University. He concedes no more than that these “famous card guessing tests” were only the “closest

that parapsychologists have ever come to constructing a definitive series of tests of the powers they believe in..." (p. 212).

A CARICATURIST ADMIRES HIS OWN LOATHSOME MASTERPIECE

Foreshadowing his final assessment ("a cynical and thoroughly dishonest woman"), Cohen begins his chapter on Madame Blavatsky by drawing this picture:

"HELENA PETROVNA BLAVATSKY may well have been the most brilliant and audacious charlatan who ever lived. She lied, connived, and bullied her way through life on four continents. She shamelessly used and misused her most devoted friends, and was responsible for at least one suicide and innumerable ruined lives... No one who was ever closely associated with her can truthfully be said to have come out the better for it, except for those who learned her tricks and used them to their own advantage."

What is one to think of the scruples and ethical judgment of someone who, after having painted a morally-repellent portrait of a "thoroughly dishonest" and loathsome creature such as Cohen here pictures, forthwith in his next paragraph (same page, 129) proceeds to pay obeisance to his own handiwork by saying, "one cannot help but express almost unbounded admiration for 'the Old Lady'"? To judge from his next-following remarks, what he finds most admirable in this "masterpiece" of the occult he himself has conjured up, is that while it connotes a faker who "had an addiction to cheap and obvious tricks that even the credulous had trouble swallowing." Yet "the exposures never humbled her for more than a moment" but, "Rather, they seemed to inspire her to more outrageous and fantastic efforts" (pp. 129-30).

Having been provided so conveniently with this insight into the *character* of our artist, let us turn to see what kind of "cheap and obvious tricks" he himself may be up to, what "outrageous and fantastic efforts" may be found in his artistry.

A BIOGRAPHER WHO ONLY QUOTES SECOND-HAND

Passing on to his next paragraph, we come upon the first of *only three* coherent passages Cohen purports to quote from Mme Blavatsky herself. Prudent to his purpose, along with an unbending reluctance to let the reader draw upon this Occult Philosopher's own words, Cohen is too wary to give so much as a single quotation from *any* of her written teachings! But here (p. 130) he pretends to quote something "she wrote to her biographer," seven printed lines beginning. "I am repeatedly reminded of the fact that, as a public character, as a woman who, instead of pursuing her womanly duties," etc.

But Cohen is not quoting what "she wrote to her biographer..."-he is quoting from page 319 of *Priestess of the Occult*, by Gertrude Marvin Williams, a notorious book first published in 1946 by Alfred A. Knopf, and which has gained the merited reputation of being the most malicious and misleading "biography" of HPB ever published. The quotation is Mrs Williams' own published *version* of what HPB had written "to her biographer," A.P. Sinnett. The *original* (p. 145, *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett*, Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1925) reads: "I am repeatedly reminded of the fact, that, as a public character, a woman, who, instead of pursuing her womanly duties," etc. Comparison of this with the Williams version and the Cohen "quotation" reveals the 1946 "biographer" dropped the comma following "woman" in the original, and by error introduced "as" before "a woman"-*mistakes blindly and slavishly copied by Cohen in 1971.*

And this is just the beginning of Cohen's deceptive "research." The two remaining long and coherent passages he presents as quotations from (i) a letter by HPB in "the New York Graphic" (pp. 147-8) and (ii) another printed by "Solovyoff... when he published *A Modern Priestess of Isis*" (pp. 164-5) also are not from the original sources pretended but have been

lifted from the Williams book, pages 322-3 and 335-7 respectively. Comparison with the original texts (see *H.P. Blavatsky: Collected Writings*, vol. I, pp.247-9; and, V.S. Solovyoff, pp.178-81) shows that twice again Cohen has slavishly copied his latter-day mentor, right down to her gross errors. In the second instance, Williams (p. 323) mis-transcribed “302 West Forty-seventh Street” as “392 West Forty-seventh Street” and this blunder Cohen has entered on his page 148. In transcribing from Solovyoff’s quotation, Williams altered punctuation (e.g., twice changing colon to semi-colon in this portion); changed paragraphing to suit her own taste (when indenting after “my back”); and omitted words (twice again in this portion, following “fools”). And Cohen has faithfully repeated Mrs Williams’ blunders and tampering!

