

Henry Steel Olcott

**The Old Diary
Leaves - IV**



OLD DIARY LEAVES, Vol. IV

by Henry Steel Olcott

EDITOR'S PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION

IT is six years since the Third Series of OLD DIARY LEAVES appeared in book form, and it is nine years since the contents of the present volume were published in the pages of the Theosophist. The author passed over in 1907, and, as all who knew him well are aware, the publication of the whole of this "true history of the Theosophical Society" was a matter that lay near his heart. There still remains sufficient material to fill one, if not two, additional volumes, and it is hoped this will appear in due course, for the longer the lapse of time that separates the present membership of the Theosophical Society from its early history, the more important it is that the facts should be placed on record. For the earlier part of the story, relating to America and India, there was no living authority so well able to bear witness to the facts as the late Co-Founder of the Society. In this present volume, however, we traverse a period when, owing to the world-wide spread of the organisation, the touch of the President with the whole of the Society was not so close, and maybe there are those well qualified to write of the development of different Sections, who could effectively supplement the present history so far as their own [vi] country is concerned. But such sectional or national histories remain to be written, and in meantime the record of Colonel Olcott is here to read—"and inwardly digest".

The volume before us deals with some five years during which the writer travelled all round the world, visiting Japan twice, Europe twice, Ceylon several times; Australia, America, Burma each once, besides, making long lecturing tours in India. These were years which saw the advent of Mrs. Besant—the present President—to the Theosophical Society, and witnessed the death of Madame Blavatsky, and of her learned Hindu colleague, T. Subba Row. Work on behalf of Buddhist Unity occupied much of the writer's time and energy in his Eastern travels, while, in the West, he devoted a good deal of attention to the study of hypnotism, both in Paris and Nancy. Many useful notes on this subject are embodied in these pages.

No revision of the "Leaves" as they originally appeared has been attempted. The Editor's work is confined to one or two explanatory notes, and the

correction of typographical and a few other obvious errors.

CHAPTER I

TOURING IN INDIA

(1887)

AMONG my visitors of the next few days was that very learned Sanskrit teacher and author, Pandit Jibbananda Vidyasagara, son of the greatest of Bengali Pandits of his day, the late Taranatba Tarkavachaspati, author of the Sanskrit Lexicon, known to old member of our Society as the one who gave me the sacred thread of the Brahmin, his own gotra and mantra, thus adopting me, so far as possible under the caste rules. His son asked me to partake of food at his house the following day, which I did with pleasure. This is, I believe, a case without precedent, as I was a declared Buddhist, and was asked to sacrifice nothing in the way of religious belief as a condition of the receipt of this distinguished mark of esteem and gratitude of the Brahmins for my services in India towards the Hindu revival.

One of my staunchest Indian friends from the beginning until now is the Honorable Maharajah Sir Jotendro Mohan Tagore, whose guest H.P.B., I, and other Theosophists have been. He is a highly educated [2] and thoughtful man, a great lover of religious discussions. In common with all Hindus, he loves the ancient ideal of the spiritual life, in theory, admits its vast superiority over the life of the world. I remember a talk we had one day, during a later visit to, Calcutta, about this very subject, and the good-natured laugh I had at his expense. He had asked me in great seriousness if I could not tell him the most effectual way to reach this high level while still living. "Of course," I replied, "there is one way that can be tried by you, with a fair certainty of gaining your object." "What is it? Do tell me," he unsuspectingly asked. "Well, drive home in that splendid carriage of yours; go up to your marble reception-room, where the silver lustres, the paintings, the mosaics, and other things make it a real princely apartment; call your' lawyers and dispose of your property by gift, keeping back not so much as one jewel; then send to the bazaar and buy the orange cloths, the staff, and the water-pot of a sanyâsi, bid farewell to your family, change your name, and go out in the world as a pauper ascetic; stick to this long enough, as the Buddha did, as Dayânand Saraswati and thousands more have in our own times, and you will find ample recompense for your self-denial and your

spiritual striving.” A smile came over his refined features as he found how easily he had allowed himself to be entrapped, and he showed no annoyance when I laughed at his dilemma. But I told him, with that affectionate frankness which our long personal friendship permitted, that unless he was [3] brave enough to try the sovereign remedy for world-troubles which the Sages had prescribed, and which the experience of hundreds of generations had verified, he had better not think of treading, the Higher Path: the Buddha had said in the Dhammapada: “One is the road that leads to wealth, another the road that leads to Nirvana”; and more familiar to the Christian world is that story in St. Matthew of the rich young man who put to the Christ the very same question as my friend had just put to me, and got the same answer, with the result that “when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions”. Moreover, I told my valued friend that if I were in his place I should not run away from my wealth, but should stop and put it to the helping of the world, by which he would get further along the Path than by any amount of asceticism he might attempt. For unless, as the Hindu Shastras declare, he could come to look on gold as no more excellent than clay, the vivid recollection of his relinquished splendor would haunt him always: though he plunged into the heart of the forest, or shut himself up in a Himalayan cavern, or descended to the bottom of the sea, the very air about him would vibrate with the tinkle and chink of gold and silver coin. It is good proof of the innate sweetness of the Prince’s, character that he has borne me no ill-will for my sharp frankness. In fact, these millionaires and princes get so much sickening sycophancy that, as a rule, they relish instead of resenting plain advice which has no [4] ulterior motive. But sometimes they think you a fool to pretend to despise the idol of their lifelong worship!

On the 23rd (July) I again lectured to an over-flowing audience in the Calcutta Town Hall—whose bad acoustic qualities entitle it to be called “Orators’ Despair”—on the theme of “Social Reform on Aryan Lines”. Two more lectures were given the next day, and on the 26th I left for Darjeeling, that peerless Himalayan station whose name now recalls the awful catastrophe with which it has recently been visited as the result of a cloud burst, cyclone, and earthquake. At the time of my visit, however, it was in the height of its picturesqueness and beauty, and I had a most enjoyable time. With my host, Babu Chhatra Dhar Ghose, local manager of the Burdwan Maharajah’s estates, and President of our local T. S. Branch, I made a return call on that wonderful explorer of Tibet, Sarat Chandra Das, C.I.E., Rai Bahadur, Tibetan Interpreter to Government, etc., etc., who showed me the priceless MSS. and printed books he

had brought back from Lhasa, and introduced me to a venerable Lama-Pandit, with whose help he was compiling for Government a Tibetan-English Lexicon, which, when finished, will be his chief literary monument. At the house of my old friend, Babu Srinath Chatterji, Secretary of our Branch, we met Gyen-Shapa, a Tibetan Lama-Ascetic, who has long practised Yoga and developed certain of the siddhis. Srinath Babu had seen him that very morning, while “sitting [5] in dhârana,” i.e., meditating, rise from the ground and remain, self-supported; in the air. I visited him twice more, and, with Srinath as interpreter, managed to get a good deal of interesting information from him about Tibetan lamaseries and lamas. There is, in almost all lamaseries, a school of Yoga under an adept teacher, and the feat of self-levitation is not uncommon among them. The height to which one can rise in the air depends upon his natural temperament in part, and largely on the length of practical training. His own Teacher could rise as high as the walls of the lamasery, and several of his fellow-pupils could levitate themselves higher than himself. A strict discipline, physical and moral, must be followed, and great attention is paid to diet. Such phenomena are performed in private, vulgar display being strictly forbidden. Needless to say, the curiosity of casual travellers, and especially of the beef-eating, peg-drinking European explorer, is not gratified: search as they may, they would never see a real adept, to know him as such, as the cases of Rockhill, Captain Bower, the Due d’Orleans, and Mr. Knight¹ sufficiently attest.

Sarat Babu’s Narrative of a Journey to Lhasa in 1881-82 is one of the most interesting books of travel I have ever read. It teems with accounts of dangers faced, obstacles surmounted, life imperilled, new peoples met, and plans and projects fully achieved, yet is free from bombast and vain boasting; in this, resembling that [6] peerless book of Nansen’s, *Farthest North*³ (whose Master of Ceremonies one of our own revered Mahatmas is). After living here several months, he managed to get permission to visit Lhasa, was received by the Dalai Lama, collected a large number of the most important Buddhist works, and, surmounting innumerable obstacles on the return journey to the Sikkim frontier, reached his home on 27th December, 1882. I noticed in the shape of his head a peculiarity which struck me in Stanley, the African explorer, viz., a marked fulness of the temples over the articulations of the jaw bones, a sign to physiognomists of hardness of constitution, the power of resisting disease. Sarat Babu’s whole body conveys the impression of physical toughness, and the reading of his Report to Government after meeting him, fully corroborated my first [7] impressions in this respect. His thorough mastery of the Tibetan tongue,

helped by his semi-Mongolian type of face, enabled him to travel to Tashi-Lhunpo and Lhasa in the character of a Tibetan Doctor. I had ample proof of his fluency myself when he served me as interpreter in my talk with the learned Lama-Pandit and with the head cooly, who had taken our beloved Damodar from Darjeeling to the distant station in Sikkim, where he was to meet with the high functionary who had promised to take him safely to the place where our Mahatma was to take charge of him as resident pupil.

On 1st August I left delightful Darjeeling and its bracing air, and plunged down the mountain by steam tram to the terminus station of Siliguri, where the mercury stood so high as to make the contrast very trying. I lodged and had my meals at the station that evening and the next two days, and enjoyed the novel experience of lecturing on "Theosophy and Religion" to a good audience on the railway platform! I then proceeded towards Noakhally, in the Gangetic Delta; but was stopped at Khulna, where I had to wait for the boat. Being a perfect stranger in those parts I had anticipated a quiet and uneventful evening, but a clerk who had read my name on my portmanteau, having spread the news, my room at the dâk bungalow was soon crowded with educated Bengalis, who stopped until 10 o'clock to talk philosophy, after which they went home to dine, and left me free to do the same. Rising at 4 the next morning, I left by the [8] boat for Barisâl, and after a pleasant sail down the river Bairab, which reminds one of the low-banked rivers of Ceylon, I got there at 5 p.m. and was put up at the dâk bungalow. Again I was caught by some local Hindu gentlemen, and pressed to give a lecture at 7 p.m. in the large schoolhouse. It only needed the sending around of tom-tom beaters and criers to collect a crowd, as I found on entering the hall, where fully a thousand people had gathered. My discourse was interpreted into Bengali by a Calcutta graduate named Aswini Kumar Dutt, with a fluency and fire that amazed me. I have always ranked him among the three or four very best interpreters I have had in India.

The Noakhally boat failing to arrive, I was obliged to stop over at Barisâl. My rooms were crowded all day with inquirers, and I had to give a second lecture the next evening to an audience quite as large as the first one. It was on emerging from the hall, and while standing in the verandah, that I heard the reverberations of that mysterious phenomenon called the "Barisâl Gun". Not one of the explanations thus far put forth by scientific men seems to explain the wonderful noises. Elsewhere⁴ have discussed at sufficient length the Barisâl Gun, and the several scientific and quasi-scientific attempts at explanation. I think their

palpable insufficiency was shown. For the benefit of later subscribers, it may be briefly stated that the “Gun” sounds are identical as to loudness [9] and vibratory quality with those of a cannot-shot. They have the same peculiarity of suddenness of explosion without any premonitory rumbling to prepare the listener for what is to come. In my case the first explosion came so suddenly and so loud that I thought a gun had been fired in the village, and within a few hundred yards of me. My first supposition was that an 8 o’clock gun was habitually fired there as at other stations where there are military cantonments, but on looking at my watch I found 8.45, so that could not be the case. Presently a second report came, and then, at short intervals, five more, making seven in all. Upon asking what this all meant I was, for the first time in my life, told about the “Barisâl Gun”. Bearing in mind the physical peculiarity of the sounds, the reader will be amused to learn that the following explanations have been gravely offered: the action of the tide (on the beach of the Bay of Bengal, 65 miles away); the surf; the crumbling of river banks (alluvial and only a few feet high); the crash of falling cliffs (non-existent); the impact of wind in caves or hill corners (non-existent anywhere near Barisâl); echoes reverberating from rock boards (“in the mind’s eye, Horatio”); the escape of steam puffs from submarine volcanoes; electrical detonations. Even the explosion of fireworks at local weddings has been mentioned, but not the bursting of soda-water bottles—a last hint which is respectfully offered without charge to materialistic scientific guesser. While it is easy to say what the phenomenon is not, [10] it is not at all easy to say what it is, but I am best satisfied with the theory that the Barisâl Gun is due to the action of elementals, and has some relation to an event or events which probably occurred in that vicinity long ago, certainly beyond the memory of the present generation, for old men told me that they had been hearing them ever since their boyhood. Sometimes they occur in the rainy season, sometimes not, as in the present case, when the day had been sunshiny, and the atmosphere seemed too clear and the stars too bright to tempt one to adopt the theory of an electric disturbance. I noted the fact that I heard seven distinct explosions at regular intervals, and that the number was said to be unusual; which to my mind, as an occultist, seemed to mark a purpose on the part of some controlling Intelligence to give me a friendly salute. And no more guns were heard that night, nor the next day or night, nor so long as I was in the place. I tried two or three times to have a serious talk with H. P. B. about the matter, but each time something happened to interrupt our conversation. She once said it was an exhibition of the power of the “Sons of Fohat,” and referred me to The Secret

Doctrine, but her ideas seemed to me so vague that I at last put the subject aside, and there it lies ready for the study of Mr. Leadbeater and his fellow-students of the Finer Forces of Nature. A couple of years or so ago, the matter was referred to in Nature by Dr. Francis Darwin, who asked for information. I sent him the back numbers of the Theosophist in question, [11] “but have heard nothing, from him since. Perhaps he was shocked by the other contents of our heterodox publication.

The Noakhally boat still not arriving, I was able to form a local Branch with excellent members under the name of the Barisâl T.S. It finally transpired that the missing boat had been disabled and was lying up for repairs, so I had to give up my Noakhally visit for the present and return to Khulna, whence I continued on to Calcutta, reaching there on the 12th. The next morning I took boat for Midnapur, but my visit was cut short by the steamer grounding in the canal and having to wait for the next tide, so the two lectures on the programme had to be given at one public meeting. I spoke on “The Spiritual Life” and “Karma,” and I was kept on my legs two hours and a half. A special discourse to Hindu boys was given on the next morning, and at 8 p.m. I left by the same steamer for Calcutta. On the 17th I lectured at the Oriental Institute, and the same evening sailed by the “Euphrates” for Chittagong. She proved to be as buoyant as a cork, and rolled so badly that we had scarcely a moment of quiet. We reached our destined port on the third day and a grand reception was given me. The principal native gentlemen came aboard to welcome me, and the jetty presented a very gay appearance with the picturesquely dressed crowd that had come to cheer their white friend. On the 21st, at 7 a.m., I lectured to 1,500 people on [12] “Theosophy,” and at 5 p.m., to as large a crowd, on “Body, Mind, and Soul”. There was a third lecture on the 22nd and some admissions to membership. The next day I went by country rowing-boat to Pahartali, an island village 16 miles distant, the inhabitants all Buddhists, of the race of Maghs. The house assigned to me was a hut of bamboo frame and matting sides, the roof thatched with grass. The Mahamuni T.S. was formed the next day, with Babu Krishna Chandra Chowdry, a well-known leader and reformer of that community, as Secretary and Treasurer. The Maghs are the descendants of Arakanese fathers and Bengali mothers, the country having been conquered by an invading army from Arakan, who remained there and settled down. My lecture at Pahartali was given in a shamiana, or open pavilion, which has great advantages in tropical climates, where as much air as possible is indispensable for comfort. Many people present, I was told, had come in from distances of 30 and 40 miles to hear what I had to

say about their religion. There is a gigantic image of the Buddha in the local temple, which has a royal diadem on its head, a feature I had never seen in any of my travels in Buddhist countries. True, one sees crowned images of the Bodhisattva, i.e., the entity who finally evolved up to the Buddhahood, in the Kapilavastu birth, but never of the perfected World-Savior. I, myself, have an artistically modelled brass statuette of the Bodhisattva as King of the Tusita heaven, sitting in Padmasana, which was given me by the Tibetan Envoy to the [13] Indian Government, who was here some years ago, and who had received it from the Dalai Lama himself. There is a copper plate beneath the figure, on which the conventional symbol of the Diamond Throne is engraved, and behind it, in the hollow of the image, a roll of Tibetan paper on which the Dalai Lama wrote with his own hand some prayer-charms or mantras for the protection of the handsome young envoy from all harm from evil-wishers. This figure wears many jewels, on head, neck, breast, upper arm, wrist, waist, and ankles—huge ones in the old Indian style. The hair is built up in a towering mass with pendent locks hanging over the shoulders and down to the upper arm. The hands are laid together in the lap, and support a flowery ornamented vase or statuette, showing the “Three Gems” of Buddhist symbology. Altogether it is a precious curio for our little museum at Adyar.

As Noakhally could not be reached by boat from Barisâl, and as the earnest friends there had well deserved an official visit, I went thither from the other side of the Delta, driving in an open spring-cart through a heavy rain, through a tiger-infested country part of the way, and going on thence all night in a common springless ox-cart, so sore in the body that to sleep I had to stick my legs out in front as far as my knees. At 4 a.m. we got to Mahajan’s Haut, where we took a heavy country boat up the river, in which I had twenty-eight hours for sleeping and resting before reaching Noakhally at 11 a.m. on the 27th.

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My reception was extremely cordial, and I was most hospitably entertained. At 3 p.m. I received and replied to addresses in Bengali and English at the T.S. Hall, a neat structure in bamboo poles and chinks, or screens, and thatched roof, which had cost the Branch Rs. 600. A lecture was given at 4.30 under the chairmanship of the local (European) Magistrate, in the Native Theatre, and in the evening a representation was given of that touching old Indian drama, Prahlada Charita, by amateurs who displayed real histrionic talent. But my self-possession was sorely tried by a Prelude composed in my honor, which

embodied a striking incongruity. The curtain rose upon a forest scene, in which was seen an ancient Rishi (Bharata Rishi) sitting in deep meditation beneath a tree. Anon are heard joy-songs, and from the two sides enter a number of Chelas, who cluster about the Yogî and recall him to consciousness. Asked why they are singing so joyously, he is told that "Colonel Olcott, the friend of the Aryan religion, has come to the place". The Yogî answers that this is the fulfilment of ancient prophecy and the dawn of a brighter day for India. He then rises, takes a flower-wreath from the hand of a disciple (sishya), comes forward to the footlights, and beckoning to me to approach, throws the garland over my neck, uttering a blessing at the same time. The, comical anachronism involved seemed to have struck no one but myself and the European Magistrate sitting beside me. But the intention to show the national love for myself was so evident that the inclination to [15] laugh was overcome by a feeling of gratitude for this friendly ceremony.

Another lecture was given on the next day and my rooms were crowded with inquirers, of whom a number, including Nobin Chandra Sen, the great Bengali poet, joined the Society. At night I embarked on the steamer at Taktakally after a drive of 6 miles, and on the 29th got to Barisâl, slept on the Khulna-Barisâl boat, spent the next day on the river, took train for Calcutta, and got there at 5 a.m. on the 31st.

On 1st September there was a meeting of the Ladies' T.S. at the house of Mr. Janaki Nath Ghosal, a very well-known and influential Calcutta gentleman, whose wife I have spoken of elsewhere as one of the loveliest and most intellectual women of modern India. Miss Anna Ballard, the American journalist, then living at Calcutta, accompanied me.

One morning I went with my host, our long-trying, faithful colleague, Babu Norendronath Sen, to the Esplanade to see him feed his pets. I have often seen people in the public gardens of Paris feeding the birds, but Norendro Babu feeds every morning the cows, crows, mynas, and other birds, the fishes in the ponds, and the ants which swarm in the grass of the wide Esplanade. The animals and birds all seem to know his carriage, and gather together to his usual feeding-ground, and the fishes swim towards him in the pond. This thing has been going on for years, quietly and unostentatiously, unheralded by the reporter, unnoticed by the crowd. One could hardly find a [16] stronger example of the tender compassion sometimes felt by men towards the lower creatures.

My long tour was now nearing its close, the only portion to be covered being

the Coromandel Coast. On 4th September I sailed in the B. I. steamer "Khandalla" for Bimlipatam, and after stops at Gopalpur and Calingapatam, got there on the evening of the 8th. Landing on the 9th, I found the Maharajah of Vizianagram's landau waiting for me and drove to his capital, where the Dewan, P. Jagannathraz, gave me hospitality. The next day I was kindly received at the Palace by His Highness, who put a gilt garland around my neck and engaged in a long discussion on religious matters. He presided at my lectures on that day and the next, and kept me talking with him privately in his library from 3 until 8 p.m. on the question of the existence of the soul, about which he seemed rather skeptical. Before my departure from Vizianagram, he sent me a generous present for the Headquarters expense account, and wished me every success for our movement. His carriage took me to the seaport of Vizagapatam, a distance of 36 miles. My host there was Mr. Jaggarow, son of the late A. V. Nursingrow, F.R.A.S., F.R.G.S., the owner of a very fine, well-equipped astronomical observatory, which since his death has been given to the Government of India, and is now one of the chief meteorological and astronomical stations. At his house I assisted at an alchemical experiment by a native doctor named Bulushu Soobbiah,

[17] who claimed to be able to reduce beaten silver to a white powder, for use as a medicine. Not having any silver ready, we decided to experiment on tin. The process was as follows: He made on a piece of canvas a layer of margosa leaves, half an inch thick; on that was a layer of the same thickness of saffron; on this the tin was placed, and the whole was then rolled into a sort of sausage and tied around with stout twine. This was burnt for two hours in a heap of dried cowdung fuel, four cubits in circumference and one cubit high. Upon taking out the "sausage" we found that some of the tin was calcined, but most of it only melted. The alchemist said that the fuel was not of good quality, else all the tin would have been calcined.

Rajah Gajapati Row, a well-known figure in the Madras Presidency, lives at Vizagapatam, and we exchanged friendly visits.

The two lectures I gave in this place attracted very large audiences, including an unusually large number of Europeans, who seldom attend Hindu meetings of the sort on account of the marked antipathy of the two races. On my way from the shore to the offing to board the "Ethiopia," on which I had booked my passage to Cocanâda, I had a narrow escape from what might have been a tragic accident. The surf Tan very high, and three big rollers had to be crossed in the

masalah boat in which I was. These boats are famous for surf work along the Indian coast, being not nailed or pinned, but tied together with coir (cocoanut fibre) yarn and caulked in the seams.

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Ordinarily they are very safe, and I have made many trips in them between ship and shore. But this time, after we had passed the first roller and were atop of the second, the boat's prow was lifted so high up and the roller slipped from under her so quickly that she came down on the water with a tremendous blow, and one of the planks split from the cutwater to the bilge and the water began to pour in. All the rowers but one were, flung into the bottom and lay there in a mess together. I shouted to them to pick themselves up and go back to their oars, tore the calico covers off the stern cushions and made them stuff them into the crack, set half the men to bailing while the other half tugged desperately to get the boat's head around, did my best with the steering oar, put a safety-belt on Babula, and had him tie the handle of my cashbox to the boat, so that if she foundered there would be a rather better chance of recovering it and the Society's rupees inside, which were my chief concern just then. We finally got the boat around, rode over the roller a second time, and, by dint of very great exertions, just managed to beach her, half full of water. Another boat being soon procured, I started again, and this time reached the steamer without mishap. What made the accident most serious of all was that the sea swarmed with sharks, of which I saw some on our way out to the vessel.

Cocanâda, the birthplace of T. Subba Row, was reached the next morning, and after the usual lectures, receptions, and admissions to membership, I continued [19] my journey southward by canal, landing at Rajah-mundry, where I found a deep interest in our movement to prevail. During my stay of four days in the place, crushing audiences attended my lectures, in spite of the fact that the committee charged for admission, in the hope of avoiding the great rush of the first day. A large and strong Branch was formed, with one of the best men in India as President.

