

*Theosophy cannot be
confined by dogmatism*



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Frontispiece by Adrian Chesterman

The fundamental question, “What is the criterion of Theosophy?” calls for an answer. Has Theosophy the power of growth, progress, and advancement in line with all new expositions of truth? In the minds of many the writings of H.P.B.² are regarded as the infallible oracles of Theosophy. But in time criticism is sure to do its work. Consequently it is necessary soon to give out a definition of it much broader, simpler, and more unequivocal than any heretofore offered.

This is in fact a request to formulate and promulgate a dogmatic statement of Theosophy as we understand it. That is, to go completely back on the genius of the Theosophical movement, which is for the destruction of dogmatism. The strength of Theosophy lies in the fact that it is not to be defined. It is the wisdom of the gods, or of nature. This means that evolution, slowly progressing, will bring out new truths and new aspects of old truths, thus absolutely preventing any dogmas or “unequivocal definitions.” Were we to make and declare a definition of Theosophy it would be only the words of those who participated in drawing it up, and not acceptable to all. And were it possible that all would accept, then would be sounded the doom of the movement. Hence the reply to the question, “What is the criterion of Theosophy?” is that it is found in each man’s perception of the Truth: therefore there is no single criterion.

If any persons regard H.P. Blavatsky’s writings as the infallible oracles of Theosophy, they go directly against her own words and the works themselves; they must be people who do not indulge in original thinking and cannot make much impression on the times.

As for the Theosophical Society, the moment it makes a hard and fast definition of Theosophy it will mark the first hour of its decay.

Inasmuch as Theosophy is the whole body of truth about man and nature, either known now or hereafter to be discovered, it has the “power of growth, progress and advancement,” since every new truth makes it clearer. But among the truths will not be reckoned at any time the definitions, dogmas, creeds or beliefs laid down by man.



¹ [This magazine was distributed free of charge to members-at-large of the Theosophical Society in America, who were invited to “send questions, answers to questions, opinions and notes upon Theosophical subjects.” Usually they were handled by the editor, Alexander Fullerton, with the assistance of Mr. Judge. Though some of the editor’s answers (signed Ans.) may have been by Judge, we include only those contributed under his own name, initials, or pen-names. — Dara Eklund, Compiler.]

² [H.P. Blavatsky]