COHEN, A PLAGIARIST BY HIS OWN CRITERION

Again we find the same unacknowledged reliance upon Williams when the author is pretending to quote other sources besides Mme Blavatsky. Thus, on pages 140-1, in seven lines he professes to quote a “description” of HPB as given by Colonel Olcott, which in reality is a passage Cohen has lifted from page 73 of the Williams book together with its numerous errors which distinguish it from the Colonel’s real description on page 459 of the latter’s *Old Diary Leaves*, vol. 1. Mrs Williams and Cohen substitute an “A” for “a”; “long heavy” for “long, heavy”; “neck attached” for “neck, attached”; “blue enamelled” for “blue-enamelled”; “monogram in” for “monogram on the back in...” In addition to this last omission of three connecting words, Cohen abets the literary butchery by following Williams in her capricious displacement which puts “I have gone to the theatre” etc. at the close instead of (as in Olcott’s original) at the beginning of the passage! Elsewhere (p. 167), Cohen tells us that, upon the appearance of her *Isis Unveiled*, “Serious Oriental scholars were outraged by this vast and pretentious work. A California scholar, William Emmet [sic] Coleman spent years tracing

H.P.B.'s gross errors and plagiarisms, for very little of the book was original." Apparently Mr Cohen accepts Coleman's various dicta as to what constitutes plagiarism-but if so, he himself in the above-enumerated instances must be found guilty of the same literary crime. Mr Coleman (see p. 354, Appendix C of Solovyoff's book of 1895) accused Mme Blavatsky of having copied into *Isis Unveiled* "passages copied from other books without proper credit... quotations from and references to books that were copied, at second-hand, from books other than the originals... quoted in such a manner as to lead the reader to think that Madame Blavatsky had read and utilised the original works, and had quoted from them at first-hand,-the truth being that these originals had evidently never been read by Madame Blavatsky... her reading was very limited and her ignorance was profound..."

This bill of indictment (which, we may add, was never supplemented by the proof to make it a conviction) may be compared with our finding on this latest slanderer of Mme Blavatsky. Daniel Cohen gives no credit whatever to Mrs Williams either for passages lifted *verbatim* from her book and incorporated into his own, nor for the whole body of material taken from *Priestess of the Occult* and re-worked by paraphrase (thus avoiding legal prosecution for plagiarism) to make the 44-page biographical sketch of HPB to which he has put his own name!

MASTERS OF THE OCCULT, A HACK-WORK RE-HASH OF PRIESTESS OF THE OCCULT

Moreover, it is evident that in gathering his fund of "research" data from which to fashion his pillory for Mme Blavatsky and her alleged dupes, *the most Mr Cohen did was to purchase a copy of the current paperback re-issue of Mrs Williams' book, available on the nearest shopping center book-rack!* Originally published in 1946 under the (full) title, *PRIESTESS OF THE OCCULT (MadameBlavatsky)*, the main text of this book was re-issued in 1970 by Lancer Books under the *reversed* title, *Madame Blavatsky, Priestess of the Occult; and it is only under this*

later title that the book is referred to by Cohen (as final entry in his "Selected Bibliography," p. 225).

Additional corroboration of this cheapjack "research" can be seen in the fact that where the 1970 reprint by typographical error differs from the 1946 original in the quotations given above, *Cohen's book copies from the reprint and not the original* (in the passage where he says "she wrote to her biographer"-see above-, Williams in 1946 (p. 319) had "fact, that," whereas the Lancer Books reprint (p. 349) and *Cohen* (p. 130) show "fact that," etc.).

Mr Cohen's chapter on Mme Blavatsky, from first to last, has been derived directly from Gertrude Marvin Williams, and only in insignificant fraction is it anything but a hack-work re-hash of her *Priestess of the Occult*. Point-for-point, charge-for-charge, canard-for-canard, in sequence and in incident, condensed and converted into adroit paraphrase, it is Cohen copying Williams, more often than not worsening any factual data already mangled by the latter. Had the author done other than *conceal* his indebtedness to Mrs Williams, he could not have disguised the fact his "reading was very limited"-practically confined to *Priestess of the Occult*-and, consequently, it would have had to be expected that on the subject of Mme Blavatsky his "ignorance was profound" indeed.