On the 24th I left by special boat for Bezwada, and spent the whole day and half the next slowly moving down the Godavery Canal. Friends intercepted me at Ellore, the beginning of the Krishna Canal, and induced me to lecture and to form a new Branch, under the name of the "Gupta Vidya T. S." Bezwada was reached on the 28th, and stopping there two days I organised a Branch, after which I moved on by bullock-cart to Guntur, an important place, the scene of

much missionary activity. Among my callers after my first lecture was the Rev. Mr. S., a Presbyterian missionary, whose case was a very hard one. For two years past he and his wife had been persecuted by the other missionaries, their pay stopped, and every effort made to drive them out of India, because, on discovering that the senior missionary had been behaving immorally with some of the women converts, they had tried their best to have him tried and removed. The policy of expediency, however, prevailed over that of justice, and these two honest Christian workers had been reduced to the direst straits. He had worked at carpentering and other odd jobs and she had done [20] sewing, but there were days when they had to go hungry. The Hindu community held the worthy couple in respect and told me these facts, so I had my cook prepare a good dinner for them, and sent it over and invited myself to come and help eat it. They received me with affectionate kindness as a compatriot and sympathiser, and Mrs. S. expressed the wish that I might leave the error of my beliefs and join them as a missionary; a proposal which made me laugh, and make them the counter-proposal that they should disconnect themselves from a party where such iniquities could prevail, and join me as earnest Theosophists!

On 3rd October I presided at the anniversary of our local Branch's Sanskrit School, which was established by the good Mr. C. Sambiah Chetty, and had then 193 pupils, who had gained the unusual proportion of 97 and 82½ per cent of passes, as against the average of 75 per cent. The same day I left for Bezwada by bullock-cart, and thence went on by special boat on the canal to Masulipatam, where I arrived on the 5th. My reception here was enthusiastic. The boat was bedecked with flowers, I landed under a leaf-pandal or canopy, there were ornamental arches, complimentary addresses, and jubilation generally. That evening I lectured to 3,000 people, among whom were all the local padris (missionaries), and to another monster audience on the next day, after which I formed the Masulipatam T. S. On the 7th I was honored with visits by the Revs. Stone, Clarke, and Peel, of the Church of England Mission, and enjoyed a friendly [21] talk of three hours with them. An address to Hindu boys about their religion closed my public labors, and my last night at Masulipatam was spent on my mats on the stone quay, where I slept the sweet sleep of the weary. On the 8th I embarked on the B. I. coaster "Umballa," got caught in the tail of a cyclone, and had a nasty wet and comfortless time of it. But the next morning we were off Madras Harbor, and I had hoped that my troubles were over for the year, but the sea was so rough that we could not enter, and had to steam off and on the whole day, in sight of our haven, yet unable to reach it. The next morning, however, I

got ashore, and with a feeling of immense relief saw once more our lovely Adyar, on the 262nd day from that on which the tour began. Whom should I find there but Mr. Alexander Fullerton, of New York, who had come to help me as Private Secretary. How that scheme prospered will be seen in the next chapter. Meanwhile, the reader who has followed me throughout my journeyings will appreciate the significance of the entry of October 11th in my Diary—"Blessed rest".

CHAPTER II

THE FEARS OF H. P. B.

(1887)

THOSE who follow me through all these incidents of past years are virtually watching the building up of the structure of the Theosophical Society, course by course, from its foundation-stone to its finials; the slow but sure erection of the modern temple of Theosophy. They know, as outsiders do not, who were its architects and builders, and what it would have been without them.

When I look through my papers of those days of stress and storm, and read the letters written me from exile by Madame Blavatsky, the solemn feeling comes over me that the binding mortar of its blocks was stiffened by the blood of her heart, and in her anguish were they laid. She was the Teacher, I the pupil; she the misunderstood and insulted messenger of the Great Ones, I the practical brain to plan, the right hand to work out the practical details. Under the Hindu classification, she would be the teaching Brahmin, I the fighting Kshattriya; under the Buddhist one, she would be the Bhikshu, I the working Dyâkya or [23] Laic. It is painful beyond words to read her correspondence from Europe, and see how she suffered from various causes, fretting and worrying too often over mares' nests. Out of the sorest grievances I select the defection of T. Subba Row; the admission into the Theosophist by the Sub-Editor (whom she had herself appointed) of articles which she considered antagonistic to the trans-Himalayan teachings; the refusal of Subba Row to edit the Secret Doctrine MSS., contrary to his original promise, although she had had it type-copied at a cost of £80 and sent me for that purpose; his wholesale condemnation of it; the personal quarrels of various European colleagues; the war between Mr. Judge and Doctor Coues in America; the threatened renewal of persecution against her if she returned to India, as we begged her to do; her lack of time for writing for a great Russian review; from which she derived the money for her support⁵ and the consequent necessity for depending upon the liberality of some London friends; and, lastly, the discovery of the black treachery of two Western women whom she had regarded as her friends. She unravelled plots to oust us, to turn me away from Adyar and put another in my place, and to use her as the centre of a new Society to be formed in Europe, and again and again warned me to be on my guard.

Undoubtedly there was some [24] such scheme latent in the minds of some, but it never came to aught, for two reasons, viz., (1) she refused point-blank to lead any Society that did not recognise Adyar as its central head; and (2) I was not the sort of person to be easily driven away from a post where I had been put on guard by the Masters, and by them bidden to hold it to the end of my life. She begs me, on the score of the “real, more than fraternal affection” she has for me, her “internal, not external, loyalty” to me as her “colleague, chum, and co-worker in Master’s work,” to break up the Indian part of the conspiracy. In another letter she writes: “I love you: more than anyone on earth save Master, my friendship and brotherly affection for you are eternal; and if you believe me capable of going back on you, let alone the T. S., then—you are a—.” Her use of the word “eternal” has a deeper meaning than appears on the surface, as those who have traced back the mutual relations of us two in past lives (both men in them all) will understand. Suffice it to say that this is not the first time that we have been closely associated in the evolutionary paths of our two entities. One day, in despair on the discovery of a case of treachery which had nearly cost her the friendship of some of our ablest colleagues, she writes that here is one more case going to prove that we two ought to place absolute trust in no third party whomsoever, but to stick together all the stronger as each new case of disloyalty shows itself.

In answer to my protest against her taking up the editorship of the projected new magazine, Lucifer, [25] while still nominally editor of the Theosophist,⁶ she assures me most earnestly that it shall never be allowed to hurt our Magazine, but will be rather a “supplement to it,” and sent me a joint note from the founders of the Theosophical Publishing Company that the scheme “emanated from members of the London Lodge who wish to see the movement active in England, Europe, and the West generally,” and circulate the teachings which had been given them. She wrote me that to start Lucifer and publish The Secret Doctrine, a Theosophical Publishing Company, with a subscribed capital of £1,500, had been formed and registered. As, regarded her return to India, she had no heart for it if Subba Row was to be her enemy, so much had she loved and respected him; and, besides, it had been reported to her through third parties that if she returned the Government would send her to prison on some paltry pretext. This was the sheerest nonsense, but she did not realise it, so positive had been the correspondents (not Hindus, of course) of her informants. So there she was, hoping and yearning to be allowed to come back to, as she writes, at least die in, India,⁷ yet unable to get out of her London engagements, torn by conflicting

emotions, made almost wild by the tone of my letters, which were sometimes very harsh—as I, too, had enough to drive a more nervous man crazy—and suffering [26] from mortal diseases which made life a burden. Yet through all, like the faithful sentinel of Pompeii, she stuck to her duty, passed many of the twenty-four hours at her desk, reconciled enemies, made new friends enthusiastic, and, little by little, poured into receptive minds the sublime teachings of which she was the channel. Ah! cruel world, when shall you have another Helena Petrovna to martyrise!

One very sore trouble at this time was an internal agitation within the body of the London Lodge, two factions having sprung up, under the leading of some of our strongest people. An energetic group, sharing the views of the Founders as to the necessity for carrying on a vigorous public propaganda, clustered about H. P. B., while what might be called the conservative party held aloof. The uneasiness kept H. P. B. in a state of nervous excitement, which is reflected in her letters to me. Finally, a party of fourteen of the younger persons joined to form the since world-famous Blavatsky Lodge, the choice of the title being meant as a public protest of loyalty to her whose name had been so tarnished in the Coulomb-Missionary plot. Writing on 25th May (1887) from Maycot, she says: “We have fourteen of the best of the members who have now formed a new Lodge and, my protests notwithstanding, have called it the Blavatsky Lodge of the T. S.”; and later, she writes: “The Blavatsky Lodge (for which please send a charter, as it is already announced in the papers) met last night, the 7th July, at T.’s beautiful villa.”

[27]

But we must return to Mr. Alexander Fullerton, whose arrival at Adyar was noticed at the end of the last chapter. I had never seen him before—in the body—but knew him for one of the best and most honorable and unselfish men in the “Aryan” Branch of our Society. We had grown so rapidly and the volunteer staff at Headquarters was so small, and duty so imperiously required me to devote the greater part of each year to travel, that I could not help letting our foreign correspondence fall into arrears. All constitutional authority then centring at Adyar, it was reasonably expected that from thence teachings would flow out to our distant groups of sympathisers. In point of fact, however, there was nothing of the kind; we received them as members, credited their fees, issued their charters and diplomas, and then had to leave them to swim for themselves. Our literature was then very scanty, our travelling lecturers few: there was no Annie

Besant nor Lilian Edger to fire their hearts with zeal and enrapture their ears with “word-perfect” discourses. I needed, above all, a Private Secretary, and, through Mr. Judge, this came to the knowledge of my compatriots, and Mr. Fullerton offered his services free of cost. He had been at Adyar six days when I arrived from my long northern tour, and I found him in a most uncomfortable state of mind. Instead of Adyar giving him the “blessed rest” it did me, it drove him frantic with its monotonous calm. He was like the naval engineer who cannot sleep when his engine stops, and he declared that if he [28] should stop there another month he should fear for his mental balance. It was a queer case for me, for while my dear colleague felt wretched away from the roar of New York streets, I was happiest when my long journeyings ended and I could have the absolute peace of Adyar. However, one man cannot feel for the other, and he is wise who acts accordingly. Mr. Fullerton stayed with me until the 13th, and then departed for Bombay and the mail steamer homeward, after an experience of nine days of our silence and our Spartan fare; for he was a Philadelphian, and I doubt if any native of that town of fat living and peerless house-keeping can be long content to domicile elsewhere, however resigned he may force himself to seem. It was I who urged him strongly to return to New York and help Judge build up our American movement, for I foresaw the utter hopelessness of his trying to fit into our Indian frame. I feared the worst might happen, and he was too valuable a worker to waste. He had been appointed a Delegate from American Branches to our Convention, so he left with us an official greeting and Report to read for him. In it he says: “I much regret that my sudden departure from India, necessitated by the state of my health, obliges me to leave in the hands of the Secretary a report which I should otherwise offer in person. Having come to India to place my services as Private Secretary at the disposal of the President, I was commissioned to act as delegate... After a stay at Adyar of little more than a week, my steadily increasing ill-health [29] compelled me to reluctantly abandon my post and to leave India” (Report 12th Convention, T.S., 1888.) It did not strike either of us then, as it does me now, that he was permitted to come to India just for him to get in touch with us, to take a plunge, as it were, into its all-potent aura so as to impregnate him with the occult influence, and then hurried back to work, as he has ever since then worked, with quenchless ardor and loyalty for the Great Idea; even when most of those he then followed as leaders fell off and became foes, he was “faithful found among the faithless”. Surely the ways of the Unseen Ones are inscrutable.

The regular weekly meeting of the Executive Council was held on the Sunday

after my return, and, after a peaceful session, adjourned without a row, contrary to the expectations of some, as the strained relations of H. P. B. with two of the members made the more timid ones very nervous. I felt the strain at once, but managed things so as to prevent the hatching of mischief. Mr. Oakley having declared that he knew the Police had special orders to watch us and were keeping us under close espionage, I at once took up the gauntlet, and said I should call on the Police Commissioner the next day and bring him to breakfast. I had to laugh when a Hindu colleague came to me after the adjournment, laid his hands on my shoulders, and said: “You always bring peace!” and fell to sobbing. “Capital idea,” I exclaimed; “I shall adopt this as my motto—Ubi sum ibi pax!”—a good one for a P.T.S., it would seem.

[30]

As promised, I did bring Colonel Weldon, Inspector General of Police, to breakfast a couple of days later, and had to almost force him to look at our books, including our Membership Roll. He said he had no such special orders as I spoke of, and he was perfectly satisfied that our Society had no political character whatever. We were not under suspicion, and somebody had been telling me an untruth. But I determined not to stop there. From our landing in India, eight years before, neither H. P. B. nor I had, save while at Simla, even left a card at a Government House, nor curried favor. It now seemed to me that perhaps we had made a mistake, and by keeping aloof from Europeans had made possible the spread among Hindus of such stupid rumors as the above: I would call on the Governor. So, a little later, I was granted an audience by Lord Connemara, and we spent an hour in friendly talk about Theosophy and our Society. He expressed a wish to read some of our literature, so I sent him some. The next day came an invitation to a dance at Government House, and since then I have been on the “Government House List,” i.e., am recognised as “respectable,” and receive the official cards regularly to all the important functions. To keep myself en évidence, I always show myself there for a half-hour at least, and so the last vestige of constraint between the Government and ourselves has disappeared.

One of H. P. B.’s groundless worries was that, as she was the registered Editor and half owner of the Theosophist, it was possible for her to be put into an extremely [31] awkward position if her Sub-Editor should take it into his head to insert, while I happened to be one my travels, some paragraph of a seditious character. He being irresponsible, the whole legal responsibility would fall on

her shoulders, and if a criminal case were instituted it would prevent her from returning to India. She begged me to put my name on the cover as Editor, and to make the corresponding change in the registry. So I did this latter on 1st November (1887), and thus relieved her of her anxiety.

Repairs and constructions, the buying of books for the Library, and other domestic matters took up a good deal of my time. We have excellent chances at Madras for buying books at nominal prices, as there are many book sales throughout the year; some of the large British booksellers get rid of their surplus stock in this way, and there are always sales of private libraries being held. I have bought books worth £25 for less than the same number of rupees, and I do not think I have had to pay even as much as a rupee each on the average for the several thousand volumes I have put on the shelves of the Adyar Library. As for our 3,000 or so of old palm-leaf MSS., we have got them for nothing or next to nothing by the kind help of our South Indian members.

About this time the learned Pandit N. Bhashyacharya, whom I had appointed Pandit of the Adyar Library, made a visit of inspection to the Government Oriental Library in Madras. He reported that there were 4,000 MSS there, but prophesied that within a [32] very few years our collection would surpass it. It has not even yet (in 1899) got so far as to do that as regards numbers, but we have more rare and valuable ancient works, and our collection is said to be, on the whole, a better one. In the Government Library there are hundreds of MSS. of books which are now available in print, such as Râmâyana and Mahâbhârata, and consequently the olas are of comparatively little antiquarian value. When we realise the White Bequest, we shall easily double the size of our collection, and within a short time. Meanwhile, the Library is rapidly and steadily growing; and when we are in a position to organise our contemplated staff of Pandits, copyists, and translators, the collection will be quite big enough to keep them busy. As soon as may be, I hope to begin the regular issue of texts and translations of ancient classics, for gift and exchange with other libraries and learned societies, gifts to poor Pandits and Orientalists, and sale to regular subscribers. What a pity that Mr. White could not have lived to see how much good his bequest will do!

On 24th November Pandit Bhashyacharya and I left for Bangalore to fulfil engagements for lectures. He spoke once in Telugu, once in Tamil, and, on the 30th, lectured an hour and a half in Sanskrit as fluently as if it were his own vernacular. This was to an association of Sanskrit. Pandits especially, but a large audience of Hindus listened to him with the closest attention. I gave several

lectures in English, admitted many candidates to membership, presided at the [33] Anniversary celebration of our local Branch, and received daily roomfuls of inquirers. On 2nd December I was back again at Adyar, and resumed the usual round. My little compilation of Golden Rules of Buddhism, which I sent to the High Priest Sumangala for official approval, was now given to the printer and published, as also was Pandit Bhashyacharya's Visishtadvaita Catechism.

At a Government House function on 12th December I met the Hon. George N. Curzon, eldest son of the Earl of Scarsdale, who was on one of his long journeys to the East, and who seemed greatly interested in us and our ideas. He came over the next day to see our Library, and we had another long talk on Theosophical matters, to our mutual satisfaction apparently. I formed a very high opinion of his character and abilities; and now that he is back in India as Baron Curzon of Kedleston, in the post of Viceroy, this estimate has been amply borne out by his speeches and actions. Certainly, he bids fair to be the best Governor-General we have ever had, taking him all in all. When his appointment was announced in London I wrote him a friendly note of congratulation, and was very glad to learn in response that he kept a pleasant recollection of his visit and our discussions. Since I have been in India—say, twenty years—we have had no one to compare with him, in my opinion. He would make a splendid Theosophist. Let us hope he will when he retires from politics.

[34]

Among the events of the month was a flying visit, from London of Mrs. Cooper Oakley to her husband, and her departure on the 21st. On the same day the carpenters, finished the shelving in the Library and we began to transfer the books there. The first one placed on the shelves was Isis Unveiled, as being the pioneer of all our Theosophical literature.

The delegates to the Convention now began arriving, and soon the whole of our house-room was occupied, It is always a strange sight to European friends to see the place filled at night by camping Indian Delegates. Each brings his sleeping-mat and rug and his pillow, and makes his choice of his share of floor-area to spread them on. By 10 o'clock every corner is occupied, the lights are reduced to a minimum, and the snorers make music for the rest. I have in mind two or three of these trombone-players who are entitled to the championship medal. At times when sitting at my desk upstairs in our vast house, I have heard such a row downstairs that I thought there must be quarrelling, and have gone down to suppress it; but it has proved to be only our champions, lying on their

backs with open mouths, and doing their best to break up that Adyar silence which was so uncomfortable to Mr. Fullerton!

The Maharajah of Durbhunga (F.T.S.) played us a scurvy trick by telegraphing an offer to give us Rs. 25,000 in one lump sum instead of his usual donation of Rs. 1,000 per annum, as the larger sum, if put at 4 per cent interest, would yield us that amount in [35] perpetuity. But he never paid either it or even the yearly thousand thereafter! Yet his public charities amounted to an enormous sum during the course of his life. What was his reason for his faithlessness towards us he never explained.

The autumn monsoon rains should, by good rights, be over by the second week in December, but this year (1887) they altered their programme. On the 25th it rained heavily all day, the next day “this fearful storm continues and upsets our calculations sadly,” on the third the river ran bank-full and the grounds were flooded. This caused the greatest inconvenience to the Delegates, who had to go to some distance from the house for their meals and bathing, yet nevertheless we had sixty-seven at the opening. Leadbeater and Dharmapala arrived from Ceylon on the 29th, and the Convention went off very well. A very large Crowd attended the Anniversary celebration in town on the 28th. Before the adjournment of the Convention, 127 Delegates had registered. The Indian National Congress, a political body, met in Madras this year; and as most of its leading men ‘were members of our Society, their absence from Adyar injuriously affected the numerical strength at our Convention. By the last day of the year all had gone, and so closed a fruitful and important chapter of our history. During the twelve month we had published 28 books, pamphlets, and magazines, added 25 new Branches, and largely increased our membership. On the 31st of December, after deducting 4 charters as lapsed, we had 133 [36] living Branch charters, geographically distributed as follows:

India 96; Burma 3; Ceylon 8; England 2; Scotland 1; Ireland 1; France 1; Germany 1; U.S.A. 13 (7 newly formed); Greece 1; Holland 1; Russia 1; West Indies 2; Africa 1; Australia 1. These figures show how wide-spread our influence had become, how many seed-beds of thought had been established. In the President’s annual address was given a historical résumé and explanation of the original constitution of the Society and its modification to keep pace with its expansion from one small group at New York to a world-covering body, with Branches to be counted by scores and members by thousands. It concludes with these words, which, for the benefit of new members, may profitably be quoted

here:

“This is a Society without means, without patronage, with social prejudice arrayed against it, and vested interests its natural foes; a Society which appeals to no sectarian loyalty, holds out no worldly inducement, but the reverse, to those who join its ranks; a Society professedly devoted to the study and propagation of philosophy, the declared foe of vice and censor of selfish indulgence; teaching the highest moral ideal, affirming the essential unity of religions, and the necessary supremacy of truth over all; yet we see it within the short space of ten years spreading over a good portion of the earth’s surface, having chartered 137 Branches, of which only 4 have lapsed, and with men of all the old religions its enthusiastic [37] adherents. Whether the Society has been riding on the crest of a wave of thought, caused by the general upheaval of old prejudices, or itself has been a strong power behind the wave, it is not for us to say; but the pregnant fact is that it exists and is a social force of the day, with a prospect of a prolonged and useful career. It is—it must be—due to the breadth of its platform and the judiciousness of its policy of tolerance and brotherly good will towards all.”

Twelve years have come and gone since then, yet the impetus behind us has never slackened, the vital force within the Society never been spent; disasters have not wrecked us, secessions not weakened us, the fountain of ancient wisdom has not ceased to flow. Hands across the seas and around the globe, brothers! for in union is our hope and our power to do good.

CHAPTER III

SCIENTIFIC AND OTHERWISE

(1888)

WE cross a threshold of time and enter the Society's thirteenth year, which will be found as full of incidents as either of its predecessors. For we have made history rapidly. Not with a blare of trumpets or waving of banners have we moved on, but impelled by a divine force for the arousing of thought and the moulding of opinions, a force as silent as irresistible.

In the January Theosophist of the year 1888 appeared a notable report on certain meteorological observations made in Baroda State according to the system laid down by the ancient Rishis, as found in that classic of Astrology, the Brihat Samhita, which was very important. It was made by that excellent gentleman and staunch Theosophist, Mr. Janardhan Sakharam Gadgil, F.T.S., a graduate of Bombay University, and a Justice of the Baroda High Court, and Rao Sahib Bhogilal Pravalabhadas, Director of Vernacular Education of that State, with the help of Joshi Uttamram Dullabharam and his pupils. Judge Gadgil's object was to test the ancient system of weather forecasts in [39] comparison with those made from day to day by the Government Weather Bureau, using the most improved instruments and the accessory of the electric telegraph to gather in the daily minutes of many scattered observers. The results were, on the whole, highly gratifying, and may be tabulated thus:

Rain predictions, exactly fulfilled on the day.....	30
Ditto, but with a shifting of dates.....	10
Days on which rain fell but was not predicted.....	11
Rainfalls when the dates were not accurately determined, owing to Mr. Gadgil's absence from home.....	7
Total	58

To understand this, it must be remembered that the Hindu almanac-makers issue their predictions in the previous autumn, and derive them from patient observations of astronomical positions at that time, the results of which stellar aspects are calculated with great accuracy according to a theory quite unknown,

I believe, to our Western astronomers and meteorologists. The ancient theory is that clouds are positive and negative, male and female; that the latter become fecundated by conjunction with the former, and that they will shed rain six and a half months later (vide Brihat Samhita, chap. xxi, shloka 7). It is there quaintly affirmed that “if pregnant clouds appear when the moon is in a certain Asterism, the delivery of rain will Occur 195 days after, when the moon will be in the same Asterism”. By close observation, therefore, of the number and places of clouds on the days beginning from the first of the bright half of the lunar month [40] Margasirsha (November-December), the Indian almanac-makers safely predict the days and quantities of rain-fall during the next monsoon season, a half-year later. Judge Gadgil printed tables of dates and measured rainfalls which go to support the claim of the Rishi rules to be regarded as strictly scientific. The late Professor Kero Laxman Chhatre, the great Poona astronomer, wrote that the predictions were wonderful in his sight. The facts accumulated prove, in Judge Gadgil’s opinion, that “although the sun is the chief cause of the evaporation of water, the moon is the potent factor in causing watery vapor to assume the form of pregnant clouds which, at their maturity, are to fall in the form of rain, and to fructify the earth”.⁸ He specifies several other points of importance which [41] are also supported by his results, and the reader wilt do well to consult the number of the Theosophist indicated. I have recalled these researches by our fellow-members in 1888 as being most timely in the present year of drought and famine (1899), and as an indication of the wide field of scientific research which opens out before the educated man who applies himself to study the palm-leaf MSS. in our Adyar Library. The nett result of two years’ comparison of the almanac prognostics with those of the Government Weather Bureau showed them to be of equal accuracy, while, as regards the cost of statistical collection, the comparison is, of course, very greatly in favor of the Indian system. Let us hope that this field may soon be properly explored.

I note that on 5th January I sent Professor Charcot, of La Salpêtrière, a copy of the Tamil translation of that libidinous work Kama Shastra, that he might observe what it says about the effect upon the procreative function of pressure upon certain points in the limbs. In vol. lx of the International Scientific Series I had [42] read what the authors of the book (Animal Magnetism, by MM. Binet and Fêrê) say about this very thing, which is credited to Dr. Chambard, of France, as a new discovery.⁹ I wanted Charcot and his pupils to know that the fact had been familiar to Indian physiologists for ages. Almost by return post Dr Charcot thanked me warmly for bringing the fact to his notice, and said I had

made une vraie trouvaille—a genuine find. I wish I could impress on the minds of all students of mesmerism, hypnotism, and spiritualism the gravity of the danger they run in making any experiments upon subjects of the other sex without the presence of responsible witnesses. While the French doctors say that the physiological excitement in question is aroused by pressure on the “erogenic” zones only when the subject is in the state of full somnambulism, the Hindu love-manual makes no such assertion, but lets us understand that it can be caused when the [43] subject is fully awake. How many unhappy victims have there not been who were perfectly innocent of wrongdoing, but who have unwittingly pressed upon the spot in the arm whose nerves react so as to throw the neuropathic subject into a frenzy of desire!

Things were growing more and more unpleasant at Adyar on account of the friction between’ H. P. B. and T. Subba Row and certain of his Anglo-Indian backers. They even went so far as to threaten withdrawal from the Society and the publication of a rival magazine if H. P. B. did not treat them better. In fact, Subba Row and one of his friends did resign that year, but I gave myself no uneasiness about the projected magazine, for the basis of success—persevering effort and unselfish zeal for Theosophy—were not among the strong points of their characters.

The Governor’s Annual Levee, to which I was invited, was a gorgeous spectacle, the vivid coloring and sparkling glitter of the robes and turbans of the Oriental magnates and of the uniforms of British officers producing a strong effect upon the eye in the Banqueting Hall of Government House, with its milk-white walls and lofty columns in polished white stucco that rival Parian marble in beauty.

I note that one of our Council members received from Meerut about that time a copy of his horoscope, as found in the Nadi Granthams of a great astrologer of that place. This was the second case of the kind which came under my notice, and it is certainly enough to stagger anybody’s faith to be told that a stranger [44] can walk into the Brahmin astrologer’s house, give him no proper clue to his identity, and within the next few minutes have one of those mysterious old books placed in his own hands, opened at a page where he may read for himself the particulars of his present birth, the name, caste, and quality of his father, and the chief incidents of his own life. Yet this is alleged to be true, and, if I may believe friends whose social and official positions entitle them to credence, they have had this very experience with the Meerut astrologer. I saw him personally

once at that station and saw his collection of books, but he could find nothing in any of them about me, nor about Mrs. Besant (I think it was) who was with me. I then learned a thing not previously known to the public, viz., that the Grantham contains only the horoscopes of persons born in India, and within that portion of it known as Bhârata Varsha, i.e., between the Himâlayas and the Vindya Range. I should have been glad to have had it otherwise, as it would have been a pleasure to have reported to my Western scientific friends the fact that the outline sketch of my life had been found recorded in an ancient work written centuries before the date of my birth. Others have had that experience, so I leave to them the duty of bearing testimony. Meanwhile, if the reader will refer to the Theosophist for December, 1887, and the article on “Bhrigu Sanhita,” he will see a very instructive narrative of Babu Kedar Nath Chatterjee’s experience with the Meerut astrologer above mentioned. It is worth [45] while giving place to some extracts. From a relative of his, the author had learnt of his having got from the Meerut man a copy of his horoscope, taken from the ancient work in question, in which were given so many minute details of his past life as to amaze them both. Babu Kedar Nath accordingly determined to see whether he would have a like good fortune, and with this object went to Meerut and hunted up the astrologer. On his way he collected from seventeen friends their “Janma Lugnas” and “Rasi Chakras,” together with a brief account of their lives written in English (of which the astrologer is ignorant), on separate pieces of paper. The Janma Lugnas and Rasi Chakras were, however, written in Devanagari characters, which he could read, but which would give him no clue to the identity of the parties concerned, since they were but the statements of the stars and constellations under which certain individuals were born, and would only serve to guide him as to the book in which to hunt up the horoscopes under corresponding astronomical signs. With this preface we will now allow Babu Kedar Nath to describe what happened to him, after he had handed the Devanagari memoranda of his seventeen friends to the astrologer, one by one, and been shown that each person’s horoscope was actually recorded in the pages of his mysterious book:

“I had,” he says, “lost my own horoscope, prepared by my parents at my birth; and consequently I did not know the date and time of my birth. One morning I simply asked him: ‘Who am I?’ He [46] ascertained the correct time of the day with the help of my watch, drew a Rasi Chakra appertaining to the time of my query, and, according to certain rules of astrology, drew a Rasi Chakra of the time of my birth, Then, without reference to the Sanhita, he told me, from his personal knowledge of the science, some of the incidents of my

past life. Some of his conjectures turned out to be correct, others were wrong. He then retired to his library, and after about fifteen or twenty minutes he brought out a book as usual, and I myself found my horoscope in it after a search of about ten minutes. I allowed the Pandit to read the whole of it, and it took him about three hours to finish it. I cannot now describe my feeling at that time; I thought indeed that I was in a state of dream. The horoscope proceeded, reminding me of the past events of my life from year to year; some of them I had nearly forgotten, and I sometimes had to task my memory to recall them to mind. I cannot imagine a greater wonder than going to a stranger, who, when you ask him who you are, gives you a book which contains minute details of your life from your birth to death. I assert that there is nothing in my horoscope which is not an actual fact, or which has not happened with reference to that portion of the horoscope which deals with my past life,...

“I shall now give a brief account of the contents of my horoscope, and make quotations here and there from it for a better elucidation, though by so doing I

[47] shall have to make my private life known to the public. My horoscope, like numerous others that I then saw and have since then seen, is divided into three parts, and is a dialogue between Sukracharya, the disciple, and Bhṛigu Deva, the preceptor.

“The first part consists of (1) some of the chief events of my present life, (2) the chief characteristic of my body and mind, (3) a brief account of the members of my family, (4) the lines on the palm of my right hand, with their effects.

“The second part consists of (1) a brief account of the previous birth, (2) some of the principal acts done in the previous life which have produced some of the grand results in the present life.

“The third part consists of (1) a detailed account of my life from birth to death, (2) a brief account of the lives of my parents from year to year during my infancy, (3) a brief account of the other members of my family, (4) the diseases, dangers, and misfortunes that I shall be subjected to from year to year, (5) recipes to cure those diseases, and advice about warding off the dangers and misfortunes, (6) various Prayaschittas or atonements for removing some of the principal events of the present life which are the results of some of the misdeeds done in the previous life, (7) elaborate description of the manner in which these Prayaschittas should be performed and the various Mantras, (8) how I shall be born in the next life to come. Besides the above there are many other things in

the third part.

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“My horoscope, of course in manuscript, consists of 77 pages of bigger size than royal octavo. I have all along been speaking only of the twelve parts of my entire horoscope. This part which: I have in my possession is called the Tainibhavan—or that part relating to the body alone. There are other parts or Bhavans, called the Dhanabhavan (relating to wealth), the Dharmabhavan (relating to religion), the Pitribhavan (relating to a father), and so forth. These different Bhavans give a detailed account of the subjects of which they treat. But it is a matter of regret that the Pandit has got a few only of the other Bhavans. He has not even got the entire number of the Tainibhavan parts of all the horoscopes, and he had in several cases to refuse to give copies, for he had not the originals.”

The long tour of 1887 left same effects of a very disagreeable nature on me, which showed themselves in an impoverishment of the blood and, an outbreak of boils, of which one took on a carbuncular character and laid me up for a while. But our kind friends, General and Mrs. Morgan, hospitably urged me to visit them at Oatacamund, which I did, and in that magical mountain air my health was soon re-established. I gratefully recall the kind attentions shown me by many European friends, even of mere acquaintances, up to that time, and am sorry that I am not at liberty to record their names in this narrative in token of my remembrance. Telegrams were sent me from all over India, and sympathetic paragraphs appeared in the [49] Hindu papers. To add to my pleasure, I had an attack of gouty rheumatism in one foot, and this puzzled me more than a little, for my paternal ancestral stock passed on to me no such taint of blood. But eight years later, at Paris, the mystery was solved for me by Madame Mangruel, the well-known somnambule or clairvoyant, who advised me to abstain from meat eating, as that was the cause of my misery. I followed her prescription, and all gouty symptoms have disappeared. The disease was, then, not hereditary, but induced by the meat diet, and disappeared on my changing to a non-flesh dietary. The hint should not be lost by any reader who has not tried this remedy.

Portents of a coming storm in our European groups, stirred up or intensified by; H. P. B., begin to show themselves, and Judge complains of our neglecting him. Just then Dr. Coues was working hard for the notoriety he craved, and Judge was opposing him. In view of the very important bearing it has on the ethics of the secession move of June 1895, the text of some of Judge's letters

may as well be given:

“(New York) June 8, 1888, certain matters are occurring here which need attention and action... His (Coues’) policy is to place himself at the head of some wonderful unknown thing through which (save the mark!) communications are alleged to come from the Masters. He also in a large sense wishes to pull the T. S. away from your jurisdiction and make himself the Grand Mogul of it in this country... I know that.’. policy is to retain complete control in you, and my [50] desire is to keep the American Section as a dependency of the General Council in India; hence you are the President. It was never my intention to dis sever, but to bind, and the form of our Constitution clearly shows that. That’s why no President is elected or permitted here... So I would recommend that you call the Council and consider our Constitution, which ought long ago to have been done—and decide that we are in affiliation and subordination to India, and that we are recognised as part of the General Council, with power to have a Secretary as an (official) channel, but not to have a yearly President, but only a chairman at each Convention. I cannot work this thing here properly without your co-operation.”

“I am always striving to keep your name at the top, for until your death you must be at the head.” (Letter of May, 21, 1888.)

“Until you two die it is folly for others to whistle against the wind. Masters and Federation!” (Letter of June 15, 1888.)

Alas! for the shortsightedness of men who leave behind them documentary proofs like the above, when setting themselves to the building up of a new structure of falsehood, fraud, and treachery in which to house new idols. No wonder the Secessionists adopted the policy of boycotting my name and falsifying history. To have mentioned me at all would have provoked too much inquiry. Alas! poor Judge.

In March the Burmese edition of the Buddhist Catechism appeared at Rangoon, making the seventh [51] language in which it had thus far been published, viz., English, French, German, Sinhalese, Japanese, Arabic, and Burmese. In April a Japanese friend wrote me from Kyoto that my Golden Rules of Buddhism had been translated into their language and published.

At a garden-party at Government House on the 21st of April, the Gaekwar of Baroda introduced me to the Maharajah of Mysore, who asked me to his garden-party of the next week. Thus began our friendly acquaintance, which lasted until his death. On 6th May, by his special invitation, I privately lectured to the above

two Princes and their staffs at the Mysore Maharajah's house, on the subject given me of "The Effect of Hindu Religion on Hindus". For a full hour after the lecture I answered questions put me by the Princes, the Gaekwar chiefly playing the part of spokesman, as the Mysore ruler had an impediment in his speech. This experience was not quite equal to that of Talma, who "played to a pitiful of kings," but it was a rather unusual incident for me, and a very pleasant one, for the discussion was animated, and the questions and answers were followed with the closest attention by the intelligent, and in some cases eminent, men composing the two suites.

The Anglo-Indian community were so kind during my illness that I gladly consented to lecture for their special benefit at the Breeks School, under very influential patronage. The subject given me was "The Noble Army of Ghosts and Their Mansions": in short, a discourse upon other World Order in which [52] the Summerland theory of the Spiritualists was compared with the Eastern idea of Kamaloka. There was a large audience, and the proceeds went to a local charity. A second lecture followed.

During this visit to Ootacamund, I bought, on Mrs. Morgan's advice, the piece of land on which I built, as a hot-weather retreat for H. P. B., myself, and other European workers at Adyar, the cottage since known as "Gulistan"—the Rose Garden. She, poor friend! never had the chance to use it, but I have and others, and a more delightful sanatorium it would be hard to find.

An instructive experiment was made by Mr. Archer, R. A., at my request, which is worth reporting. We discussed the theory of "visualising," in connection with the real or pretended method ascribed to William Blake, the Irish painter-mystic, who, it is alleged, would paint a portrait after a single sitting; he having the faculty of visualising his sitter in the pose desired, and thus being able to paint from the astral phantom as if it were the living flesh. Mr. Archer had never tried it, but said he would if I would pose for fifteen minutes. I took my place and he steadfastly looked at me, now and again closing his eyes to fix the image the better upon his sensorium, after which I was dismissed and asked to return after three days. When I went again to his studio he had sketched in my portrait, and we were both greatly interested to see how he had retained parts of the face and lost others. As an experiment, it was valuable in its suggestiveness.

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Mr. Archer finished the portrait, and it is now at our London Headquarters.

At appointed interviews with the Baroda and Mysore Princes, the maintenance of the Adyar Oriental Library and the holding of an Inter-State Sanskrit Convention, for the purpose of putting the movement for a revival of Sanskrit literature on a broad and sensible basis, were discussed. His Highness the Gaekwar asked me to draft a plan for a Technological College at Baroda, for the endowment of which he was ready to set aside ten lakhs of rupees, and I did so. The Mysore Maharajah has since established a Sanskrit Department in his own State, the Gaekwar has introduced Sanskrit and Technological instruction into his, and the Inter-State Sanskrit Convention has been held at Hardwar, and is known as the Bhârata Mahâ Mandala. So seeds are dropped, and some fall on stony ground, but others strike root in fertile soil and bring forth their special harvests.

My health having been, entirely restored; I left Ootacamund on 31st May, and after a short tour to Coimbatore, Pollachi, Udamalpet, and Palghat, where lectures were given and two new Branches were formed, returned to Adyar and plunged into routine work, literary and official.

The last week in June brought me a vexatious letter from H. P. B., indicative of a storm of trouble that was raging in and about her, the consideration of which had better be deferred until our next chapter.

CHAPTER IV

FORMATION OF THE ESOTERIC SECTION

(1888)

IT was remarked at the end of the last chapter that we were now about to review some disagreeable incidents of the year in which H. P.B. was a conspicuous factor; If she had been just an ordinary person hidden behind the screen of domesticity; this history of the development of the Theosophical movement might have been written without bringing her on the stage: or if the truth had been told about her by friend and foe, I might have left her to be dealt with by her Karma, showing, of course, what great part she had played in it, and to how great a credit she was entitled. But she has snared the fate of all public characters of mark in human affairs, having been absurdly flattered and worshipped by one party, and mercilessly wronged by the other. Unless, then, her most intimate friend and colleague, the surviving builder-up of the movement, had cast aside the reserve he had all along maintained, and would have preferred to preserve; the real personage would never have been understood by her contemporaries, nor justice done to her really [55] grand character. That, she was great in the sense of the thorough altruism of her public work is unquestionable: in her times of exaltation self was drowned in the yearning to spread knowledge and do her Master's bidding. She never sold her rich store of occult knowledge for money, nor bartered instruction for personal advantage. She valued her life as nothing as balanced against service, and would have given it as joyfully as any religious martyr if the occasion had seemed to demand the sacrifice. These tendencies and characteristic traits she had brought over with her from the long line of incarnations in which she (and, in some, we) had been engaged in like service; they were the aspects of her individuality, high, noble, ideally loyal, worthy, not of being worshipped—for no human being ought to be made the cause of slavish adoration—but of aspiration to be like it. Her personality is quite another affair, and afforded a strong background to throw out her interior brightness into stronger relief. In the matter under present discussion, for instance, the front she presents to me in her letters is unlovely to a degree: language violent, passion raging, scorn and satire poorly covered by a skin of soft talk; a disposition to break through the “red tape” of the Society's mild

constitution, and to rule or ruin as I might decide to ratify or disavow her arbitrary and utterly unconstitutional acts; a sniffing at the Council and Councillors, whom she did not choose to have stand in her way, a sharp and slashing criticism of certain of her European co-workers, especially of [56] the one most prominent in that part of the movement, whose initials she parenthesised after the word “Satan,” and an appeal that I should not let our many years of associated work be lost in the breaking up of the T. S. into two unrelated bodies, the Eastern and the Western Theosophical Societies. In short, she writes like a mad person and in the tone of a hyper-excited hysterical woman, fighting for her good name against the black maliciousness of the, Missionary-Coulomb-Hodgson assault, and for her life against a number of physical ailments which three years later carried her off. Yet, ill in body and upset in mind as she may have been, she was still a mighty factor for me to deal with, and forced me to choose which line of policy I should follow. The first count in her indictment against me (for, of course, more suo, it was all my fault) was that I had decided against her favorite in an arbitration I had held at Paris, that year, between two opposing parties among the French Theosophists; it was, she writes me, “no mistake, but a crime perpetrated by you against Theosophy (doubly underscored), in full knowledge of what X. is and fear of Y. “Olcott, my friend, you are—but I do not want to hurt your feelings, and will not say to you what you are. If you do not feel and realise it yourself, then all I can say will be useless. As for P.,¹⁰ you have put yourself entirely in his hands, and you have sacrificed Theosophy, and even the honor of the T. S. in France, out of fear of that wretched little——.” Encouraging [57] praises, these, for a poor fellow who was struggling with all his might to steer the ship on its course, keeping clear of the shoals and rocks which wreck so many societies, and are doubly dangerous to vessels manned by cranky crews. She had hatched out a new section, with herself elected as “President,” taken a commodious house, and had a signboard ready to have painted on it either “European Headquarters of the T. S.” or “Western Theosophical Society”. Seeming to suspect that I might not like it very much to have the whole machinery of the Society upset to gratify her whim, and remembering of old that the more she threatened the more stubborn it made me, she writes: “Now look here, Olcott. It is very painful, most painful, for me to have to put to you what the French call *marché en main*, and to have you choose. You will say again that you ‘hate threats,’ and these will only make you more stubborn. But this is no threat at all, but a *fait accompli*. It remains with you to either ratify it or to go against it, and declare war to me and my Esotericists. If,

recognising the utmost necessity of the step, you submit to the inexorable evolution of things, nothing will be changed. Adyar and Europe will remain allies, and, to all appearance, the latter will seem to be subject to the former. If you do not ratify it—well, then there will be two Theosophical Societies, the old Indian and the new European, entirely independent of each other.” Hobson’s choice, in a word! After this, one need not be astonished to see her saying: “I write in all calmness and after full deliberation, [58] your having granted the Charter to P. having only precipitated matters!”

This stand-and-deliver ultimatum naturally frightened the “mild Hindu” members of our Executive Council to fits, and involved another visit to Europe in 1889. The Paris arbitration above referred to occurred during my European visit of 1888, which kept me there, from 26th August to 22nd October, and was made, at the entreaty of the Executive Council, as the tone of H. P. B.’s letters had alarmed them for the stability of the movement in the West. The tour should, by rights, have been mentioned before the incidents of the threatened split above alluded to, but H. P. B.’s letter lying nearest to hand, and the trouble being continuous through the two successive years, I took it up first.

The Paris imbroglio sprang out of a disturbance in the “Isis” Branch, founded by the late regretted M. Louis Dramard. After his decease, a hypersensitive young man named Gaboriau, who showed an excessive, enthusiasm for Theosophy, but small executive faculty, and who had been taken up as a protégé by H. P. B., was spending a small patrimony, just inherited, on Theosophical publications, and trying to lead the Isis T. S. along its difficult path. In doing this he had become involved in disputes, in which H. P. B. had taken his side, and made a bad mess for me by giving him, in her real character of Co-Founder and her assumed one of my representative, with full discretionary powers, a charter of a sweeping and unprecedented [59] character, which practically let him do as he pleased. This was, of course, protested against by some of his soberer colleagues, recriminations arose, and an appeal was made to me. After my arrival in London a circular was issued to each registered French member appointing a time and place of meeting in Paris, and on 17th September my formal decision was read before the assembly. The impossibility of reorganising the Isis T. S. being evident, a new charter was granted to a new Branch, the “Hermes,” and the now lamented M. Arthur Arnould, the well-known author, was elected President; M. Eugene Nus, the historian, and George Caminade d’Angers, Vice-Presidents; Gerard Encausse, Corresponding Secretary; and C.

Dubourg and Julien Lejay, Secretaries. A large roll of members was inscribed and the young Branch began its career. My action in this affair was taken according to my best judgment, after hearing all that was to be said and seeing everybody concerned; I believe it to have been the best under existing circumstances, though it threw M. Gaboriau out of the active running, caused him and some of his few followers to denounce me unqualifiedly, and led to a pitched battle, as one might say, between H. P. B. and myself on my return to London. The sequel is above shown in her revolutionary action with respect to the reorganisation at London.

It was during this tour that I made the acquaintance of Professor F. Max Müller, and visited him at Oxford, where he was good enough to have me meet Sir William [60] W. Hunter, K.C.S.I., and the world-famous Prof. E. B. Tylor, the anthropologist. Professor Müller was so kind as to say that the Oriental reprinting, translation, and publishing portion of the Society's work was "noble, and there could be no two opinions about it, nor were there among Orientalists". But as for our far more cherished activities, the discovery and spread of ancient views on the existence of Siddhas, and of the siddhis in man, he was utterly incredulous. "We know all about Sanskrit and Sanskrit literature," he said, "and have found no evidence anywhere of the pretended esoteric meaning which your Theosophists profess to have discovered in the Vedas, the Upanishads, and other Indian Scriptures: there is nothing of the kind, I assure you. Why will you sacrifice all the good opinion which scholars have of your legitimate work for Sanskrit revival to pander to the superstitious belief of the Hindus in such follies?" We sat alone in his fine library-room, well lighted by windows looking out on one of those emerald, velvety lawns so peculiar to moist England; the walls of the chamber covered with bookcases filled with the best works of ancient and modern writers, two marble statuettes of the Buddha sitting in meditation, placed to the right and left of the fireplace, but on the hearth (Buddhists take notice), and the grand old scholar, author, discoverer, controversialist, teacher, courtier, seated at his large morocco-covered mahogany writing-table, with the light of one window shining full in his face and another beyond the edge of the table bringing [61] out his aristocratic profile in sharp relief. How the picture of that temple of high-thinking comes back to my memory out of the latency of the âkasa! I see this greatest pupil of that pioneer genius, E. Burnouf, sitting there and giving me his authoritative advice to turn from the evil course of Theosophy into the hard and rocky path of official scholarship, and be happy to lie down in a thistle-bed prepared by Orientalists

for their common use. As he warmed with his subject, the blood rose to his head and suffused his delicate skin, his fine nostrils dilated, and his eyes sparkled. I sat facing the fireplace, at the nearer end of the table, where I could read the emotions in his face as they arose, listening with the respect to which so aged and so illustrious a scholar was entitled. When he had finished, I quietly said that his conclusions as to these occult things were at variance with the beliefs of every orthodox Pandit, from one end of India to the other; that the Gupta Vidya was a recognised element in Hindu religious philosophy, as, of course, he knew; and that what most drew the educated Indians into sympathy with us was the very fact that we believed exactly what they had believed from time immemorial on these subjects. Moreover, I would venture to declare to the Professor that I had had the clearest evidence at first hand that the Siddhas, or Mahatmas, live and work for humanity to-day as they ever have; and that the claims of Patanjali as to the siddhis and the possibility of developing them were, to my certain knowledge, true. The Professor, finding me so [62] self-opinionated and indisposed to desert my colors, said we had better change the subject. We did, but not for long, for he came back to it, and we finally agreed to disagree, parting in all courtesy, and, on my own part, with regret that so great a mind could not have taken in that splendid teaching of the Sages about man and his powers, which is of all in the world the most satisfying to the reason and most consoling to the heart.