How far this ignorance extends may be judged from his reckless declaration that since "his report was published theosophists have expended millions of words attempting to prove that Hodgson was a liar, a knave, and a fool, but the charge just will not stick" (p. 161). There is nothing to indicate that Cohen knows the least thing about the counter-charges brought against Dr Richard Hodgson (the chief "exposer" of HPB) during the last 45 years by Kingsland, Hastings, Carrithers, Vania, Waterman, and Endersby. Certainly Mrs Williams never told him anything about any of this; and none of their books in her defence can be found in Cohen's 4-

page “Selected Bibliography.” Nor does he appear to know that the most damning, documented arraignment of Hodgson ever published—including, as it does, more than half-a-hundred detailed charges of specific chicanery—, the work of Adlai E. Waterman, has now been in print for nine years and has been attacked and defended (as none before it) in the *Journal* of the Society for Psychical Research, for whose investigating Committee of 1884 Dr Hodgson acted as agent, *but during all this time no defender of Richard Hodgson has discovered and disclosed a single error or mis-statement of fact in that one book!*

DANIEL COHEN’S “EXTRAORDINARY... INACCURACY IN OBSERVATION”

But what does Mr Cohen know of the work of Richard Hodgson—any more than of Hodgson’s critics? His ignorance is profound. He writes (pp. 162-3): “Hodgson had not been oblivious to the real power of Madame Blavatsky. He ended his report with this celebrated judgment:

““For our part, we regard her neither as the mouthpiece of hidden seers, nor as a mere vulgar adventuress; we think that she has achieved a title to permanent remembrance as one of the most accomplished, ingenious, and interesting impostors of history.””

The statement Cohen here purports to quote did *not* end Hodgson’s report (his “Account,” etc., without appendices, spans pages 207-317 of vol. III, *Proceedings*, S.P.R.); nor was it *his* statement at all. On page 207, it closed the “Statement of the Committee” (pp. 201-207).

Mr Cohen’s blunder here is of a piece with his assertion on page 163 that “Hodgson did note, however, that the Colonel showed ‘extraordinary credulity and inaccuracy in observation and inference.’” This quotation too did not originate with Hodgson, *but with the Committee* (p. 205).

Besides his blundering as to the source of each of these attempted quotations, Cohen in both instances shows himself unable to copy correctly a sentence or less in print before his very eyes. In the first (from p. 207) he has through error omitted two words and put in another, as may be seen upon comparison with the original; and in the second (from p. 205), he has omitted the only punctuation mark in the portion quoted, while errantly inserting another where none was! Indeed-“extraordinary credulity, and inaccuracy in observation and inference...”!

“EXTRAORDINARY CREDULITY”-DANIEL COHEN’S ADDICTION TO THE LIES OF
GERTRUDE MARVIN WILLIAMS

In approaching the case of Mme Blavatsky, the author of *Masters of the Occult* has destroyed his own understanding-and that of his trusting readers-not only by relying almost totally upon a single “authority” but by taking as his authority the worst possible witness to the doings of HPB. Had he-or his publishers exercised even such minimal caution as to consult the standard *Cumulative Book Index*, to possibly see whether there had been made a reply to this chosen authority, its volume for 1943-1948 would have revealed immediately beneath the entry under Gertrude Marvin Williams’ name (p. 2447), another in refutation, thus listed as:

“-Carrithers, W.A. Open letter to the author of Priestess of the occult, regarding the charges against H. P. Blavatsky...”

This definitive rebuttal, *The Truth About Madame Blavatsky* (whose author currently Secretary of The Blavatsky Foundation), is a rebuttal to which Cohen’s unacknowledged “authority” (and her publisher) in writing *refused to answer, and a rebuttal that has never been challenged.*

Oblivious to research of this kind, nowhere is Cohen’s *extraordinary credulity* more apparent than in his blind, uncritical acceptance of Mrs Williams’ ridiculous fictions, lies which he does not hesitate to impose upon his reading audience. Two examples from among many will

suffice.

On page 159 he writes: “Madame Coulomb was one person with whom H.P.B. did not have to pretend. She could also be used on various errands, like delivering Mahatma letters. Her husband was clever with his hands and very useful for building the devices H.P.B. needed to produce her phenomena. That is why he was entrusted with the delicate and supersecret task of building the Shrine itself. The Shrine was a lacquered wooden cabinet, decorated with pictures of the Mahatmas, and hung from the ceiling of a tiny secret room, just off H.P.B.’s own bedroom. It functioned magnificently at first.”