The tour of 1888 took me to London, Liverpool, Cambridge, Glasgow, Paris, and Bologna. I called two Conventions at London of the British Branches, organised and chartered a British Section of the T. S., and issued an order in Council forming an Esoteric Section, with Madame Blavatsky as its responsible head. It was thus worded:

“LONDON, 9th October, 1888.

“THE ESOTERIC SECTION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

“I. To promote the esoteric interests of the Theosophical Society by the deeper study of esoteric philosophy, there is hereby organised a body, to be known as the ‘Esoteric Section of the Theosophical Society.’

“II. The constitution and sole direction of the same is vested in Madame H. P. Blavatsky, as its head; she is solely responsible to the members for results; and the section has no official or corporate connection with the Exoteric Society, save in the person of the President-Founder.

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“Persons wishing to join the Section, and willing to abide by its rules, should communicate directly with Madame H. P. Blavatsky, 17 Lansdowne Road, Holland Park, London, W.

“(Sd.) H. S. OLCOTT,
President in Council.

“Attest:

“H. P. BLAVATSKY,
“Corresponding Secretary.”

This was the beginning of the E. S. T. movement, now so very important an one as carried on by Mrs. Besant, the chosen successor of H. P. B. The reason for my throwing the whole responsibility for results upon H. P. B. was that she had already made one failure in this direction at Adyar in 1884, when she, with T. Subba Row, Oakley, Damodar, and others, tried to organise a secret class, or group, whose members were to have been brought more closely into relations with the Masters, but which failed, and I did not care to be responsible for the fulfilment of any special engagements she might make with the new set of students she was now gathering about her, in her disturbed state of mind. I helped her write some of her instructions, and did all I could to make the way easy for her, but that was all. Later, when I found that those who entered the E. S. were satisfied with what they were getting, I took a more decided stand in the matter, and now have nothing but praise to express for the way in which the present head of the school is dealing with her army of voluntarily enrolled students.

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At the same time, it must never be forgotten that the E. S. T. is not the T. S.; nor that its rules are binding only upon members belonging to that special school; nor that it would be a violation of the T. S. constitution for it to interfere with their rights of private judgment; nor that the President-Founder is compelled to guarantee to every individual member, of whatsoever religion, race, sex, or color, his or her personal liberty of belief and speech.

Nearly all the persons engaged in the Paris quarrel were to blame, they having given way to personal jealousies, obliterated the landmarks of the Society, fallen into a strife for supremacy, with mutual abuse, oral and printed. I first tried to get

the dissentients to work harmoniously under the old charter, and, this failing, offered the two parties, M. Gaboriau's and M. Arnould's, a charter each, on the most liberal conditions; but Gaboriau would not or could not form a Branch without the others, and so the one charter for the Hermes Branch was the result. The thanks of the Society were officially given to Madame the Countess d'Adhèmar, F.T.S., for throwing open her drawing-rooms for meetings during my stay, and doing all else within her power to promote the reorganisation of our affairs at the French capital.

My tour realised the objects in view, H. P. B. being pacified, our affairs in Great Britain put in order, and the E. S. started; but, as was above made plain, the calm was not destined to last, and a second visit to Europe had to be made in 1889, after my return [65] from Japan. Yet the strife between us two was always on the outside, and as regards questions of management and policy; interiorly, we were linked together in an unity of purpose and ideals that not even death has broken asunder. To refute the many falsehoods spread by third parties who wanted to breed dissension between us, or give the impression that the Society was on the point of splitting—a belief held by many, my Executive Council included, on the strength of H. P. B.'s hysterical letters—she and I issued the following joint note:

“To dispel a misconception that has been engendered by mischief-makers, we, the undersigned Founders of the Theosophical Society, declare that there is no enmity, rivalry, strife, or even coldness between us, nor ever was; nor any weakening of our joint devotion to the Masters or to our work, with the execution of which they have honored us. Widely dissimilar in temperament and mental characteristics, and differing sometimes in views as to methods of propagandism, we are yet of absolutely one mind as to that work. As we have been from the first, so are we now united in purpose and zeal, and ready to sacrifice all, even life, for the promotion of Theosophical knowledge, to the saving of mankind from the miseries which spring from ignorance.

“H. P. BLAVATSKY. H. S. OLCOTT.

“LONDON, October, 1888.”

On my way overland to Naples to take the P. and O. “Arcadia” for the return voyage, I stopped a [66] Bologna to see Count Mattei, the inventor of “Electro-Homoeopathy,” and decide whether it would be worth while for Tookaram Tatyra to try it in our Bombay Charitable Dispensary. I was prompted to this by what I

saw of the results of the application of one of the Mattei “electricities” as a lotion to the hand of a poor fellow, which had been terribly crushed in some machinery: in one night the pain had been much assuaged. The experimenter was “Major” Tucker, of the Salvation Army, who had implicit faith in the Mattei system. Signor Venturoli, now Count Venturoli-Mattei, the discoverer’s adopted son and heir, kindly took me to Rioli, the station on the road to Florence, near which stands “Rochetta,” the picturesque but ill-planned castle of Count Mattei, and I spent the day with him in interesting discussion. He was then a strong giant of a man, despite his eighty-four years, and vehement to a degree in his denunciation of orthodox doctors and their remedies. In his bedroom—in one of the turrets, if my memory serves—was a scathing caricature on them, done in fresco on the groined ceiling. He was justifiably proud of the numberless cures wrought by his Electro-Homoeopathy, for I have heard too many stories about them at first hand to doubt its efficacy. When it comes to the “electrical” part of the matter, however, the case is quite a different affair. My belief is that, if the true name were given to the system, it would be “sun-bathed” or “chromopathic” medicine. I may be wrong, but, from all I can hear and infer from the [67] behavior of the medicines, I am persuaded that the words “blue-electricity,” or green, yellow, red, or others, mean simply distilled water which has been exposed to the magical action of the sunlight, passed through panes or lenses of glass of those several colors; that in the Mattei system we are dealing, in reality, with Chromopathy. Of course it does not matter a pin, save as a trade secret, whether the concealed agency be solar or herbal; the prime fact is that the medicines cure, and human suffering is diminished. Nothing that the Count said warranted me to adopt this opinion, but on the face of it his electrical nomenclature is ridiculous from the scientific point of view, and one of his most successful and loyal disciples, an English doctor, whose diploma was cancelled by the Faculty because of his professional heresy, confessed to me his concurrence in my views. The Mattei pills and powders may be, as alleged by his opponents, the ordinary homoeopathic remedies mixed together, on the off-chance that some one of them will cure the patient, or they may not; perhaps they are common remedies exposed to chromopathic influence, or possibly mesmerized to imbue them with a healing vital aura; this does not much matter; the fact is they effect cures by thousands, and the sale of the medicines is, I believe, fast enriching my genial friend of 1888, Count Venturoli Mattei.

As I was to pass through Rome, I halted there a day, not to pretend to see the city, but only to enter Saint Peter’s and thus lay my hand, as it were, on [68] the

heart of Christendom to test the vibrations. The experience was a curious one. As I looked around me at the statues of kings, emperors, and pontiffs, with their usually false epitaphs, I seemed to feel the karmic current of their unholy alliances, offensive and defensive. What horrors, what injustice, what selfish pacts, what conspiracies to wrong and dominate the helpless victims of ruthless power and self-delusion, what rivers of blood set flowing in the name of God, but for the greed of tyrants! Who, with an open mind, could stand in that monstrous cathedral and not shudder at the thought of what it represented in world-history, the Walhalla of scourges of humanity? I stayed there for hours, walking about, speaking to no guide, asking no questions, simply psychometrizing the place, and following the mental clues in all directions, that I might indelibly impress the pictures on my memory. The next morning I left for Naples, and on the following day embarked. As the “Arcadia” did not sail until 10 p.m., we had from her deck the chance to see the lovely panorama of the illuminated city mirrored in the glassy waters of the bay—a fairy scene.

The homeward voyage proved most interesting, as a great desire to know something about Theosophy, the Society, and occult sciences generally, was shown by the passengers of both saloons. Among them was that gracious student of mystical subjects, the Countess of Jersey, whom I found one of the most high-minded, pleasantest acquaintances I ever made. Doubtless, as a consequence of her example, the whole first saloon [69] fell to talking about Psychometry, Thought-transference, Clairvoyance, Palmistry, Astrology, and similar topics of the Borderland group; and practical experiments were made to test the correctness of theories. On the fourth day out I received an invitation in writing from Lord Jersey, Sir Samuel W. Baker, the African explorer, and other notables, on behalf of the saloon passengers, and with the captain’s consent, to lecture on “Theosophy,” which I gladly did. The vote of thanks was offered by Sir Samuel in a beautifully worded short speech, which was very gratifying. Three days later there was another call upon me, and I took, by request, the subject of “Psychometry”. This set many to making experiments, and I myself made some that were instructive. A certain lady brought from her cabin a half dozen letters from persons of widely different characters, each enclosed in a plain envelope, so that the experimenter might get no clue whatsoever to the sex or character of the writer—a clever precaution. I made her sit in an easy-chair, and passed the letters one by one over her head to her forehead, where I bade her hold them and answer my questions. She was not to stop and think what the answer ought to be, but just to say the first thing that came to her mind. I asked her: “Is the writer a

man Or a woman? Answer quickly, please.” Then I asked: “Is he (or she) old or young? Tall or short? Stout or thin? Healthy or ill? Hot-tempered or calm? Frank or deceitful? Generous or miserly? Worthy or unworthy of trust as a friend? Do you [70] like this person?” etc., etc., never putting a leading question or doing anything to confuse the spontaneous thought of the subject. Now, at first blush, it is perfectly plain that the closest scrutiny of a blank envelope—unless its shape were an unusual one and associated with a certain correspondent—would reveal nothing as to the sex, age, complexion, form, or mental or moral characteristics of the writer of the enclosed letter. The first lady experimenter proved herself devoid of the psychometric faculty, but another lady who next submitted herself to the test was successful in five out of seven cases—as subsequently verified on opening the covers; and the first lady’s brother, an army officer and a rather flippant critic of the science, found to his amazement that he could psychometrize. The rumor of these instructive experiments running through the ship, caused the invitation to make my second lecture on the subject of Professor Buchanan’s discovery. A well-known Member of Parliament gave very correct delineations in two cases submitted to him for psychometric reading. The scientific and practical value of the possession of this sense is evident, inasmuch as it arms a person with a super-refined faculty of feeling the true character and motive of a correspondent, or of one with whom one is talking, or whom one meets in the world, whatever mask may be used in the letter or put on the face of the individual. Then again, the developed psychometer ought naturally to be intuitive for learning the sense of an author and reading the meaning of a public lecturer, despite his, perhaps,

[71] clumsy way of putting things. It makes one instantaneously responsive to appeals to the higher nature, and guarded against being carried away by the sophistries of those who would deceive and cajole one with evil designs.¹¹

The “Arcadia” landed her passengers at Bombay on 10th November, and our party, which comprised, besides myself, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Johnston, Baroness Kroumness, Mr. E. D. Fawcett, and Mr. Richard Harte, all members of the Society, were warmly welcomed by our friends of the Bombay Branch. Mrs. Johnston is the daughter of Madame Vera Jelihovsky, H. P. B.’s sister, and was married from her aunt’s home, 17 Lansdowne Road, W., to the brilliant young Sanskritist and Indian Civilian in question, during the summer of 1888. Her mother being away in Russia, I represented her and the rest of the family at the civil marriage at the registrar’s office. Her husband was now coming out with us

to take up his appointment in the Bengal Civil Service. The whole party were present at the Convention of that year, and were photographed in the annual group picture.

CHAPTER V

THE CONVENTION OF 1888

(1888)

OUR friends were delighted with their cordial reception at Bombay, and, like all strangers, struck with the picturesqueness of the city and its swarming and motley inhabitants. Our Branch members did—as they invariably do—all that lies within their power to make new-coming colleagues feel welcome. It is in some respects a model Branch, having had the good fortune to possess energetic, intelligent, and devoted officers from the beginning. When I look at this group, it seems strange to me that so long as our T. S. Headquarters remained there the Branch was almost inert. I made frequent desperate attempts to infuse life into it, but without encouraging success. Perhaps it was because the members felt that within arm's length of them were the Founders, and that at any time a half-hour's stroll would take them into the presence of H. P. B., whose average conversation was more instructive and stimulative of thought than any number of dull meetings, at which no one person could claim to be much more advanced in knowledge [73] than the others. But when we shifted to Adyar, and the responsibility for the Branch's activity was definitively thrown upon Tookaram Tatyā, Rustomji A. Master and two or three more, the latent life in the Branch suddenly showed itself. We left the group in 1882 with a majority of Hindu members, whereas now, and for some time past, they have kept away, and the Branch is preponderatingly Parsi. Yet the selfsame studies have been pursued, the identical Theosophical ideas been taught and accepted, until now there cannot be found, the world over, a more thoroughly Theosophical group than the Bombay T. S.

All the party save myself went to Elephanta to see the caves, and were taken to see the other Bombay sights. On the 12th of November we had a public reception, Mr. K. M. Shroff presiding, and our welcome was warm enough to prove that the public were as ready as ever to see us back and hear us speak. Messrs. Johnston and Harte made addresses, and I lectured on "Thought-reading". The next day we left for Madras; our colleagues at Poona and Gooty meeting us at their stations, and bringing flowers, fruits, and delicious fresh milk. Adyar was reached on the 15th, and the newcomers showed great delight

with the house and grounds; more especially, even, with the home-like feeling of the place; for I have ever tried to give visiting members the impression that they are not my guests, nor the Society's, nor anybody's, but just co-proprietors of the property, coming to their own home. H. P.B. and I always [74] followed that policy, and I have tried to keep it up.

The Executive Council met as usual on the following Sunday, and passed resolutions thoroughly approving of my doings in Europe. Tranquil days of work and pleasant conversation followed, but before long I began to see signs of discontent spreading to some extent among certain few Branches, the result of underhand schemings by one or two malcontents who were unfriendly to H. P. B. This passed off in time, although a desperate attempt was made at that year's Convention to make trouble for me. The Bombay Branch sent me, on November 30th, a resolution recommending that T. Subba Row, who had resigned, be asked to come back to us, but I have positively refused to lower the Society's dignity in any similar case, however influential might be the seceder—my conviction having always been that the cause we stood for is so infinitely greater and more majestic than any man or woman engaged in the T. S. work, that it would have been a lowering of my self-respect to beg anybody to stand by us against his inclinations. To my apprehension, a man could not enjoy a higher honor than the chance to help the Teachers in their benevolent plan for the uplifting of contemporary humanity.

On 3rd December, Mr. Noguchi, a representative of the Committee of patriotic Japanese who had sent me an invitation to visit their country in the interests of Buddhism, arrived. On the 18th I served, at the request of the Madras Government, as a Judge at [75] a public trial of ploughs at the Saidapet Agricultural College Farm, thus, after thirty years, resuming my practical interest in agricultural questions. H. E. the Governor of Madras, the Earl of Jersey, and other important personages were present, and expressed their satisfaction with the Committee's awards. The Earl and Countess of Jersey came one day and saw the Library and took tea with us, a hospitality which they subsequently returned to me both in England and at Sydney, where Lord Jersey was Governor at the time of my visit.

At a Council meeting in the same month, a resolution was unanimously passed to convert itself into an Advisory body and restore to me the full executive powers which, in 1885, I had consented to have curtailed, to satisfy some who thought it would be better to have several bosses instead of one. The

thing did not work well enough to continue it, and all my colleagues were but too glad to reshift the responsibility to my shoulders rather than keep it themselves. It was all the same to me, for even during the interval I virtually had to do all the work, and the Council meetings grew more and more perfunctory—as Council meetings usually do when there is some leader who may be counted on to pull the stroke-oar and get the boat on the straight course when cross winds blow.

I took Mr. Noguchi to the State Ball at Government House on the night of the 21st, and thoroughly enjoyed his expressions of wondering interest in everything [76] he saw, from the dazzling military uniforms, the gold-bestrewn court dress of the Governor, the dresses of the ladies, the dancing, the polished white columns and walls of the Banqueting Hall, the life-sized portraits of the Queen and other dignitaries, and the picturesque liveries of the turbaned servants, down to the supper-table in its inviting array—all complete novelties to him. The Governor was very pleased to see and talk with so intelligent a representative of his grand nation of heroes, and asked him various questions about the state of religion in Japan and the reason for my proposed visit. He was a nice fellow, was Noguchi, and made himself very popular at Headquarters and among the Hindu community in general, whom he electrified with his speech at our Anniversary celebration.

The Convention Delegates began arriving on the 24th of December. On Christmas Day I got a foolish cablegram from H. P. B. threatening the resignation of herself and the entire Blavatsky Lodge should Cooper Oakley be readmitted to membership, the act showing the state of nervous excitement into which the Subba Row imbroglio had thrown her. She used the name of the Blavatsky Lodge and of certain of its members so often in her letters, as condemning me utterly and backing her views unreservedly, that it became at last tiresome. Considering our personal relations, the identity of our ages, and our joint relationship to our Guru, it seemed to me ridiculous that she should imagine that the dicta of a group of junior colleagues, however warm partisans of hers, should influence me [77] to act against my own judgment in questions of management. I wrote her at last that if she sent me any more round robins or protests from the same quarter I should neither read nor answer her letters: our affairs must be settled between ourselves without the interference of third parties. Answering me, she admitted the correctness of my argument, and the exasperating documents ceased to arrive.

Our newcomers were much gratified on hearing a concert of Indian music given us by the Madras Gayan Samaj, under the management of our old member and friend Mr. Bulwant Trimbak Sahasrabuddi, of Poona. This gentleman, seeing the decadence of the ancient musical science, and the substitution of frivolous and sometimes immoral airs and songs, undertook, in or about the year 1878, the heavy task of trying to revive the Aryan melodies; to do which he formed, at Poona, the first Gayan Samaj. Undaunted by obstacles, he bravely stuck to his work, giving time, labor, and money, enlisting the sympathies of successive Governors of Bombay and Madras, and of other influential gentlemen, official and private. His self-denial has been rewarded by seeing this national movement getting foothold, and I hope he may live to see full success crown his endeavors.

The attendance of Delegates was small at that year's Convention, partly because of so many of our best men having been drawn to the political Congress at Allahabad, and in part because of the transient disaffection in the Bombay Branch. Tookaram Tatya [78] and the other Bombay friends stayed away, but still the affair went off successfully.

Consistently with my policy to give every chance to my colleagues to try experiments which seemed to them to promise well for the Society's interests, I acceded to their wish that we should try what effect the complete abolition of entrance fees and annual dues, and the trusting for the Society's support to voluntary contributions, would have. Personally, I did not believe in the scheme, though I officially supported it, for our fee-list was so modest that it seemed as if anybody who should object to paying them could not have any real sympathy for our movement, and it would leave us to throw upon our more generous members virtually the whole responsibility of keeping the Society going. But the Convention voted for the change, upon the motion of the representatives of the British and American Sections present; I concurred, and issued the necessary Executive Notices, to clear the way.

The first effect was that angry protests broke out in both the Western Sections; H. P. B. wrote me a violent letter, denouncing me as a vacillator, and liberally reporting what so and so, her friends and colleagues, said about my inconsistency, after having just effected the organisation of a British Section and giving it the right to levy the customary entrance fees and annual dues; while Judge and his party openly revolted, and refused to comply with the new order of things. Secretly, I was rather amused to see how much of a [79] mess was

being made by marplots eager to have a finger in the pie, and was disposed to give them the rope to hang themselves with. It was not long before the experiment failed and we returned to the old method, as will be seen later.

The other important thing done by the Convention of 1888 was the adoption of the policy of reorganising the Society's work on the line of autonomous Sections: this having been the motive prompting me originally to grant, in 1886, a Charter to the American. Section, and, later, one to the new Section at London. The plan had proved an entire success in America, and after two years of testing it in practice it seemed but fair to extend it to all our fields of activity. It was an admirable plan in every respect; local autonomy imposed local responsibility and local propaganda, and involved much personal exertion; the creation of Sections minimised the burden of dull details which had previously so hampered my command of time; and the Society changed from a quasi-autocracy to a constitutional Federation, each part independent as to its internal affairs, but responsible to every other part for its loyal support of the movement and its ideals, and of the Federal Centre, which bound the whole together, like the fasces of the lictor, into an unbreakable bundle. Under this plan the formation of a new Section adds but little to the work of the Adyar staff, but increases to a marked degree the collective strength of the Society, as the house's foundation becomes stronger and [80] stronger with each squared stone that is built into its mass.

In reporting to the Convention of 1888 the passage of the resolution in Council, recommending the change of its functions from an executive to an advisory character, I made in my Annual Address the following declaration of intention: "My offer to retire was rejected by unanimous vote by the Convention of 1885, and I was told that I must serve the Society during my life. I yielded my own inclinations to the sense of duty, and the time has come when I should say, most distinctly and unequivocally, that since I am to stay and be responsible for the progress of the work, I shall not consent to any plan or scheme which hampers me in the performance of my official duty. That duty is, first, to the unseen yet real personages personally known and quite recently seen by me and talked with, who taught me the way of knowledge, and showed me where my work lay waiting a willing worker; next, to my colleague, friend, sister, and teacher, who, with myself and a few others, founded this Society, and has given her services to it these past thirteen years without fee or hope of reward; and, thirdly, to my thousands of other associates in all parts of the world, who are counting upon my steadfastness and practical management for keeping the

Society moving forward in its chosen line of usefulness.” In short, if I was to be again responsible, I meant to manage things as my experience in public affairs showed to be best, and “to be obedient and loyal to the Teacher we two [81] personally know, and loyal and staunch to the colleague you and I and all of us know, and a few appreciate at her true worth. This is my last word on that subject; but in saying it, I do not mean to imply that I shall not freely use my own judgment, independently of Madame Blavatsky’s, in every case calling for my personal action, nor that I shall not be ever most willing and anxious to receive and profit by the counsel of every true person who has at heart the interests of the Society. I cannot please all; it is folly to try; the wise man does his duty as he can see it before him”.

My voyage to Japan was one of the most important events in our Society’s history; and as we shall be coming to it presently, and the results of the tour were astonishing, it will be as well if the clear statement of Mr. Noguchi, the special Delegate sent to persuade me to accept the invitation of the Japanese Buddhists, and to be my escort, as to the then religious condition of Japan, and his fraternal appeal for the sympathies of the Indian public, which so deeply moved his hearers at the Anniversary celebration in Pachiappah’s Hall, Madras, should be included in this narrative. Mr. Noguchi spoke in his own language, but an English translation was read on the occasion. He said:

“Brother Theosophists and Hindu Friends—I am very happy and much honored to address you on the occasion of my first visit to India, a land sacred in the eyes and dear to the hearts of the Japanese and all other Buddhists, as the birthplace of the Founder of [82] our religion, and the country where his eloquent voice uttered its precious teachings. I come from the ‘land of the Rising Sun,’ which lies twenty days’ sail from here by the ocean, in the fastest steamers. Yet it is not to be considered as further away than a single yojana, or even the width of this hall, when we realise the fact that the tie of a common brotherly love really binds us together in a golden chain. That tie is our common interest in a great movement for the revival of religion; the resuscitation of the morality taught and illustrated by our ancestors, and strictly illustrated in their own lives. This movement is that which was begun and has, during the past thirteen years, been directed by the Founders of the Theosophical Society. I am not here to prove that Buddhism is a better religion than yours, but to tell you something about the religious and moral state of my dear country.

“When you hear the facts you will, I am sure, give me and my co-religionists

your loving sympathy and good wishes. For you will at once recognise the truth that Japan is at this moment in almost exactly the same condition as your sacred India was ten years ago, when Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky left America and came to your shores. For ten years they have been helping you to understand, and encouraging you to love, respect, and defend your religion from its unscrupulous enemies.

“They found it lifeless and its followers in despair. They have put life into its enfeebled body and courage into your hearts. You were then almost ashamed to [83] confess yourselves Hindus, but now you are proud to be so called. The day of unchallenged slander and misrepresentation of the faith of your forefathers has gone for ever. You now, knowing how much truth it contains, and what is your duty to your children as regards making them understand it, are brave and confident to silence the liar who attacks it. We, Japanese Buddhists, now ask you to lend us this worker of social miracles, this defender of religion, this teacher of tolerance, for a little time, so that he may do for the religion of my country what he and his colleagues have done for the religion of India. We are praying Colonel Olcott to come and help us; to come and revive the hope of our old men, to put courage in the hearts of our young men, to prove to the graduates of our colleges and universities, and to those who have been sent to America and Europe for education, that Western science is not infallible, and not a substitute, but the natural sister of Religion. He is a Buddhist of many years’ standing. He has helped the Buddhists of Ceylon to work a change for the better in their religion so wonderful that no one could believe it without going to that island and talking with the priests and the people. When he first came there, in the year 1880, things were worse for the Buddhists than they were for you in India in 1879.

“Now Buddhism is reviving, the Buddhists are beginning to be full of hope and courage, schools for Buddhist children have sprung up everywhere, societies have been formed, books are freely published, a [84] semi-weekly journal has been started and has acquired a great influence, and the Colonial Government has gazetted the Wesak Day of May as a Buddhist national holiday. This is the sort of help we need in Japan as badly as a starving man needs food. Mr. Laurence Oliphant, the English enthusiast, a brilliant writer, of mystical and religious tendencies, formerly a member of the British Parliament, says: ‘A moral pall shrouds this earth’s surface, and it is densest where our Occidental civilisation most prevails. Japan was a relatively pure country until she felt the demoralising touch of Western civilisation, and now how sadly has she

deteriorated!’ I am sent here by a very influential national committee to beg Colonel Olcott, our American Brother, to come and give religious food to us. Will you not spare him to do this meritorious work?”

A succinct survey of the names and tenets of the various sects of Japan followed, and his hearers were informed as to the rather demoralised condition of the priesthood, after which Mr. Noguchi closed his address as follows:

“But there are honorable exceptions among the priests; some are really working for Buddhism, but they are few. Where is the higher doctrine? The doctrine is there, but its vital strength is very much reduced. Old Japan is no more; the old grandeur and prosperity of Buddhism, alas! is no more visible. What shall we do? What steps must we take to reform the Buddhists and give life to Buddhism? How shall we wipe off the rust accumulated on the solid gold [85] structure of Buddhism, so that it may outshine the new-made brass structure they are trying to erect? The first important step we must make is the unification of all Buddhists, no matter of what sect they are, nor of what country. Of course, it will be a very difficult task. The second step is to begin to make every priest and layman educated; and this, too, is very difficult, and a work of time. The third step is to reconvert the Japanese to Buddhism: needless to speak of its difficulty, in view of what I have above stated. The fourth step is to encourage the Japanese to take all that is good from Europe, and to reject all the bad. Two opposing forces are now working to influence and mould the intellect of the educated Japanese—one asserting that everything European is good, and the other the contrary. The balance of thought must change towards one scale or the other, and on that the destiny of Japan hangs. What shall we do? This is the echo of the cry which is now reverberating throughout Japan. Our Buddhist brothers have been aroused from their long drowsiness, but there is no help within. To rescue our Buddhists from the thralldom of Western vices we have thought of only one way. I have hinted to you what that is. It is to obtain the unselfish help of Colonel Olcott, the Founder of the Theosophical Society, and Reformer of Religions. We heard of the name of this esteemed and honorable man, and of the good work his Society is doing for Buddhism in Ceylon and elsewhere. All Japanese Buddhists are now waiting his visit, and they [86] have named him (Jamashaka) ‘Bodhisat of the Nineteenth Century’. My dear brother and colleague, Kinza Hirai, ex-President of Kin Society, sent letters asking him to give his services to Japan for the advancement of Buddhism. Mr. Hirai and the Reverend Sano, an influential priest, are forming and organising a Branch of the

Theosophical Society at Kyoto, and they are working vigorously in its interest. They have sent me to this twice-blessed country to attend the Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society at Madras, and after the close of its Session to escort Colonel Olcott to my country as a guest of this Society. In a few days I shall be leaving this for Japan. My stay here and among my Buddhist brothers in Ceylon has been very agreeable, and I leave you with sorrow. I shall not forget the hospitality that I have received here, nor the brothers with whom I have made lasting friendships. Let us help each other and work mutually for the advancement of our ancient religions. We, Buddhists, must form a strong brotherhood of co-religionists, of all parts of the world; and for the realisation of this grand object, work earnestly, constantly, and willingly. We must do good work for the sake of the world, as our Lord Buddha did, and as Colonel Olcott, in a lesser yet still most useful way, is doing. ‘Give me liberty or give me death,’ said Mr. Patrick Henry, the American revolutionary patriot. I will say, ‘Let me die or else do a good work while living.’”

The earnestness of Mr. Noguchi’s delivery seemed to strike a responsive chord in the Indian heart, and [87] he carried with him from the hall the best wishes of all. This was the first time that Japan had made an appeal to a foreign nation for religious help since that historical event in 1584, when a company of Japanese ambassadors, themselves of princely birth, were conducted into the presence of the chief pontiff. Escorted by the cavalry and Swiss guard, accompanied by the foreign embassies, all the Roman princes and nobility, with the officials of the cardinals and of the Vatican, they went in a glittering procession through the streets of Rome, the guns of the castle and those of the Vatican thundering their welcome. Prostrating themselves at the Pope’s feet, they declared that they “had come from the extremities of the East to acknowledge in the presence of the Pope, the Vicar of Jesus Christ, and to render obedience to him in the name of the princes of whom they were the envoys”. The reading of the letters of credence was followed by a most fervid discourse by Father Gonzalez, and the whole of Christendom was thrown into agitation by the dramatic aspect of this unique occasion.¹² The event was the sequel to the long and adroit labors of Jesuit missionaries, who had skilfully appealed to the Japanese sense of devoted loyalty to their sovereign, and by changing the external aspects of Christianity to conform to those of the ancestral Shinto cult, had made the Japanese believe that the Western religion was, of all others, the best fitted to exalt the [88] grandeur of the emperor and the happiness and dignity of the nation. But in a little more than three decades the steel hand under

the velvet glove was felt to be clutching at the throne and life of the nation, and there followed one of the bloodiest, most remorseless persecutions of perverts to be read of in history; the new religion was extirpated from the land, and its last missionaries swept into the sea. The ports of Japan were then closely sealed, and for two hundred and fifty years she continued to jealously guard herself by strict seclusion from the possibility of further contamination by foreigners. This is the secret of her isolation, known to comparatively few outside the class of sinologues.

When Japan was once again opened to foreign intercourse by the American Commodore Perry, and change became the passion of the day, an imperial Commission was ordered to report upon the advisability of adopting Christianity as the State religion, in order to improve the moral condition of the people. "The result," says Hearn (quoted by Mr. Knapp), "confirmed the impartial verdict of Kämpfer in the seventeenth century upon the ethics of the Japanese. 'They profess a great respect and veneration for the gods, and worship them in various ways. And I think I may affirm that in the practice of virtue, in purity of life and outward devotion, they far outdo the Christians.'"¹³ The Commission reported against the adoption of the Western religion "on the ground that, judging, from the moral condition of the West, [89] Christianity was not there so potent an influence for right living as were in Japan the religions which had so long held sway among the island people". Neither Mr. Knapp, nor Lafcadio Hearn, nor any other unbiassed modern observer believes that Japan will ever come under the sway of Christianity so long as there survives any hope of independent national existence. During the mighty revolution in every other department of thought and life that the empire has been the scene of, none has occurred in that of religion. "From the benefits of this movement," says Knapp, "which bore so many features of Western life across the Pacific, Christianity has been the one thing excluded; and it was deliberately excluded because, after full investigation, it was deemed prejudicial to the interests of morality" (p. 218). "It is an open secret that the American commission recently sent to Japan to consider the crisis in mission work there was confronted with problems which the national spirit has evoked, not only in matters of administration, but also in those affecting supposed essentials of Christian belief. It is at least wholly safe to predict that every hope of sectarian aggrandisement on Japanese soil which has been cherished by any of the numberless denominations who have sent their propagandist forces there is doomed to disappointment. The Christianity which gains a foothold or any lasting influence in the empire will be neither

Presbyterian, nor Methodist, nor Unitarian Christianity. It will not be even American, nor English, nor German, [90] nor Roman Christianity. It will be, if anything at all, an essentially Japanese faith, based upon and assimilated with the old loyalties... In her faith, as in her polity, Japan will remain, as always in the past, the unconquered Island Realm” (p. 222).

At the time of the Noguchi commission I had none of my present familiarity with his nation, but I loved them as I do all Oriental peoples, instinctively, and with my whole heart, and in accepting his invitation I felt that with love and sincerity one may unlock all doors that lead to the popular heart. I knew, from experiences in India, Ceylon, and Burma, that modern education but paints a gloss over the outer man, leaving the inner self what heredity and Karma have made it: I felt that even so feeble an agency as one man’s voice must arouse the dormant religious sentiment and call back at least the most earnest of the people from the slimy path of greed and worldly success into the clean, broad road traced out by the Buddha, in which their forefathers had trod for thirteen hundred years. It would not be I, but the resistless power of the Buddha Dharma that would be pitted against the forces of irreligion and moral revolt. When we were driving home from the place of meeting, Noguchi expressed his wonder that so huge an audience had listened to him in such perfect courtesy and silence; saying that I must expect nothing to equal it from my Japanese audiences, who were in the habit of interrupting public speakers with protests and comments, and sometimes making a good deal of disturbance.

[91] I bade him not distress himself on that score, for it had never happened within my experience to be interrupted when speaking, perhaps because I kept my hearers so busy thinking as to give their thoughts no chance to wander. The result—as will be seen later—proved me to be right, for a more courteous reception than that given me would have been impossible to conceive of.

The last Delegate to the Convention of 1888 left Adyar on the 30th (December), and we of the household enjoyed the calm after the storm of clashing opinions. On the last day I wrote: “Thus closes the year 1888, which has been rife with disagreeable incidents, trials, and obstacles of sorts, yet on the whole prosperous. The resignations of Subba Row, Oakley and others bring evil sequences, among them the discontent, almost rebellion, of Tookaram, who has been misled by hasty judgment prompted by X.’s machinations. The outlook for 1889 is much better. We have got rid of a certain pestiferous fellow who kept us all in misery.”

Thus, then, we roll up the scroll from which our notes of the year's history have been copied, and lay it on the table of Chitragupta, the Record-keeper of Yama, for production at that future day when the deeds of our lives have to be scrutinised by the Lords of Karma.

CHAPTER VI

VISIT TO JAPAN

(1889)

MY departure for Japan having been fixed for the 10th of January, I had quite enough to do to get out the Annual Report and put things in order generally within the preceding few days. Dharmapala, who had decided to accompany us, left on the 1st for Colombo to get ready, and Noguchi and I embarked on the appointed day. The passage to Colombo was smooth and pleasant, and a lot of Buddhist friends met us on arrival. The High Priest, Sumangala Thero, awaited us at our Theosophical Headquarters in Maliban Street, and came again the next day for a long and friendly talk. Pandit Batuvantudave, the learned Sanskritist, as Buddhist Registrar of Marriages under the Ordinance which I had persuaded Lord Derby and Sir Arthur Gordon (Governor of Ceylon) to have passed, celebrated a marriage between co-religionists on the 14th, in my presence, and in his address to the bridal couple mentioned the part I had had in bringing about this reform in the old marriage laws.

[93]

Attendance at public meetings, reception, and making of visits, a grand dinner given by the Colombo Branch, a public lecture or two, presiding at school celebrations, and other matters, took up all my time, and sent me to bed each night tired and sleepy. On the evening of the 17th we had a most dramatic send off from a crowded meeting convened to hear the High Priest lecture on Bana. It was stifling hot in our packed hall, and the enthusiasm bubbled over. Sumangala Thero gave a most eloquent and kindly discourse, setting forth the magnitude of the task which I had undertaken, handing me an engrossed Sanskrit letter of credence to the Chief Priests of Japanese Buddhism, which assured them of the sympathy and good-will that they might count on from their co-religionists of the Southern Church. In the course of his remarks he reminded his hearers of the historical incident of the Buddhist monk, Punna Thero, who, when starting on a foreign mission of propaganda, was interrogated by the Buddha as to the course he should adopt in case he should be refused a hearing, should he be reviled, opposed, stoned, persecuted or killed, declared his readiness to bear all, suffer all, and yield up even life if needs be to spread the Dharma among foreign

nations who had not yet enjoyed the inestimable blessing of hearing it preached. He applied the lesson to my case, and exhorted the Sinhalese to prove their devotion by deeds of self-sacrifice. In conclusion, he said: "He is the only person who could undertake and carry out this missionary work for Buddhism. It [94] is well, therefore, that our Japanese brothers have heard of the great good that he has done for our religion, and have sent for him to help them also." After complimenting Dharmapala and saying that "he is worthy to share the high honor of his task, and be the first Sinhalese who sets foot upon the shores of Japan," [an error, since I met a Sinhalese merchant there], he added: "I invoke upon their heads the blessings of the Devas, and I ask you all to speed them on their way with your heartiest good wishes."¹⁴ When, at last, we left the hall for the steamer and passed out into the moonlit street, the welkin rang with cries of "Sâdhu! Sâdhu"! and Noguchi's and Dharmapala's bosoms swelled with emotion, as mine did, and our hearts were warmed with hope and infused with courage to face the difficulties before us. Yet, in comparison with the striking pageantry of the scene at Rome in 1584, when the Japanese ambassadors to the Pope asked his religious help, how modest and unnoticeable were the conditions under which our present visit was taking place: a single schoolmaster, representing a small committee of enthusiasts, mostly young men, comes and takes me by the hand and leads me to Japan, not to build up Christianity, but to revive Buddhism. Yet the sequel will show that in this, as in many other cases, great results may follow the employment of insignificant agencies. So superstitious have I become in the matter of the association [95] of the numbers 7, 17, and 27 with our Society's most important events that I confess to having taken it as a good augury for this present tour that we embarked on the "Djemnah" on the 17th of the month.

This was my first long voyage on a French mail steamer, and I was delighted with the arrangements on board. Travelling second-class, as I almost always do, from motives of economy, I found that the whole deck was free to us to occupy day and night; we mixed on terms of equality with the saloon passengers, and were not made to feel as if we were social pariahs, as one is aboard the British liners. Our table was the same as that of the saloon save in the number of entrées and our not having a huge tiffin at 1 p.m. to gorge on top of a 10 o'clock breakfast: the officers were most courteous, the servants as respectful and attentive as those in good families, and the baggage-room was accessible daily between fixed hours, and one had only to descend a short staircase to get at it. We reached Singapore on the sixth day, and were visited by some Sinhalese who

are settled there, and with whom we organised, on the next day, a local T. S. Branch, with Mr. B. P. De Silva, the well-known jeweller, as President, and nineteen members. We sailed the same day and reached the coquettish little Cambodian town of Saigon on the 27th, Sunday. Like Pondicherry, Chandernagore, and all other French colonial towns, Saigon bears the distinct national stamp. There are cafés, marble-topped little tables on the sidewalks, blue and white signs on the street corners, shops that [96] remind one of the Palais Royal, a theatre subsidised by Government, military men walking about in uniform, civilians with tiny rosettes in their button-holes, and other external signs that unmistakably indicate the presence of Gallic occupancy. There was a performance of Romeo and Juliet as a grand opera that night, to which all of us passengers went. The auditorium would have astonished an untravelled Frenchman, as the building stood in its own large grounds, was open to all the breezes by arches at the sides, and there were broad verandahs on which one could stroll between the acts. It was a pleasant outing to break the monotony of a sea voyage. The Zoological Garden of Saigon is very pretty, and at that time possessed a splendid collection of birds of all kinds—as fine a one as I ever saw. I came near being compelled to remember it distinctly, as a gigantic scarlet-plumed flamingo took a notion to chase me, and I would have fared ill from his strong beak if his attention had not been diverted at the critical moment.

On the 28th we sailed for Hong Kong, and on our way began to feel the touch of winter, poor Dharmapala shivering and suffering from the cold, icy wind. Hong Kong was found in gala dress for the Chinese New Year (February 1), and we were greatly interested in all the sights. The men and women were gorgeously apparelled, the children, funny moon-faced mites, with their cheeks highly rouged and heads shaved, dragging after their parents, the streets full of jinrickshas, palanquins, and uncouth carts, fire-crackers [97] snapping, peripatetic restaurant men carrying their charcoal kitchen-stoves and cooked food by poles across their shoulders, and many other strange things to see.

The next, day we sailed for Shanghai, and went right into a cold air-current which made us huddle around the cabin stove, and me to realise what life in the tropics did for Western constitutions. Dharmapala began to suffer rheumatic pains in his feet and limbs, and to wish himself back in warm Ceylon. Anchored at Woosung, the river harbor of Shanghai, a snow-storm struck us, and the prospects were so uninviting that we stuck to the ship and the stove, and let the other passengers go up the river in the Company's big launch without us. On the

6th we moved on towards Kobé (Japan) and had a bright, sunny day, fairly comfortable in the sun, but bitter cold in the shade. Up to noon on the 7th the ship made 284 miles within the twenty-four hours, and we got into the warmer air of the black current, which sweeps across the ocean to Japan, and modifies the temperatures of both air and water. A pretty island with snowy mountain peaks was sighted off the coast of Korea, and on the 8th we were sailing through the inland sea of Japan, amid surroundings that were so beautiful as to have made it world-famed. At times it seemed to me like sailing up past the Hudson River highlands or through Lake George.

We reached Kobé at daylight on 9th February, and before I had finished dressing, some members of [98] the committee of invitation came to my cabin and testified their delight in welcoming me to their country. On the pier, ranged in a line, were a number of Buddhist priests of all the sects, who saluted me with that exquisite politeness for which the nation is celebrated. Of course, the first thing to strike the eye of one familiar with the appearance and dress of the bhikkus of Southern Buddhism was the entire contrast in the costume of the Japanese monks. Instead of the yellow robe, the bare head, leg, arm, and foot, here we saw them clothed in voluminous garments with huge drooping sleeves, their heads covered in most cases, and the feet protected by tailor-made socks, and sandals with wooden or other soles. They wear under-cloths, and kimonos or outer coats, sometimes several, and, in the cold season, wadded with cotton to protect them from the severity of the climate. Some are made of silk, others of cotton. There are parts of Japan where snow falls to the depth of eight feet, and on some of the mountain peaks the snow never melts. Clearly, then, the robes of India, Burma, and Ceylon are quite unfit for the northern lands where Buddhism flourishes. Forming a procession of jinrickshas, and supplying us with one each, and taking charge of our luggage, they took us to the most ancient temple of the Ten Dai sect, crowds of priests and people following, where I was formally welcomed, and made a suitable reply. In the evening I held a conversazione which ran into a lecture. In the afternoon I had been to the American Consul and [99] procured my passport to Kyoto, without which I could not have travelled under then existing laws. The name of the venerable Chief Priest of the temple was Jiko Katto. He treated me with the greatest urbanity, and assured me that the whole nation were waiting to see and hear me, as a defender of Buddhism. After a second lecture, the next morning we left for Kyoto by train, and I found a multitude of well-wishers awaiting me in the station, and crowding the street in front. We were escorted in procession to Nakamaraya's Hotel, whence, after a

rest and some refreshments, I was taken to the great Choo-in Temple of the Jodo sect, and in the “Empress’s Room” held a reception until nightfall. The display of costly lacquered screens and panels, artistic bronzes and paintings on silk was magnificent. The room is set apart as a royal apartment for the use of H. M. the Empress on the occasions of her visits. It was given me for use for functions of sorts during my stay at the ancient capital.

After dinner, American-like, I went sight-seeing with an interpreter and had my first experience with a jinricksha. It is an excellent vehicle—provided that the cooly be sober enough to keep his footing. Mine wasn’t; and the first thing I knew, he had fallen flat, and I came sailing through the air over him, but, fortunately, being sure-footed, I landed with one foot at each side of his head, no worse for the adventure. We strolled through Theatre Street, or at any rate the street which is lined on both sides with theatres [100] and show-places of all kinds, and stopped to see a performance of trained birds, which did many wonderful tricks. But I was glad enough to get to bed early; as I was pretty well tired out. Poor Dharmapala was laid up with neuralgia in the feet, suffering cruelly.

The next morning I attended by invitation an imposing ceremony in Choo-in Temple, in which some 600 priests took part. It was to celebrate the voluntary promulgation of a Constitution by H. M. the Emperor, an act which has been rightly characterised as one of unprecedented magnanimity. The most undisputedly autocratic sovereign on earth, out of profound regard for the welfare of his country and his people, had given them the political blessing of a Constitutional Government; not driven to it by rebellious barons, like King John of England, but of his own free will, and because he loved his people with his whole heart. The ceremonies at the Temple included the chanting of hundreds of verses to the rhythmic tapping of drums, which produced vibrations of a strong hypnotic character. At the High Priest’s request I stood before the high altar and in front of the statue of the Buddha, and recited the service of the Panch a Sila in Pali, as it is done in Ceylon. They were all so interested that not one moved until I had finished. Was it not a unique experience for an American man to be standing there, as one of his race had never stood before, in the presence of those hundreds of priests and thousands of laymen, intoning the simple sentences which synthesise [101] the obligations assumed by every professing Buddhist of the Southern Church? I could not help smiling to myself when thinking of the horror that would have been felt by any of my Puritan ancestors of the

seventeenth century could they have looked forward to this calamitous day! I am sure that if I had been born among them at Boston or Hartford, I should have been hanged for heresy on the tallest tree within easy reach of their infant settlement. And very glad I am to believe it.