Here the descriptive terms “secret room” and “hung” from “the ceiling” are derived from *Priestess of the Occult*, page 202. Dr Hodgson’s report, page 221, shows the Shrine rested on a shelf, being partially suspended by two wires (Williams mistakes *as four*); and Cohen thinks a room approximately 18 x 18 feet is “tiny” (see his *mislabeled-only* partial and reduced-reproduction of Hodgson’s “Plan of Occult Room.” etc., from which Cohen has deleted the legend giving the *scale*, thus avoiding self-exposure on this point). Bamboozled by both Williams and Hodgson, our author is unaware that, as Waterman (op. cit., p. 10) shows on Mme Coulomb’s own testimony, “building the Shrine itself” was not a “supersecret task” entrusted to M. Coulomb, for it was constructed by Deschamps, a local cabinet-maker’s shop! But Cohen, taking his cue from Mrs Williams, rambles on:

“Just before the Shrine went into operation Olcott was a restless and unhappy man. But H.P.B. led him to the secret room and he was given the full treatment. The chelas prostrated themselves, there was a smell of incense and the doors to the Shrine were flung open revealing two slender vases, and a nice note of thanks from the Mahatmas to their loyal servant Henry S. Olcott. Olcott broke down and cried.”

All this has been evolved from *Priestess of the Occult*, page 203-:

“To give Olcott a pleasant first impression of the Shrine, H.P.B. made him the hero of the occasion. Followed by a procession of solemn chelas, H.P.B. ceremoniously led the Colonel up the stairs, through her sitting room, and into the Shrine Room. Slowly the long curtains were drawn back and in the half-light of flickering wax tapers the Shrine stood revealed. Its doors were opened, incense burned. Salaams, prostrations, puja, the doors were closed... more incense and puja... again the doors of the Shrine were opened. There stood a pair of slender vases of tortoise shell and lacquer with a message that they were a token of affectionate regard from the Masters to their loyal servant Henry Olcott. The pleasure of standing in the spotlight was sufficient to enable Olcott to pretend that it was all real. Accepting the adulation of the chelas, most of whom he despised, he could forget his humiliations for the moment. Tears welling in his eyes, he hugged the vases close. His voice trembled so that he could not speak.”

But alas, the “pleasant first impression of the Shrine” with its “hero of the occasion.” the “procession of solemn chelas” and “H.P.B. ceremoniously” leading the tour up “stairs, through her sitting room,” the revelation in “the half-light of flickering wax tapers.” the burning “incense,” the “Salaams, prostrations, puja”... “more incense and puja,” the opening, closing and re-opening of “the doors of the Shrine” (a sequence which escapes Cohen, though necessary to any marvel. real or pretended)-all this is no more than simply Mrs Williams’ manufactory of falsehoods fast at work fabricating claptrap for the purpose of blackguarding Mme Blavatsky. For, as the record and Dr Hodgson show (see “Colonel Olcott’s Flower Vases.” Appendix III to Hodgson’s Account, *Op. cit.*, pp. 323-5), the “pair of tortoiseshell and lacquer vases” were received *separately* by Colonel Olcott in the presence of *two* witnesses on “May 26th,” months *after* the Shrine first “went into operation” early in 1883 (see Waterman. p. 20 and Chapter VII,

“The Occult Room Bookcase Phenomenon”) and were received by the Colonel not through the Shrine but, reports Hodgson, through a cupboard “in the north wall of the Occult Room” (designated as number “8” in his “Plan”)!

So much for the fictional Williams blather about her imaginary Colonel: “Tears welling in his eyes, he hugged the vases close. His voice trembled so that he could not speak”-or, to go one better as Cohen sees it, “Olcott broke down and cried.”

“*Triple hell!!!*”-as Beatrice Hastings might annotate it-shameless exhibitions of literary legerdemain.

On the same order is Cohen’s repetition of another Williams fable, one from pages 101-02 of her book: “The company agreed to meet again on the following Tuesday evening, September 7, when Mr. Felt would lecture on ‘The Lost Canon of Proportion of the Egyptians.’ The seventeen people present were deeply impressed...