The first Buddhist images and sutras were introduced from Korea into Japan, according to that historical book *Nihongi*, in the year A.D. 552, but the religion did not at once gain popularity. “In the beginning of the ninth century the priest Kūkai, or more generally known as Kōbō Daishi, compounded out of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Shintō (ancestor worship), a system of doctrine called Riōbu Shintō, the most prominent characteristic of which was the theory that Shintō deities were nothing more than transmigrations of Buddhist divinities. Buddhism, thus fairly introduced, ere long obtained complete ascendancy; it became the religion of the whole nation. By different emperors grants were made to Buddhist temples and monasteries, but after the revolution of 1868 these were withdrawn, and Buddhism has been virtually disestablished since 1st January, 1874.”¹⁵ Certain temples do, however, still receive governmental patronage, but it is because the monks act as guardians of the tombs of sovereigns; [102] the others, to the number of some 70,000, if I am right, are supported by voluntary subscriptions and other gifts of the pious. Mr. J. Morris¹⁶ notes the coincidence that just when Buddhism was being introduced into Japan by monks from China and Korea, Catholic missionaries were Christianising the kingdom of Northumbria; and as the influence of King Oswy was thrown into the scale in that country in favor of the new religion, so the announced preference of the Empress Gemmei for the rights of Buddhism aided very materially to establish it in Japan—both events going to prove, as one might say, the principle that at certain epochs and places nucleating centres of religious power are developed, making them the initial points of circling waves that run outward into the mass of mankind.

On the 12th of February I paid my respects to the Chief Priest of the Shin Gon sect, the Esoteric Buddhists of Japan, it is said. We had a long and interesting talk, during the course of which it came out that we held many ideas in common. The learned prelate showed me the greatest good-will, and promised me a welcome from his whole body of followers. At 2 p.m. I lectured in the vast preaching-hall of Choo-in Temple to an audience of about 2,000. Mr. Kinza Hirai interpreted, and my remarks on the state of Buddhism were received with storms of applause. The next day I had a grand reception at the chief temple of

the Western Hongwanji, one of the two [103] great divisions of the Shin Shu sect.¹⁷ The sacred building was decked with the national ensign, and, in compliment to me and the Ceylon Buddhists, the Buddhist symbolical flag, which the Colombo Buddhist T. S. has introduced in the Island of Ceylon. This charming courtesy was shown me throughout my whole tour in Japan, the two flags being grouped together at every hotel, railway station, and temple visited. On the occasion in question 600 pupils of the Temple College were drawn up in two ranks to salute me as I walked between. By request I addressed them, their teachers and the priests, on the subject of education and religion, after which a collation of cakes, etc., was served. The visitor to Japan is astonished to see the exquisite taste displayed in the preparation of these products of the baker's art; the cakes being made into the shapes of flowers, so deftly colored and moulded that in the light momi wood boxes in which they are laid in cotton, in layers of trays, one might fancy one was receiving a present of hothouse blooms. This developed artistic sense shows itself in every detail of Japanese life—it is ingrained in the national character. In the serving of food, the very vegetables hidden under the inverted lacquer saucers, when uncovered, are seen to have been arranged with an eye to contrast of colors, and to make the meal more appetising by an appeal to the palate through the sense [104] of sight. Oh, the dear, kind people! who could help loving them after once seeing them in their own homes!

A similar reception was given me the next day at the Eastern Hongwanji, the body to which belongs Mr. Bunyin Nanjio, the brilliant Sanskrit pupil of Professor Max Müller, and with him co-editor of *Sukhâ-vati-Vyûha*, a description of the Land of Bliss.¹⁸ and I am under obligations to him for kindly interpreting for me on several occasions. I was shown over the huge temple, which was then nearly completed, and which was the finest in the country. They showed me huge cables, each 15 inches thick and 18 yards long, entirely made of tresses of hair cut from the heads of pious women who had offered them to be thus used for hauling the timbers of the new shrine! Did anyone ever hear of a similar act of devotion? On this occasion I received my first present of books for the Adyar Library, the nucleus of the large and rich collection which we possess, thanks to the generosity of our Japanese friends. My third lecture in Kyoto was given that evening to the usual crowd of patient listeners. Later, I sat for my portrait to a very famous artist, whose name I was not fortunate enough to catch. Whatever came of it I have never heard.

On the 15th I went to Osaka, the second largest city of Japan, Kyoto ranking third. It is to the empire what Liverpool or Glasgow is to Great Britain, or Boston or Philadelphia to the United States. It is [105] the headquarters of one of the six military divisions of Japan. One of the quarters of the city bears the name of Tennôji, the Temple of the Heavenly Kings, from the existence there of one of the most sacred fanes of the Buddhist religion—the one, in fact, which I visited on the 17th. I was told that it is the oldest temple in Japan. There is an ancient revolving library arrangement there, the books being shelved on revolving frames which may be turned in search of any desired volume, just like the modern revolving bookcases, quite recently rediscovered, and now in general use; only these at Tennôji are huge structures, and have stood there for no end of years. An interesting feature of this place is a temple for the babies who have left their weeping mothers' arms to pass on towards Sukhâvati, the Japanese heaven. It is filled with the clothes, toys, and other loved objects which formerly belonged to the little ones, and a bell hangs there for the mother to ring as she offers up her prayer, that the ears now closed in death but reopened in the brighter sphere may hear her heart-cry, and the child answer by coming near to feel the love that rushes out in greeting. The senior trustee of the temple gave me an ancient Japanese gold coin, flat, thin, with rounded ends, and an inscription in the Chinese character. I lectured here to a Prisoners' Reform Society.

On my arrival at Osaka on the 15th, before reaching my lodging-place, the Un-rai-ji Temple of the Nichiren sect, I had to visit a girls' school called "So-gai-suchi-een" and address the pupils, and also a large [106] boys' school, "Kyo-ritsu-gakko," and address them. The damp cold at the former place was so trying to me, standing as I did, according to Japanese custom, in my thin cotton stockings, that I took a severe cold, which threatened an attack of pneumonia; but the timely use of a hot foot-bath and warmed blankets, followed by a refreshing sleep, averted the calamity. Dharmapala, however, did not fare so well, for it intensified the neuralgia in his feet to such a degree that he had to go to the hospital at Kyoto, and stop there until the very last days of my tour. The kindness shown him by all, young and old, hospital officials and outsiders, was simply marvellous. A Society of young Buddhists constituted themselves his nurses, and stopped with him night and day, anticipating his every want, and ministering to him in loving devotion. This national custom of putting off the shoes on entering a house or temple is a dangerous one for foreigners, and I suffered much from it until I learnt from a kind English friend at Kobé to carry with me a pair of woollen felt chaussons, such as the French peasants wear

inside their wooden sabots in winter, to put on at the door after removing my shoes. After that there was no further difficulty. I recommend friends who may contemplate a tour in Japan to profit by this warning. At 10 a.m. on the 16th I went to Cho-sen-ji Temple, of the Shin Shu sect (a ride of three miles in jinrickshas), and lectured; thence to the house of Mr. Tamuda for tiffin; and, later, to the Nam-ba-mido Temple, of the same sect as the above, and lectured to an audience [107] of 2,500 persons. On the morning of the 18th I returned to Kyoto, leaving Noguchi behind, sick abed.

Things had now reached a critical point as regarded my Japanese tour. It now came to my knowledge that the committee of young men who had invited me had not command of the money that would be needed for the tour, and that they had even been obliged to charge 10 sen for admission to my Kyoto lectures to cover the preliminary expenses. At this juncture the wealthy Shin Shu directors had come forward and offered to take over the tour and pay for everything, on condition that the original committee should withdraw and leave the management of affairs in their hands. This proposal at once put things on a footing of absolute certainty as regarded the success of the tour, but it did not satisfy me, for it would virtually hand me over to one only of the nine principal sects of Buddhists to escort me throughout the empire, thus possibly making the people at large to believe that I specially favored the views of Shin Shu. Now this sect presents the curious anomaly that their priests marry and have families, whereas celibacy was particularly enjoined on his bhikkus by the Buddha. They get over this by claiming to be only samaneras, or, as we should say, clerks in holy orders, not full priests. Be that as it may, it was clearly injudicious for me to consent to the arrangement—made with the committee without my knowledge—so I rebelled. I sent out invitations to the Chief Priests of all the sects to meet me in Council in the Empress's Room at Choin-

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Temple on 19th February and listen to what I should have to say. To attend this Council I returned from Osaka on the 18th, as above mentioned. The meeting was, I was told, unprecedented in Japanese history, such a thing as a General Council of the Heads of all the sects never having been held before. That did not trouble me, for I had been bringing together into friendly relations in India and Ceylon, for years past, priests, Pandits, and other people of various sects, and I felt within me that sense of power and of certainty which made me sure that I should succeed. The fact is that the instantaneous and enthusiastic

welcome given me from the moment of landing, and the vast crowds that had thronged to hear my message of brotherly love, had placed me in a position to dictate terms, and I had not the least intention to let my visit be exploited for the profit of any one sect, however rich or powerful it might be. I fancy that this decision of mine helped to influence the several sectarian Heads to come and hear my views, however determined they might be not to let themselves be persuaded into concurrence in any plan, even though most ingeniously and speciously set forth, which should seem likely to assign them individually a place that would lessen their importance in the eyes of their followers and the general public. At all events, the Council met at the designated time and was a complete success, as the continuation of my narrative in the next chapter will show.

CHAPTER VII

SUCCESSFUL CRUSADE IN JAPAN

(1889)

THE sun shone bright for our meeting; and its reflected light made every point of gold in the lacquer panels to sparkle, every sheeny surface in the embroidered satin decorations to blossom out in its lovely hues. A long table had been placed in the middle of the room, with chairs at each side, which were to be occupied, at my suggestion, by the Chief Priests, in the order of their seniority of age: a small table in one corner was meant for the interpreter, Mr. Matsumura, of Osaka. I was invited to take the seat at the top of the long table, but respectfully declined, saying that as I held no official rank in their order, no proper place could be assigned me; as an outsider and a layman, it would be more respectful if I sat at the small table with my interpreter. Second point scored, the first one being the arrangement of seats according to age, it being a fundamental principle among the Orientals to yield precedence to age. This brushed away, at the same time, the difficulty as to which sect was entitled to [110] the highest place at the board; a point of etiquette as scrupulously held to as it was by that fiery chieftain who said: "Where the Douglas sits is the head of the table." Among the delegates were several very old men with grey hair and bent forms, who kept their hands and bodies warm in the unheated room with brass braziers placed before them on the table and an ingenious contrivance, a curved tin case with perforated cover, to fit around the pit of the stomach, inside a sash, with a sausage of powdered charcoal in a thin paper cover inside, which, being lighted at one end, consumes away very slowly and gives a pleasant warmth to the body.

All preliminaries being thus disposed of, I first had read by Mr. Matsumura a Japanese translation of the salutatory letter in Sanskrit to the Buddhists of Japan from Sumangala Thero—mentioned above—in which he begged his co-religionists to receive me as a zealous and consistent Buddhist, and help me to realise my plans. Then followed the reading of a joint note of similar purport from the principal priests of both Sinhalese Buddhist sects. I then read in English my address, in which I defined my views and hopes with regard to the present tour, and my reasons for convening the meeting. Inasmuch as the consequences of the meeting were of a permanently important nature, and the event has

become historical in Japan, I venture to copy from the Theosophist Supplement for April, 1889, the text of the document in full.

[111]

“REVEREND SIRS,

“I have invited you to meet me to-day on neutral ground, for private consultation.

“What can we do for Buddhism?

“What ought we to do?

“Why should the two great halves of the Buddhist Church be any longer ignorant and indifferent about each other?

“Let us break the long silence; let us bridge the chasm of 2,300 years; let the Buddhists of the North and those of the South be one family again.

“The great schism took place at the second council of Vaisâli, and among its causes were these questions: ‘May salt be preserved in horn by the monks for future use?’ ‘May solid food be eaten by them after the hour of noon?’ ‘May fermented drinks which look like water be drunk?’ ‘May seats covered with cloths be used?’ ‘May gold and silver be received by the order?’

“Does it seem worth while that the vast Buddhist family should be estranged from each other for such questions as these? Which is the most important, venerable Sirs, that salt shall or shall not be stored up for future use, or that the Doctrines of Buddhism shall be preached to all mankind? I am come from India—a journey of 5,000 miles, and a long one for a man of nearly 60 years of age—to ask you this question? Answer me, O chief priests of the twelve Japanese sects: I charge you upon your consciences to answer. I have brought you a written appeal from your [112] co-religionists of Ceylon and a Sanskrit letter from the learned Sumangala, High Priest of Adam’s Peak, begging you to receive their brotherly salutations, and to listen to me and help me carry out my religious work. I have no special, private word to speak to any of you, but one word for all. My mission is not to propagate the peculiar doctrines of any sect, but to unite you all in one sacred undertaking. Each of you I recognise as a Buddhist and a brother. All have one common object. Listen to the words of the learned Chinese pilgrim and scholar, Hiouen Thsang: ‘The schools of philosophy are always in conflict, and the noise of their passionate discussions rises like the waves of the sea. Heretics of the different sects attach themselves to particular

teachers, and by different routes walk to the same goal.’ I have known learned priests engage in bitter controversy about the most childish subjects, while the Christian missionaries were gathering the children of their neighborhoods into schools and teaching them that Buddhism is a false religion! Blind to their first duty as priests, they thought only of quarrelling about unimportant matters. I have no respect for such foolish priests, nor can I expect them to help me to spread Buddhism in distant countries, or defend it at home from its bitter, rich, and indefatigable enemies. But my helpers and well-wishers will be all sincere, intelligent, broad-minded Buddhist priests and laymen, of every country and nation.

“We have these two things to do. In Buddhist countries, to revive our religion; purify it of its [113] corruptions; prepare elementary and advanced books for the education of the young and the information of adults, and expose the falsehoods circulated against it by its opponents. Where these latter are trying to persuade children to change their family religion for another, we must, strictly as a measure of self-defence, and not in any angry or intolerant spirit—condemned by our religion—collect and publish all available facts about the merits and demerits of the new religion offered as better than Buddhism. And then it is our duty—as taught by the Lord Buddha himself—to send teachers and preachers to distant lands, such as Europe and America, to tell the millions now disbelieving Christianity, and looking about for some religion to replace it, that they will find what will convince their reason and satisfy their heart in Buddhism. So completely has intercourse been broken between Northern and Southern Buddhists since the Vaisâli Council, you do not know each other’s beliefs nor the contents of your respective Scriptures. One of the first tasks before you, therefore, is to have the books compared critically by learned scholars, to ascertain which portions are ancient and which modern, which authoritative and which forgeries. Then the results of these comparisons must be published throughout all Buddhist countries, in their several vernaculars. We may have to convene another great Council at some sacred place, such as Buddha-Gaya or Anuradhapura, before the publications mentioned are authorised. What a grand and hopeful spectacle that would be! May we live to see it!

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“Now kindly understand that, in making all these plans for the defence and propagation of Buddhism, I do so in the twofold character of an individual Buddhist and President of the Theosophical Society, acting through and on

behalf of its Buddhist Division. Our great Brotherhood comprises already 174 Branches, distributed over the world as follows: India, Ceylon, and Burma 129; Europe 13; America 25; Africa 1; Australasia 2; West Indies 2; Japan 1; Singapore 1. Total, 174 Branches of our Society, all under one general management. When first I visited Ceylon (in the year 1880) and formed several Branches, I organised a Buddhist Division of the Society, to include all Buddhist Branches that might be formed in any part of the world. What I now offer you is to organise such Branches throughout Japan, and to register them, along with our Buddhist Branches in Ceylon, Burma, and Singapore, in the “Buddhist Division”; so that you may all be working together for the common object of promoting the interests of Buddhism. This will be an easy thing to do. You have already many such Societies, each trying to do something, but none able to effect as much as you could by uniting your forces with each other and with the sister Societies in foreign countries. It would cost you a great deal of money and years of labor to establish foreign agencies like ours, but I offer you the chance of having these agencies ready-made, without your being put to any preliminary expenses. And since our Buddhist Division has been working for Buddhism without you for [115] the past ten years, I doubt if you could find more trustworthy or zealous co-operators. The people of Ceylon are too poor and too few in number (only some 2,000,000 of Buddhists) to undertake any such large scheme as I propose, but you and they together could do it successfully. If you ask how we should organise our forces, I point you to our great enemy, Christianity, and bid you look at their large and wealthy Bible, Tract, Sunday-school, and Missionary Societies—the tremendous agencies they support to keep alive and spread their religion. We must form similar Societies, and make our most practical and honest men of business their managers. Nothing can be done without money. The Christians spend millions to destroy Buddhism; we must spend to defend and propagate it. We must not wait for some few rich men to give the capital: we must call upon the whole nation. The millions spent for the missionaries are mainly contributed by poor people and their children: yes, their children, I say, for they teach their children to deny themselves sweets and toys and give the money to convert you to Christianity. Is not that a proof of their interest in the spread of their religion? What are you doing to compare with it? Where are your monster Buddhist Publication Societies, your Foreign Mission Societies, Missionaries in foreign lands? I travel much, but have not heard of them in any country of Europe or America. There are many Christian schools and churches in Japan, but is there a Japanese Buddhist school or temple in

London, or [116] Paris, or Vienna, or New York? If not, why not? You know as well as I that our religion is better than Christianity, and that it would be a blessed thing if the people of Christendom were to adopt it: why, then, have you not given them the chance? You are the watchmen at the gates of our religion, O chief priests! why do you slumber when the enemy is trying to undermine its walls? Yet, though you neglect your duty, Buddhism is rapidly spreading in Christian countries from several causes. First of all its intrinsic merit, then its scientific character, its spirit of love and kindness, its embodiment of the idea of justice, its logical self-consistency. Then the touching sweetness of the story of the life of Sakhya Muni, which has touched the hearts of multitudes of Christians, as recounted in poem and story. There is one book called *The Light of Asia*, a poem by Sir Edwin Arnold, of which several hundred thousand copies have been sold, and which has done more for Buddhism than any other agency. Then there are and have been great authors and philologists like Professor Max Müller, Messrs. Burnouf, De Rosily, St. Hilaire, Rhys Davids, Beal, Fausböll, Bigandet, and others, who have written about the Lord Buddha in the most sympathetic terms. And among the agencies to be noticed is the Theosophical Society, of which I am President. The Buddhist Catechism, which I compiled for the Sinhalese Buddhists eight-years ago, has already been published in fifteen different languages. A great authority told me recently in Paris that there were not less than 12,000 professed [117] Buddhists in France alone, and in America I am sure there must be at least 50,000. The auspicious day has come for us to put forth our united efforts. If I can persuade you to join hands with your brothers in Ceylon and elsewhere, I shall think I am seeing the dawn of a more glorious day for Buddhism. Venerable Sirs, hearken to the words of your ignorant yet sincere American co-religionist. Be up and doing. When the battle is set, the hero's place is at the front: which of you shall I see acting the hero in this desperate struggle between truth and superstition, between Buddhism and its opponents?"

To put everything on a practical footing, I suggested the formation of a General Committee of Buddhist affairs, to comprise representatives of all their sects, and to act for the general interest of Buddhism, not for anyone sect or subdivision. This plan I urged upon them very strenuously. I added that I positively refused to make the tour in Japan unless I could do it under their conjoint auspices, for otherwise my appeals would be taken as though made on behalf of the one sect having the tour in charge, and their influence minimised. I warned them that the Christian missionaries were vigilant and zealous, and would spare no effort to throw discredit upon my mission, not even the

employment of calumny and falsehood, as they had done in Ceylon and in India since we first began our labors there. Finally, I gave notice that unless they did form such a Joint Committee I would take the next steamer back to my place of [118] departure. Dharmapala, being somewhat better that day, was carried to the meeting in a chair and sat through the session. I am not sure, now that I come to look back at it, but that those venerable pontiffs, spiritual teachers of 39,000,000 Japanese and incumbents of about 70,000 temples, must have thought me as dictatorial a fellow as my countryman Commodore Perry..It doesn't matter now, since my terms were accepted; the Joint Committee, since known as the Indo-Busseki-Kofuku-Kwai—I think that is the title—was formed, the preliminary outlay of the Young Men's Committee was refunded to them, and thenceforth my programme was laid out by the Committee so as to take me to every important Buddhist centre throughout the empire, and to have me become the guest of each of the sects and give my lectures at selected temples of each. In the course of the tour a group photograph was taken of the members of the Managing Committee, myself and Mr. Matsumura, and may be seen by visitor's to our Adyar Headquarters.

The 20th of February is noted in my Diary as a quiet day, a rest after the stiff work of the Council. I consented to visit Yokohama on receipt of telegraphic advices that all was ready for us. I had many visitors on that and the three succeeding days, but the pleasure was marred by the sight of the sufferings of Dharmapala, who was in almost constant agony. I found time for a visit to a new silk-spinning mill, the machinery for which was being set up by a representative of the firm of Birmingham manufacturers. He called my attention [119] to the super-excellence of the plant, which was the best that money could buy—the finest, he assured me, he had ever installed in the course of his twenty years' connection with the business. It struck us both that if the Japanese practised the same wise foresight in all their commencements of manufacturing enterprises, they would become most formidable competitors in the marts of the world's commerce. We have seen during the succeeding ten years how safe was our prognostic.

On the 24th I went to Otsu and lectured in a great hall at the border of the Lake Biwa. A group of Christians were in the audience at first, but when they heard me expounding the beauties of Buddha Dharma they all left, poor things! Lake Biwa is one of the prettiest in the world, its waters glassy-smooth, its snowy mountains and its hills clad in piney woods, going to make up a charming

picture. There is a legend that in a dreadful earth-convulsion in 286 B.C. this lake was hollowed out in a single night, while simultaneously Fuji-San, the peerless conical, snow-capped mountain, two hundred miles away, shot up to its height of 12,000 feet above high-water level, with a crater 500 feet deep. Standing on the slope before Mee-de-ra Temple, with the panorama spread out before us, it was interesting to hear the folk-legends of gods and heroes who frequented the locality, and the valiant deeds they performed. At the same time I brought the minds of the party of friends around me to the paramount subject of my mission. Looking [120] down upon Otsu from its tea-kiosk that stood at the brow of a spur of the hill, and pointing to the great cluster of houses, I asked how many Buddhists the Lord Buddha would find there if he should be standing beside us. Why, so-and-so many thousand, they replied, mentioning approximately the population of the place. I don't mean that, I said, but how many out of those thousands would he call real Buddhists, the practitioners of his Five Precepts? Oh! hardly any, they said. Well, I rejoined, let us try and increase the number by our good advice, but chiefly by our example. They took it very good-naturedly, and, in fact, I always found them ready to laugh whenever a point was made against themselves: so sweet-tempered are they, they bore no malice when convinced of the friendliness and good-will of their visitor.

One legend of the lake deals with the slaughter of a monstrous serpent which ravaged the whole countryside. No man had the courage to attack it until the Queen of the Watery Kingdom, taking pity upon mankind, assumed the form of a beautiful lady of the Japanese Court, and appealed to Ben-Kei, the hero demigod, to exhibit his superhuman powers. Thereupon, the Japanese St. George bent his strong bow and sped a shaft so truly that it pierced the monster's brain and effectually silenced him. I purchased for a trifling sum a picture depicting the interesting event.

On the next day I went to see Dharmapala at the hospital and found him a little better. The rest of my time was taken up with visitors. The first application [121] for a Charter for a T. S. Branch was received this day. On the 26th I went to Kobé, where I was put up by Mr. T. Walsh, a paper-mill owner. He called with me on Mr. Jerningham, the United States Consul. The next day, with my committeemen, I sailed for Yokohama in an excellent Japanese steamer, and arrived there on the 28th at 6 p.m., after a sail through the Inland Sea, and having had a grand view of Fujiama, or Fuji-San. The slopes are so gradual as to deceive the eye as to its height, and make it seem much lower than it is.

Representatives of the General Committee met me on arrival and escorted me to the Grand Hotel, where I found myself very comfortable. Mr. James Troup, H. B. M. Consul, the well-known writer on Northern Buddhism, and I exchanged visits and had much agreeable conversation, and our party left for Tokyo (Yeddo), the capital, by the 4 p.m. train. A vast crowd swarmed about the station to greet me, and I could not doubt my being welcome. Nor could the Committee. In the evening Mr. Bunyin Nanjio called with Mr. Akamatsu, another Cambridge man of great intellectual powers and high culture, who has been advanced to a post of great responsibility in the Western Hongwanji, and a most delightful conversationist he is. Other important personages called. The next day I paid my respects to Mr. Hubbard, the American Minister Plenipotentiary, and H. E. Marquis Aoki, Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to whom I had a letter of introduction. The Committee took me to see the tombs of two former [122] Shoguns, where were superb carvings in wood, lacquered panels, and other ornamentations. I was told that a Shogun is interred in a nest of seven coffins, but nobody knew why. Can it typify the sevenfold constitution of man? Near one tomb was the great wardrum of the dead sovereign, which was formerly beaten at the head of his conquering army. The temptation to give them a surprise was so strong that I seized the beater and crashed out a booming note on the gigantic drum. "There," I cried; "I summon you in the name of this Shogun to the battle of your ancestral religion against the hostile force that would overthrow it," the next moment asking them to pardon me if I had been guilty of any breach of good manners; but they protested that I had done no more than my duty in reminding them of the obligation resting upon them to be active for their faith, and that they would make good use of the incident with the public.

On 3rd March I was invited to address a large gathering of the most important priests of the capital and environs, and I did so, showing them, with all the earnestness at my command, where their duty lay, and how closely it was associated with their best interests. As I had done in Ceylon, so here showed them that if they were only a little wise they would use every possible exertion to keep up in the rising generation the religious spirit which would make them when adults the willing supporters of the temple and priests, which their forefathers had been and their [123] parents now were; for if this was suffered to die out, the temples must crumble and the monks die off for lack of sustenance. For myself, I told them, I asked nothing, not the smallest recompense. I stood there as a mouthpiece only of the Founder of our religion, calling them to arouse and work before it was too late to ward off disaster. This was my keynote

throughout the tour, and, as will be seen later on, it was effective.

On 4th March I paid a ceremonial visit to the Chief Priest of the Eastern Hongwanji, Otani Koson San, a noble by birth, of the rank of Marquis under the new system. I found him a dignified, courtly man, who seemed to wish well to my mission, and promised all needed help. Thence to the American Embassy; and, later, Messrs. Nanjio, Akamatsu, and I had a long conference about Buddhistic affairs.

In the evening, with Marquis Otani and Mr. Akamatsu, I attended a party at the house of Viscount Sannomiya, Imperial Chamberlain, whose wife is a German Lady-in-Waiting of H. I. M. the Empress. As this was my first party in Japan, and I had been seeing all sorts of high officials in the national dress, I did not know what to wear, and asked Mr. Akamatsu and an American gentleman for advice. Both said it didn't matter; I might wear the frock-coat I then had on. I was afraid to expose myself to catching a pneumonia by donning our Western evening-dress, but remembering the old rule of Hoyle, "When in doubt take the trick," I thought it would be the wiser plan to conform to our established usage. Well was [124] it that I did. On arrival at the house, the host and other gentlemen met us at the door, some in our evening costume, some in Western military dress, all wearing orders. On ascending to the drawing-rooms I saw the whole company similarly clad, the ladies in the latest Parisian fashions. Fancy how I felt at the thought of what I should have looked like but for my instinctive precaution! I cannot say that I was pleased with the sight of all those Orientals doffing their own picturesque apparel, which suits them so well, for our European dress, which suits us, but decidedly does not an Asiatic. But it was a comfort to find, when I called on these personages at their houses, that almost invariably they wear their national dress, and put on the other in public as the imperial regulations prescribe. The party at Viscount Sannomiya's was in every respect like one of our own, even to the dancing, in which Japanese gentlemen, and sometimes even ladies, indulged. What struck me forcibly, after so many years of India and other Eastern countries, was the tone of respect and equality in the intercourse between the natives and the foreign residents. There was a total absence of that cringing and self-suppression, on the one part, and supercilious patronage, on the other, which are so galling to a lover of Asiatics and their countries. I can hardly express my delight in regard to this during my whole visit in Japan. Among Madame Sannomiya's guests were royal princes and princesses, and lesser nobles of all ranks. I also made the acquaintance of

Professor Fenolosa, of Boston,

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U. S. A., Director of the School of Fine Arts, his wife, and a friend, Dr. W. S. Bigelow, all three charming people, with whom I was fortunate enough to form most friendly relations. With Fenolosa I called, the next day, on an old army comrade of mine, Brigadier-General C. W. Legendre, of the Fifty-first New York Regiment, of the Burnside Expedition to North Carolina, with whom I passed through several battles, at one of which—Newbern—I saw him desperately wounded. Of course, we were delighted to meet again, after twenty-six years, in this remote corner of the world, and to talk over old times. At the Tokyo Club, where I was made an Honorary Member, I became acquainted with many of the most influential and cultured men of the day, among them Captain Brinckley, R. A., retired, Editor of the Japan Mail, Dr. Edward Divers, Professor of Chemistry at the University, Professor Milne, the seismologist of world-wide fame, Captain J. M. James, of the Japanese Naval Department, Hon. Mr. Satow, Dr. Baelz, Mr. Basil, Hon. Chamberlain, Honorary Secretary, Asiatic Society of Japan, and others. From one and all I received only the greatest courtesy.

At 3 p.m. on 6th March I lectured in Rin-sho-in Temple to an “educated” audience, without an interpreter, and then made calls. The next day the lecture was in Zo-jo-ji Temple, to junior priests on their duty, and I spoke as plainly as the occasion demanded. I dined at the same temple, and viewed a collection of paintings of alleged Rahans (Arahats,

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Rahats, Munis, Mahatmas), the originals of which I should never have taken for spiritually advanced persons if I had casually met them. In fact, I told the friendly monks who were conducting me about that if they had ever seen the sublime faces of real Rahans they would wish to burn these travesties. That same evening I had the pleasure of seeing a performance by a noted Japanese conjurer. He was dressed in a European walking-suit, his black frock-coat buttoned up high, and wore a small gold cross! This, it was explained to me, did not signify that he was a Christian, which he was not, but only that he could work miracles—the cross being associated by popular rumor with miracle-working! He marched in a short procession from a door at the side of the hall, preceded by a drummer and a flute-player, and followed by his assistants, male and female, in native dress. Among the striking feats that he did was to make a jet of water

spirit out of a closed fan, and another from the top of a man's head, while a jet of fire leaped from the same fan the next moment. A girl lying on a wooden bench was apparently transfixed by the blade of a sword, and another suspended by thongs at the wrists and ankles to a large wooden cross was pierced through the body at the point of the heart by a lance, and a torrent of blood poured from the wound. As, however, both damsels were presently walking about again as though nothing unusual had happened, I inferred that that was the real fact, and that I and the rest of the audience had been simply befooled.

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At 2 p.m. on the 8th I lectured at Higashi Hongwanji to a very large concourse of priests. On the next day my lecture was at the University, before the Educational Society of Japan, which counts the Princes of the Blood and most of the great men of the country among its members. I was told that no less a personage than H. I. M. the Emperor was present incognito. I was vexed to hear from Captain Brinckley, at the close, that my interpreter had mistranslated a sentence of mine so as to give it a political sense, which, of course, was farthest from my thoughts.

A lecture to the general public followed the next day, and another, on the 11th, both audiences huge and enthusiastic, and all the Missionaries at the second one, taking notes. Much good did it do them! On that same evening I attended a grand ball given by the merchants of Tokyo to the Imperial Princes. I was introduced to the Prime Minister, General Count Kuroda, the Vice-Ministers of the Treasury and of Communications, the Chief Judge of Kyoto, and many other important personages, Japanese and foreign.

On the 12th I lectured at Shinagawa, in Kon-o-Kong Temple; on the next day at Den-zu-eeen, a temple of the Jo-do sect, and paid my respects to H. E. Baron Takasaki, Governor of Tokyo, and a most affable gentleman. We had a long discussion about religious and educational matters. I also visited the Crematorium, "Nippori," and was greatly interested in all the arrangements, most of which are well worth copying. The building and furnaces are [128] of brick, the latter lined with fire-bricks and having raised floors of iron, which pull out and run in for the removal of the ashes and introduction of new corpses. The cost of cremating a body is only 28 cents, (about 12 annas), and the time required three hours. Tasteful glazed earthenware vases for holding the ashes and unconsumed portions of bone are available at the trifling cost of 30, 12, and 10 cents respectively for first, second, and third qualities. The charges for cremation

are \$ 7, \$ 2.50, and \$ 1.30 (the dollar is now worth about Rs. 3) according to the “class” of cremation. In point of fact there is no difference whatever between the quality or quantity of fuel used, nor in any other detail; it is simply a question of family pride. The establishment belongs to a private corporation with a paid-up capital of \$ 30,000, and the ground and buildings cost but \$ 12,000. Thirty-one corpses may be cremated simultaneously, in as many separate furnaces or cubicles. The funeral ceremonies are held in an adjoining chamber, the body being packed in a tub, in sitting posture, resting on a trolley and covered with a white sheet. At the conclusion of the prayers, the tub is rolled into the cremating chamber assigned to it, and in due course the waiting relatives receive the ashes, and take them away for disposal according to fixed custom.

CHAPTER VIII

FURTHER TRIUMPHS IN JAPAN

(1889)

NOTHING could have been better than the Committees' management of the tour, it having been planned so as to give all classes the chance of hearing what was to be said on behalf of Buddhism. Under the mutual-benefit compact made between the sect-leaders at the momentous Council at Choo-in Temple, Kyoto, I was made to lecture at the temples of their several religious bodies, now at one, now at another, sometimes at two in one day. Such mutual good-feeling between them was unprecedented, and all did their best to swell the numbers of my auditors and gather together the learned and unlearned, priests and laity, nobles and commoners, military and naval officers, and civilians. Every paper and magazine in the country occupied itself with accounts of the mission, its objects, its arguments, the proposed creation of a good understanding between Northern and Southern Buddhist, and the physical appearance of the "American Buddhist". Meanwhile, poor Dharmapala lay in hospital at Kyoto, agonising with his neuralgia, and [130] attended with loving tenderness by his self-constituted young nurses.

My discussion with H. E. the Governor of Tokyo led to his inviting me to dine with him at the Nobles' Club, and meet the Prime Minister and his colleagues of the Cabinet. I was not a vegetarian then, so it is quite natural that I should have relished a meal out of the ample menu for the occasion, a copy of which, printed in Japanese and in French in parallel columns, I find pasted in my Diary, along with scores of visitors' cards in Japanese, Chinese, English, and French, kept as souvenirs of this marvellous tour. To anticipate the wishes of those among my readers who like their mouths to water even though the eating be done by proxy, I think I shall copy the bill of fare just to show how far Feudal Japan is vanishing into the mists at the coming in of the French cook and his batterie de cuisine:

DINER DU [19], 1889

Potage tortue, à l'anglaise.

Brochet au court-bouillon aux crevettes.

Cotelettes ae veau piquées aux petits pois.

Cailles au riz.

Filet de bœuf, marine sauce piquante.

Aspic de foie gras belle vue.

Asperge en branche.

Dindonneaux rotis. Salade.

Pouding au painnoir.

Glaces aux fraises.

Desserts.

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What do you, reader of old illustrated books of travel, with their pictures of the dresses of Shogun, Mikado, Daimio, and their trains of Samurai knights of two swords, as complete incarnations of chivalric valor as the world ever saw or troubadour ever celebrated; of pike-bearers, forerunners, harbingers, clerks, and cooks; of feudatory petty chiefs and retainers, with pikes, scimitars, bows, and arrows, umbrellas, palanquins, led horses, and other marks of their grandeur suitable to their birth, quality, and office, and an hundred other appanages of the dignity of the families of these very Cabinet Ministers who sat at H. E. the Governor's board with me, and ate his young turkey, his foie gras and his strawberry ices—what do you think of this spectacle of the 19th of March at the Nobles' Club? There's progress of a certain sort—backward, towards the kitchen and the stomach!

The dinner finished, H. E. the Prime Minister said that the gentlemen present would be glad to hear my views about the system of education which I thought most likely to advance the interests of a nation. Thereupon, I urged the necessity for blending the development of body, mind, and conscience in such a way that the ideal man and woman would be developed, declaring any other system faulty as tending to cultivate, as it were, monstrosities, abnormal growths, of athletes, opportunists, quibblers, casuists, seekers after mere worldly success. No nation could be really great whose foundations were not laid on character, and the loftiest ideal of human character was the individual [132] who did his duty in this world, while training his spiritual nature to prepare it for the environment of the future, and push him on faster around the orbit of his cosmic evolution. I

cited the examples of the nations which had fallen from great heights to the lowest of depths before disappearing from the face of the earth, and implored them to open their eyes to the strange operation of karmic law which had brought Japan to a front rank in the family of nations, aroused her wonderful latent potentialities, and brought my hearers and their colleagues and hereditary associates to the responsible opportunity of directing this revolution in the grooves of national progress.

Having made it widely known that I would thankfully accept gifts of books for the Adyar Library, kind friends and sympathisers daily brought such gifts, until by the time of my departure from Japan I had an accumulation of some 1,500 volumes. Included in these was the entire collection of the Tripitikas, over 300 volumes, formerly belonging to a deceased High Priest of the Jo-do sect. This was a very valuable present, as it enables one who knows both Pali and Japanese to compare the texts of the Northern and Southern Canons. Already we have had this done to some extent by Japanese priest-students who were guests at Adyar, but the real work is still to be done, and great results ought to come out of it.

On 18th March I lectured, by invitation, on “Practical and Scientific Agriculture” before the [133] Japanese Agricultural Society, and on the next morning received notice of my election as an Honorary Member, together with a present of two rare Satsuma-ware vases, now deposited in our Library. At 2 p.m. I lectured in English to a cultured audience on “The Scientific Basis of Religion.” Showing the strong array of proofs which recent psychical research supplied towards the elucidation of the problem of the trans-corporeal extension of human consciousness. I also showed by diagrams on a blackboard how the basic idea of the correlation of spirit with matter for the evolution of visible nature had been expressed and preserved for our instruction in the arbitrary language of symbols, each of which had as definite meaning as the signs of algebra.

My appointed time for departure from the capital having come, I made farewell calls on the Prime Minister, the American Ambassador, and other acquaintances, got my passports from our Embassy, had a good-bye dinner given me at the Japanese Buddhist sects,¹⁹ and on the 23rd at 6 a.m. left by train for Sendai, a station far to the north, which was reached after a twelve hours’ run. Mr. Kimura, my Interpreter, and Rev. Shaku San, a most genial and excellent priest of the Zen-shu and Member of the Joint Committee, accompanied me. As

an indication of [134] the tome of the Japanese press, the following paragraph from the Dandokai, an influential paper of the capital, will be read with interest:

“The arrival of Colonel Olcott has caused great excitement among the Christians in Japan. They say that he is an adventurer, a man of bad principles, and an advocate of a dying cause. How mean and cowardly are they! They may use the unprincipled pens at their disposal as much as they choose, but they cannot weaken the effects of his good principles, nor fasten upon him any of their scandalous insinuations. They do not produce the least effect upon Colonel Olcott or upon Buddhism... How ridiculous all this is! How great has Colonel Olcott’s influence become in Japan!”

From another issue the following is quoted:

“Since Colonel Olcott’s arrival in Japan, Buddhism has wonderfully revived. We have already stated that he has been travelling to all parts of the empire. He has been everywhere received with remarkable enthusiasm. He has not been allowed a moment of leisure. He has taught our people to appreciate Buddhism, and to see our duty to impart it to all nations. Since his discourses in Tokyo, the young men of the Imperial University and High Schools have organised a Young Men’s Buddhist Association, after the model of the Young Men’s Christian Association, to propagate our religion; and some learned and influential gentlemen have given encouragement. An additional lustre has also been given to Buddhism by his coming.”

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A correspondent of the Indian Mirror wrote: “One of the high functionaries who was present at the Colonel’s lecture predicted that his visit to Japan would have a considerable influence on Buddhism and the Buddhist people.” When we come to summing up the results of the visit, we shall see what remarkable testimonies have been given by Japanese authorities themselves. The tour must have been made at the real “psychological moment”.

We found it bitterly cold at Sendai. The Japanese empire stretches, it must be remembered, from 24° to 50° 40’ N. lat., and from 124° to 156° 38’ E. long., and the climate, as might be expected, is extremely varied. Thus, while the Riukiu and Bonin groups of islands, lying in the tropics, enjoy perpetual summer, the northern boundaries have the arctic temperature of Kamtchatka. In these northern latitudes snow has been known to fall to a depth of 8 feet: at Tokyo itself they have several snowstorms during the winter, each of from 3 to 5

inches' fall, while in 1876 the whole city was covered to a depth of 2 feet or more. Add that, save in the few European-fashioned houses, there are no grates or heating furnaces, and that the screen-walled construction of most dwellings lets in every wandering air of heaven, and the reader can imagine what must have been the comforts of travel, and lecturing in huge, unwarmed temples, for me, a visitor from the tropics. I wondered how the Sinhalese priests would have enjoyed it in their loose yellow togas, their bare legs and feet, and their shaven scalps!

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On the 24th I lectured before H. E. Mr. Matsudaira, the Governor of Sendai Fu (Province), and the other principal officials of the place, and was, later, entertained by His Excellency at dinner. Fifty guests were present, and the evening was spent in interesting talk. The lecture in the great theatre to the public, on the next morning, was a grand success, to judge from the crush and the applause. Afterwards, Shaku San and Kato San, of the Committee, took me for a day's rest to see Matsushima, a pretty seaside place, where there is a small cave and an old temple. It was a sunshiny day, but snow lay on the ground, and our sail among the group of islets off the shore was not as balmy an outing as would have been a similar one in Colombo or Galle harbor! However, it was an outing after all, a day's respite from the fatiguing round of lecturings to overflowing audiences of thousands, and a break in the sense of deprivation of all privacy by day or night. My audience on the 26th numbered 3,500 as estimated, and they listened in deathlike silence, albeit they had fought and pushed and scrambled to get in. They consoled themselves, however, at the close by a furious outburst of applause that could have been heard a long way off. I paid a farewell visit to the Governor, and received, in the evening, a complimentary address from a deputation representative of all the sects, who gave me also a present of 30 yen towards the travelling expenses. On the 27th we went to Utsonomiya, where we stopped overnight. But at 9 p.m., tired though I was, I was [137] dragged out to visit a temple and make a ten minutes' speech!—like stirring up the animals in a travelling menagerie to make them growl. In the morning we started for Mayabashi. At a wayside station a body of priests in full canonicals paid me their respects, and presented me a silk handkerchief. We reached Mayabashi at 12.30, and an hour later I was on the platform again with a large audience to talk to. Some missionaries turned up after I had closed. But the next day's audience was tremendous: I lectured at 2, and at 5.30 moved on to

Tagasaki, where I spoke in a theatre to another big crowd. We left the next morning early, and dined and lectured at Kanagama. The view of the sea from the house of my host, Mr. Takashma, the great railway contractor, was very lovely, the harbor, shipping, and town of Yokohama being in sight. I slept at the Grand Hotel in that place that night, and at 11 A.M., the next day lectured in the Yokohama theatre, which, of course, was packed from floor to ceiling, though it was raining and the streets were very muddy. It was amusing to see the arrangement for caring for shoes and sandals at the door. When I arrived there must have been 1,000 each, in two different heaps, each pair tied together with a string of tough twisted paper, with a tag bearing a certain number, the corresponding ticket having been given to the owner on entering the building, a very simple and sensible plan. My own shoes were similarly cared for when I removed them and put on my warm, thick French chaussons. The Vice-Governor [138] was present and brought me a complimentary message from his chief. At 2.30 we took train for Shidzuoka, and got there at 9.30 p.m. Then “to wished-for bed” at the hotel, which was exquisitely neat and well-ordered. The furniture—well, shall I describe it? I would, only there was none to speak of. The floor, as usual, laid out in squares of 3 x 6 feet in frames, within which was very fine white matting, stuffed with something underneath, thus forming a soft surface to sit on. At one side a sort of recess in which stands a handsome porcelain jar, a dwarfed tree in a pretty box, a religious scroll hung on the wall, and—nothing more. Soft small cushions for us to sit on around a brassy brazier or fire-pot in a square wooden tin-lined box, where a charcoal fire is kept burning, a couple of movable iron rods laid across to rest the kettle on, a tray close by with tiny eggshell porcelain cups and a canister of green tea, ready to hand for anybody who wants hot tea to warm his stomach with, and--a cordial, well-bred, sweetly kind manner, which shows you that you are most welcome. Those are my recollections of the Shidzuoka Hotel. But not quite all, for there were the sleeping arrangements. Fancy stuffed cotton mattresses, six or eight inches thick, one to lie on, the other to cover yourself with, and pillows to build up for your head to rest upon. That is all; no bedstead, no cot, no stretcher, just the two fthoon, and draughts of cold air getting at one from under the movable screen partitions. I tried to tuck the end of the top mattress around my neck, but that [139] was impracticable, so I had recourse to my clothing, at the same time registering a vow to bring my own rugs with me, as we do in India.

It rained heavily that day, but I had to lecture in a Jo-do temple at 7 p.m. having previously called on the Governor and discussed politics and religion. We

had bright sunshine again on 2nd April, and I lectured at 2 p.m. Our dear enemies the missionaries tried the game of putting me questions on what they thought vulnerable points in Buddhism, but my Diary says they “got more than they had expected,” so I may just leave the matter there. From a Dr. Kasuabara I received the unique gift of the large and ancient Mandara (religious painting) of woven silk, 1,200 years old, which is to be seen at our Library. It represents the doctrine of the Shingon sect as to the appearance of the Buddhas in the world and the glorious company of the Apostles (of Shin-gon orthodoxy). The generous Doctor told me that this had hung for centuries in a certain temple of which his family were the hereditary custodians; that this temple was burnt in, I think, some domestic internal war, and totally consumed with all its priceless art treasures save and except this very Mandara, which had been almost miraculously saved.

At 7 a.m. on the 3rd we left for Hamamatsu, on an open platform truck part of the way, and by trolley the rest, the railway being in course of construction then. I lectured in the afternoon, and, later, dined with seventy persons of influence, invited by H. E. the Governor.

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Okasaki was reached on the following day, and after an early dinner I lectured, with the Governor in the chair. The crowd was awful; hundreds could not get into the building, and I had to go out and show myself to them, and pacify their clamor. At 4 that afternoon we went on to Nagoya, Mr. Nanjeo's place of residence. He met me in the train and put me up in the Hongwanji Temple. Our welcome at the railway station was a real ovation: there were bomb-firings, groves of Buddhist and national flags, gay, laughing crowds, cheers, and a procession of thirty or forty jinrickshas in line after me, each containing a priest or some important layman.

The next day I called on H. E. the Governor, visited the ancient castle, one of the chief historical edifices in Japan, where I saw wonderful paintings, wood carvings, brass lanterns, and lacquers, and lectured to 4,000 people in the Hongwanji Temple hall. It was a grand sight. Here let me note a fact that upsets our Western popular theories as to the cause of baldness. We say it is due to wearing the hat too much or keeping the head too hot, but I noticed in Japan, as I had always among the Bhikkus of Ceylon, about the same proportion of bald heads as one sees among us, and yet those people go bareheaded throughout life. It was amusing to stand facing the door, looking over the heads of thousands of

squatting persons, and see the shining bald heads reflecting the light among the multitude of stubbly, hairy scalps, like a shining saucer inverted in the grass of a field.