“Olcott was enchanted... scribbled a hasty note: ‘Would it not be a good thing to form a society for this kind of study?’ H.P.B. nodded assent...

“The infant Society was named by Sotheran... Sotheran searched for a name that was different. Miracle Club seemed to him cheap... Leafing through the dictionary he found *theosophy*, an erudite and vague word; no one knew what it meant, which was perfect.”

In his own agile style, one hop this side of plagiarism, Cohen the Copier (p. 144) repeats it this wise:

“H.P.B.’s great invention, theosophy, was born, at least in name, in that eventful year of Madame, Olcott and a few friends would often gather to hear speakers on different occult subjects. One night they heard a speech on the mysteries of ancient Egypt... Olcott was particularly intrigued, and wondered if a group could be formed to study such subjects. The old

Miracle Club name seemed rather cheap... Charles Sotheran... leafed through an unabridged dictionary and came up with the word theosophy. No one knew exactly what it meant, but it had the right tone, and so the first incarnation of the Theosophical Society was formed.”

It is not evident why the founders of the Theosophical Society would be such fools so that among them “no one knew what it meant” even *after* finding the word “theosophy” in the dictionary-Cohen adds his own bit of clairvoyance: “unabridged dictionary.” But, on the vital facts, his faculties have failed him. For one thing, this use of the word “theosophy” was first suggested in Committee and Olcott, the President-Founder, tells us (op. cit., pp. 121, 132) the Committee was not appointed until September 8th, 1875. Note the date of the alleged christening, with Mme Blavatsky herself in attendance: “September 7,” 1875. Here, the Williams-Cohen accusation of collective ignorance is sheer balderdash. The best proof of this is that months previous to that time HPB got off what she later called “My first *Occult* Shot,” an article entitled “A Few Questions to ‘Hiraf,” which was published in the *Spiritual Scientist*, Boston, July 15th and 22nd, 1875 (see *H.P. Blavatsky: Collected Writings*, vol. I, pp. 101-118). This article refers both to “the angels, students of God’s great Theosophic Seminary” and to “the more modern Theosophists, at whose head was Paracelsus...”

Another hard-rock fact on which to transfix Mrs Williams’ show here of monumental research may be found on page 128 of Dr E.R. Corson’s compilation, *Some Unpublished Letters of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky*, a book published in 1929 and one of Mrs Williams’ acknowledged source references (her pp. 105, 340). The second paragraph of the second in this series of letters, one dating from February, 1875, begins:

“I am here in this country sent by my Lodge on behalf of Truth in modern spiritualism, and it is my most sacred duty to unveil what is, and expose what is not...”

“...When J became a spiritualist, it was not through the agency of the ever-lying, cheating mediums, miserable instruments of the undeveloped Spirits of the lower Sphere, the ancient Hades. My belief is based on something older than the Rochester knockings, and springs out from the same source of information that was used by Raymond Lully, Picus della Mirandola, Cornelius, Agrippa, Robert Fludd, Henry More, et cetera, etc., all of whom have ever been searching for a system that should disclose to them the ‘deepest depths’ of the Divine nature, and show them the real tie which binds all things together. I found at last, and many years ago, the cravings of my mind satisfied by this theosophy taught by the Angels and communicated by them that the protoplast might know it for the aid of human destiny.”

For any reader in quest of truth about Mme Blavatsky, the only discernible value to be found in *Masters of the Occult* is the indication on page 162 that now at last the Society for Psychical Research at least occasionally is facing up to a fact and a duty by informing inquirers, like Cohen we must presume (since one assumes he contacted the Council of that Society for the permission to reproduce the Hodgson “Plan”-or that part of it-which appears in his book), that, as regarding the 1885 SPR Committee Report condemning Mme Blavatsky, “The Society did not actually endorse the report, for the group holds no corporate views...” If so, this is another dividend accruing from Walter Carrithers’ 1967 Petition to the SPR Council asking for withdrawal of the “Hodgson Report.”

Aside from this, Daniel Cohen’s discussion of the case of Madame Blavatsky is worthless when not downright pernicious; and, with its misrepresentation of sources, its flagrant misquotations, gross errors, wholesale distortions and suppressions, and its inexcusable perpetuation of viciously contrived “incidents” and false charges, this biographical sketch is, in effect, nothing less than a fraud upon its readers, a hoax.