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If the 6th was not a busy day, I am much mistaken. At 8 a.m. we went to Narumi, a place 7 miles distant, and lectured; at 1 p.m. lectured in Nogoya in the other (Eastern) Hongwanji to 4,000 people; and at 7 p.m. gave a third lecture before the Governor, the Military Officers of the Province, and a picked company of 200 to 300 more, personally invited by the Governor. Mr. Kimura broke down, and Mr. Bunyio Nanjie finished the interpretation of the discourse. Kimura was a strong young man, I was 57. The Governor's friendliness cost me dearly, for he kept me talking in a private room after the lecture, with a strong, cold, side-draught blowing on me from an open window, and I caught a severe cold in the bowels, which brought on an attack of my old army complaint, dysentery, which gave me trouble until almost the last day of my stay in the country. It made it doubly hard for me to travel about in jinrickshas and all sorts of other conveyances, standing up to lecture, eating meals at irregular hours, sleeping anyhow and anywhere, and being overwhelmed by the auras of swarming thousands of all sorts and conditions of men.

Our next point was Gifu, where there was a great crowd to hear me. The next morning, at the Mayor's request, I gave a lecture at the Club to an audience of persons who would not come to the Hongwanji lecture: for which pettiness I gave them some plain talk, upbraiding them for frivolous quarrels with co-religionists when all ought to be united to promote the interests of our religion. I reminded them that, since [142] I had come 5,000 miles to see them, they had paid me a poor compliment in staying away from my public lecture, and compelling me, ill as I was that morning, to give them a special lecture. I cannot say how much of this was translated to them, but at least those present who knew English had the benefit of my opinions. We left for Ogaki, but upon arrival I was so done up with fever, pain, and diarrhoea that I was forced to lie abed. Two doctors came, but could not do much, and I had a bad night. The next morning, however, I bestirred myself again, and lectured to 2,500 people before taking train at 11.30 a.m. for Kyoto. Part of the journey was by steamer, 50 miles, on Lake Biwa. How lovely the picture of blue hills with snowy peaks, glassy water, luxuriantly green shores, pretty islands and islets, picturesque hamlets, and here and there native craft with their queer sails and hulls! We reached Kyoto at 7,

and I went straight to bed.

It is worth while to supplement my perhaps too optimistic narrative of the features and probable results of the tour with an occasional quotation from the press. The Madras Mail, a conservative Anglo-Indian journal, said:

“We observe, says a Japanese paper, that in Nagoya Colonel Olcott has been welcomed with extraordinary enthusiasm. His lectures were attended by fully 4,000 people on each occasion, and the wildest applause greeted his declarations of the close relationship that must, in his opinion, exist between the revival of Buddhism and the stable progress of the nation.

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Evidently the people's hearts are inclined towards such teaching, for it is not at all likely that addresses, which necessarily lose nearly all their verve in translation, could rouse an audience to sympathy so strongly marked unless a powerful feeling existed in favor of the speaker's idea. Of course the farther south Colonel Olcott goes, the warmer the response his preaching is sure to awaken. Religion in Tokyo and religion in Kyoto are two very different things. Nagoya occupies, perhaps, an intermediate position in respect of the vitality of its citizens' creed. It would seem that Colonel Olcott's Buddhist guides are determined not to let the grass grow under his feet. We read that he proceeded from Nagoya to Narumi and delivered a lecture there, returning at noon to address an immense audience in the Hongan Temple, and winding up with a third address to the Governor and a select party of about 250 at 7 o'clock in the evening. We have noted that the Tokyo critics express amusement at the notion that an American should be brought to Japan to propagate Buddhism. The criticism is certainly just if it be held that the Buddhist creed is essentially the property of the Orient, and that Westerners can have no proper share in propagating it. But the masses do not reason so closely. The coming of Colonel Olcott has evidently given Buddhism a fillip in Japan.”

Wednesday the 10th was a bright day, so I went to the hospital to see Dharmapala, whom I found convalescent, and revisited that splendid silk mill, but [144] my physical troubles came again to the fore. The Indian mail brought me the latest Theosophist and a copy of The Secret Doctrine just out. On the Thursday Dharmapala was discharged cured, and with me visited Mr. Akamatsu for a long talk on Buddhistic affairs. My illness kept me rather quiet during the next four days, but I then went to Osaka and lectured on “India” to an audience

of 500 or so at the Military Club, on the invitation of the Mayor and the General commanding the troops of the district. This was followed by a dinner given me by the Mayor, and I slept at the principal hotel. The Rev. Arisawa gave me a valuable old printed work on rollers, and Mr. Tamura, the merchant, specimens of old Japanese coins. The next day we went to Nara, visiting on the way the ancient temple Ho-diu-ji, where I saw a vast number of swords, spears, bows, women's mirrors, combs, etc., etc., left as votive offerings in gratitude to the god Mu-nyak-ushi for cures of diseases and rescue from dire perils. We reached Nara in the afternoon, I very ill with the old army pest. I was shown the gigantic image of the sitting Buddha, the largest in Japan, as it measures 53 feet to the top of the head. It has been twice destroyed by fire, its last reconstruction dating back two centuries. The temple To-dai-ji (of the now almost extinct Kaygon sect) we visited. This sect is said to be a very old one, and the temple bears every appearance of it. At present the sect possesses only 5 temples, whereas it formerly had 1,000, the decadence being explained [145] as due to the monks having been tempted to play soldier in some domestic troubles, and having been worsted and decimated, as by rights they should have been, for it is not the business of the Sangha of the Lord Buddha to debase their monastic ideal by entering the military career. The lay monks of the Tibetan lamaseries numbering thousands and tens of thousands, are said to do it, but that is no excuse. On the Friday we returned to Kyoto in jinrickshas, a 20-miles ride, through the rain. On the following day we witnessed a grand ceremony in Choo-in Temple in honor of the memory of the Founder of the Jo-do sect, and I was presented a 30-volume book on the Nichi-ren sect, in a neat wooden case, which was a very fine example of the fine carpentry for which Japan is renowned. I had up to this time delivered 46 lectures since the 9th of February, 64 days, besides all the journeyings hither and thither. The 47th was given at Nagahama to an audience of 3,500, my interpreter being a charming young gentleman of noble rank, Professor Sakuma, of Kyoto College, whose acquaintance, it was an honor to have made. The next day to Nagasawa, on the shore of Lake Biwa, to lecture at 1.30 p.m., and then dine; after which our programme took us to Hikone by rowing-boat. The lake was smooth as a mirror, but a Scotch mist was falling. We slept at the country-seat (now a Club) of the late Prince Ji-ka-mon-mokani, Lord of Hikone, who was assassinated on his way to Court for opening intercourse with foreigners—a martyr to the Karma of progress. The next morning [146] I lectured at 8.30, despite my severe illness, and at 10 took the steamboat from Otsu to Kyoto. That evening I had the pleasure of witnessing the altogether

charming ballet of the Miako-odori. Fifty-one pretty and graceful damsels, appalled in the old court costume, danced and sang with exquisitely artistic groupings and posturings. It is a dance which, I believe, represents the budding of the flowers at the opening of spring. With Dharmapala I visited the new and huge temple of the Eastern Hongwanji, then almost ready for the opening ceremony. Dharmapala, his hospital doctors and company of boy nurses, were photographed on the 25th. On the 26th I had a cable from London from H. P. B. to come for a proposed two months' tour. On the 27th I gave my 50th lecture at Choo-in Temple, and Dharmapala also spoke. There was an immense audience, and it was very demonstrative. On the 28th we started in jinrickshas with Professor Sakuma and some of the Committee for a mountain town hitherto unvisited by a European. We went 34 miles over an execrable road, and the ride was a very severe and trying one for one in my physical condition. We slept at Hinoke, and resumed our journey the next morning. By noon I was almost dead with fatigue, but I kept on after dinner (at To-no-ichi, where some rare books were given me), and reached our destination at last—Fu-kutchi-yama. The whole town was out to see our entry. A body of richly dressed priests came out to meet me, and headed the procession through the town. I was lodged at the [147] Fo-ju-ji Temple, and did not keep my bed long waiting for its occupant. I rested all the next morning, receiving visitors and presents of books from all the chief priests of the local temples (of the Zen, Nichi-ren, Jo-do, and Shin Shu sects). At 2 p.m., lectured to as many people as could crowd into the building and on its verandahs and steps. Again, the next morning, a lecture to a crowd, among them being many people who had come from Ayabe, a town 2 ri off, which I was to have visited, but was obliged to cut off the list owing to my fatigue. Over 200 boys from a Buddhist school visited me, and I found on cross-questioning that not one of them knew who the Lord Buddha was—an ignorance that only matched that which prevailed in Ceylon before the Buddhist Catechism came into circulation.

On the 2nd we rode in jinrickshas 12 ri to Sonobé, where we passed the night. On Friday we shot the rapids of the Origawa river from Sonobé to Arashiyâma, about 20 miles, and enjoyed it exceedingly. I retain a vivid mental picture of the mountain gorges, the green clear water, the rushing rapids, the touch-and-go between ugly rocks, and the whirl of excitement—a splendid souvenir. From Arashiyâma to Kyoto by jinricksha, but before starting we went to see a sandalwood statue of the Buddha, said to be nearly 3,000 years old, and to be one of the historic three sent from India. There is the legend for whomsoever

cares to believe it. The morning after our return to Kyoto we witnessed a gorgeous pageant in [148] the Eastern Hongwanji Temple, the Master, Otani San, typifying Sakya Muni himself. He was attended: by a group of gaudily dressed youths personifying Bodhisattvas! The Committee gave me an excellent corner from which to see the procession move past, and the splendor of the silk silver-and-gold embroidered clothing was something to make Southern Buddhists, nursed on the traditions of the austere simplicity of the dress and habits of the priesthood, stare. Mr. Otani paid me what was considered an extraordinary honor by stopping as he came opposite the place where I stood and giving me a low bow. This from one who is looked upon as a sort of demi-god by the multitude of his sectaries was about as great a shock to them as an earthquake would have been. Yet, while thankful for the intended courtesy, I cannot say that it seemed to me to be the salutation of a typical Buddha in view of the gorgeous robes he wore, worth, I fancy, twenty or thirty thousand dollars, but rather that of some noble of the feudal Court of Japan, possibly a high Ambassador, trained to graduate the shares of court ceremonial to a nicety, so as to definitely express an entire message by a stately obeisance at a given angle of inclination. At any rate I fully comprehended that the Chief of the Eastern Hongwanji had told me as plainly as if the words had been spoken that the Buddhists of Japan were grateful for my efforts to restore the influence of the religion which had consoled and comforted so many countless millions during the past fifteen centuries.

CHAPTER IX

RETURN TO CEYLON

(1889)

ON the evening of the same day I formed—well, no, I can hardly say formed, but went through the ceremony of forming—a local Branch, T. S., with Hongwanji officials for officers. The Branch never did any practical work as such, and, for commonsense reasons that were explained to me, I was not dissatisfied. When discussing the question of the extension of T. S. work to Japan with some of the most enlightened statesmen in the sects, they said that if I would come and settle in the country they would make as many Branches and give me as many thousand members as I chose; but otherwise it would be useless, for the spirit of sectarianism was so rife that they could never consent to come into an organisation where, of necessity, some must be officers and the others simple members, and it would be an even chance if the leaders were not of some sect antipathetic to their own. Only a white man, a foreigner outside all their sects and social groups, could carry on such a Society successfully: moreover, he would have to be a sincere Buddhist, else his motives [150] would be open to misconstruction; and as I was the only man they knew who possessed these requirements, they made me the offer in question. The knowledge of this circumstance, added to my intimacy with the Sinhalese and Burmese nations, caused me to see that, if I could be spared from the Theosophical movement proper, and were free to occupy myself exclusively with Buddhistic interests, I could very soon build up an International Buddhistic League that might send the Dharma like a tidal wave around the world. This was the chief motive which prompted me to offer my resignation of the Presidency, and to pass it over to H. P. B., for reasons specified in my Annual Address before the Fifteenth Convention of the T. S. (*Theosophist*, vol. xii). Old readers will be able to recall the effect of this offer on her. She found that she had crowded me too far, and that if she let me go, something like an avalanche of official responsibility would come tumbling on her head; so she wrote and cabled that if I resigned she would at once quit the Society. Still, this would not have stopped me if a far higher personage than she had not come and told me that the Buddhist scheme must be postponed, and that I must not leave the post confided to me. The Buddhist

League is, therefore, a great and splendid work that lies in the closed hand of the future; for it goes without saying that it can never be effected by any existing organisation known as a Buddhistic agency.

On 5th May I said farewell to the assembled Chief Priests of all the sects, advising them most strongly to [151] keep up the Central Committee, and use it as the best practical instrument in cases where something had to be done for Buddhism as a whole. At 3 p.m. I lectured for the last time in Kyoto before H. E. the Governor, the Chief Justice, and many other persons of influence—military, civil, and ecclesiastic. On the 6th I left for Osaka by the noon train, and thence took steamer for Okayama. The boat was small, the saloon a den into which eleven persons were packed—like an overcrowded sheepfold, it seemed to me; and as the between-decks was built far a smaller race than ours, I had to bend nearly double to walk through. We landed at San Banco at 3 in the morning, and took refuge in a hotel at the landing. The Governor of Okayama, Mr. Chisoka, kindly sent his carriage for me in the morning, and was very polite in his attentions during my visit to the place. I was put up at the Club, in a splendid garden laid out in the unique Japanese style, with stone and wooden bridges, little islets, artificial mounds, stone lanterns, dwarfed and quaintly-trimmed trees, and abundance of flowers. At 3 p.m. I gave my first lecture before the public. The local committee had, for inscrutable reasons, issued 10,000 tickets, but as not more than half that number could squeeze into the building, there was much confusion outside. Some medical students, who had come early and placed themselves near the platform with intent to create a disturbance, made just one little attempt. When I said that Buddhism had brought with it into Japan the refinements of life, a young [152] fellow sitting close by my feet cried out “No! No!” Remembering Noguchi’s forewarning at Madras, and knowing how to deal with such young conspirators, I stopped speaking, turned towards him, looked at him steadily until he felt that he was under observation by the whole audience, and then continued my remarks. After that a flock of lambs could not have kept more quiet. Later in the day, the Governor called and took me to an exhibition of autographs of noted personages, i.e., signatures, with or without accompanying sentences or single words, written vertically on large rolls of silk paper, in big characters, with brush and Indian ink. There were also some pictures, of which His Excellency purchased and gave me one representing a Japanese warrior of the old style, mounted on horse-back. A second public-lecture and an address to priests were given on the following day, after which we left in a small boat, sculled by four men, for Takamatsu, which was reached at 5 p.m. Mr. Tadas

Hyash, the Governor, formerly of the Japanese Legations at Washington and London, called on me, and in the evening I lectured to 2,000 people. The trip across the Inland Sea was lovely.

At 10 the next morning a lecture was given on “The Evidences of Buddhism” to a great assemblage, which was very cordial. That afternoon an exhibition of Japanese wrestling was given us in the public park, in the presence of the Governor. It is needless to describe it, since it has been so often described by travellers; suffice it to say that the style is quite [153] different from ours, and that the favorite athlete was a very fat man, whose weight was enough to crush down any antagonist on whom he might succeed in getting the upper hold. We left at 3 p.m. by steamer for Imabaru, and had a miserable time of it on board. There was almost every conceivable inconvenience to endure; but as the others seemed to regard them with indifference, I could do no less. It was a splendid day, and the picture before us on approaching the landing was striking. A stone-paved slope leading up from the water’s edge was black with thousands of people, who also lined the crest and spread away to right and left. A boat, with purple silk awnings from the temple, and national and Buddhist flags flying, took me to the stone pier, amid the bursting of bombs, the ringing of bells, and the roar of shouting voices. The projection into the air of paper bells, umbrellas, dragons, fish, and other devices, when the clay bombs burst high up overhead, was something new to me. What charmed me most, however, was the projection of a Buddhist flag, made of thin strips of paper of the conventional colors, so arranged with a tiny parachute at the top end of a retaining string and 5 oz. of small shot in a little bag at the lower end as to stand up straight in the air as though nailed to a pole, while it fluttered in the gentle breeze and the sun shone vividly through the colors as it floated very gently away to leeward. Instantly the fiction of the seeing by Constantine of the figure of a Cross in the air, with the legend *In hoc signo vinces*, came to my mind. Pointing to the [154] lovely object before us in the sky, I said--referring to that story, that was probably false—”But there, my brothers, you see the symbol of our religion, under which we may conquer the minds and hearts of men of all nations if we unite for fraternal co-operation.” The lecture was fixed for 9 the next morning, and after it we left by specially chartered steamer for Hiroshima, one of the most important political and military centres of the empire. The day was fine, the boat dressed with flags, the Buddhist flag at the fore and peak. After a run of five hours we arrived, and found an even more enthusiastic welcome awaiting us. The throngs at the pier and through the town were immense; a number of bombs were fired, from them

two very large and several smaller Buddhist flags emerging; a military company of boys, with muskets, fifes, and drums, as an escort, and hundreds of school children, boys and girls, drawn up in two lines for us to pass through. The Senior Army Surgeon, Dr. Endo, a staunch Buddhist and holder of the Imperial University Igakushi degree of Doctor of Medicine, drove me in his own carriage in the very imposing procession in which we moved slowly towards our assigned quarters. The Committee of Reception wore as a badge a gilt circular plate transpierced with the Svastika emblem, so pretty that I procured a supply of them to introduce among the Sinhalese, and it was adopted by the Women's Education Society of Ceylon as their badge. On the morrow I addressed an audience of 5,000, and, later, the school children. On the 13th

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(May) another 5,000 audience, and after that an address to the senior boys of the Buddhist School. Then came a special lecture before H. E. the Governor of Hiroshima, Viscount Nodzu, the General commanding the District, and the other principal officers and officials, after which the Governor gave me a collation. I considered it a very great privilege to make the acquaintance of General Nodzu, for he was at the same time a most staunch Buddhist, one of the greatest soldiers of the empire, and a man of the most blameless character in every respect. In the recent war with China, it will be remembered, he commanded one of the two wings of the invading army, and won for himself great renown. Letters have comparatively recently been exchanged between us about the religious state of his country, in which his friendly regard for myself was clearly shown.

Our Hiroshima visit ended that night, and we pushed on by water towards Shimonoséki. It poured in torrents when we got to the pier, yet the Committee had had it lighted up with torches as bright as day; flags were flying, friends thronging, the air was rent with cheers. We had to change boats at Bakwan and make a fresh start at 3 a.m. We got to Shimonoséki at 7 p.m., and found only a few waiting, for the boat had been expected at 2, and the multitude had dispersed after waiting several hours. We stopped only three hours and left at 10 for Nagatsu, where there were the usual crowds, bomb-firing, flags, parades of schoolboys, etc. From one bomb was flung out a [156] very long streamer of paper, on which was written in giant characters the words "Olcott San is come"! This, I was told, was to notify the inhabitants of the surrounding districts, so that they might come into town. (San is the common honorific suffix, having something of the same value as our Esquire.) At 1 p.m. I lectured in the theatre

to 3,500 people, some of whom had come 50 miles, and others shorter distances, from neighboring islands, and camped all night in the theatre. Others had taken their places at daybreak. We left Shimonoséki at 8 p.m. by the Yokohama-Shanghai mail steamer “Tokio Maru” for Nagasaki. She was a very fine and commodious boat, seeming quite palatial after my experience, in small coasting steamers, and the supper and breakfast served us were something to remember. To my great surprise and pleasure, the breakfast bill-of-fare contained those popular American dishes, boiled hominy and buck-wheat cakes, neither of which had I tasted since leaving home. There seems a confusion of entries in my Diary, so that I do not see how I got from Nagatsu to take the steamer, but I certainly did, and it appears that the Committee took the size of my audience there, 2,500, all admitted by tickets, as a measure by which to calculate the average size of my audiences throughout the tour. So that as 75 lectures in all were given, the gross number of my auditors at the above average would be 187,500, and when one remembers that the Committee managed to bring me before all classes and conditions of men, one maybe prepared to believe [157] the statements made to the Adyar Convention of 1890 by the Japanese Delegates in their address, to which place will be given in the proper connection. Certainly, it was one of the most remarkable events in contemporary history; and we Theosophists are compelled to see in the results the working beneath the surface of influences far more potent than the efforts of the inferior agent who helped to throw the shuttle in the loom of Karma.

The steamer landed us at Nagasaki at 10 a.m. on the 18th of May, and I lectured at 3 p.m. My excellent and respected interpreter, Professor Sakuma, was confined to bed the next day, and my experiences at the second lecture were not of the happiest kind, for I had two interpreters: one would listen to me and tell the other briefly in Japanese what I had said, while the second would render it to the audience. It is enough to make one shudder to think what misconceptions as to my views must have been given to the public by this roundabout plan. The Committee gave me a farewell banquet, and then there was a lantern-and-jinricksha procession to escort me to the harbor—all of which splendor made me lose my steamer for Kumamoto, my southernmost place on the programme. We got away the next day at noon, and landed at Missooni at 6, spending the night there, and going by jinricksha the next day. The intestinal troubles again attacked me and gave me much pain. I tried to lecture to a great crowd in the theatre on the 21st, but as Professor Sakuma was laid up at Nagasaki, and two amateur interpreters broke down [158] in an attempt to see me through, I had to give up

the attempt. Somehow, I seem to have succeeded better the next day, for I see that I lectured in a temple to a crowd which packed the building and filled the courtyard, and at 3 p.m. before the Governor and other chief officials, military and civilian, after which we returned by jinricksha to rejoin the steamer at Missooni.

We got to Nagasaki at noon on the 23rd, where I went ashore and passed a pleasant day. I was presented a dwarf orange tree on which were two or three dozen fruits growing, two Buddhist flags in silk crêpe, and other tokens of regard. A lecture on “Practical Religion” was given at a Hongwanji temple in the afternoon, and I returned to the steamer at bedtime. The next two days were passed at sea amid charming surroundings, and a part of the time, was utilised in drafting a Memorandum about the rules which should be adopted by the Chief Priests for sending students to Colombo to pursue their studies in Sanskrit, Pali, and Sinhalese, under the High Priest Sumangala. We reached Kobé on Sunday the 26th, and went to a town named Hameiji, two hours by rail, to lecture, and got back by 8.30 p.m. The morning of the 27th was taken up with getting my return tickets and with other preparations for leaving, and at 4 p.m. I gave my 76th and last lecture at a new preaching hall of the local Hongwanji to an overflowing audience. As I stood there facing the door, the whole town and harbor of Kobé was spread out before me like a beautiful [159] picture, lighted up by dazzling sunshine. I hardly ever saw anything more charming. A last dinner was given me at a regular Japanese hotel in the native fashion, my hosts being the members of the Joint General Committee, who were most kind and cordial. After dinner I had many invitations to write Buddhist moralities and my name in Chinese characters on the paper or silk scrolls called Kakomono, which, mounted on map-rollers, are suspended in Japanese houses as ornaments, or, when the scroll (then called mendara) bears a religious picture, as objects promotive of devotional feeling. I had done numberless things of the kind throughout my tour, until, as I told the Committee, I had squeezed my brain dry of Buddhistic axioms. But this being our time of parting, they urged me to compliance, so I went ahead as usual. Finally, a certain lay member of the Committee who was too much inclined to drink Saké, the national beverage—a slightly alcoholic liquor obtained from rice—importuned me to do a Kakomono for him. I protested, on the ground that while at Kyoto I had done two or three for his temple, but he said that was for others, not for himself; so, as he was an obliging, cheerful sort of fellow, I consented. He brought me a piece of fine silk, the Indian-ink cake, small water-bottle and mixing saucer, and a large hair

pencil. I asked him what he wanted me to write. "Oh, some sound Buddhistic maxim," he replied. So, spreading the silk out on a little lacquered stand, I painted this: "Break thy Saké-bottle if thou wouldst reach Nirvana." There [160] was a general roar of laughter when it was translated to him, and he was good-natured enough to join in the merriment.

The next day we were steaming down the Inland Sea on the French mail steamer "Oxus," having left Kobé at 5 a.m. Among the passengers was a Father Villion, a Roman Catholic priest and savant, who had lived 23 years in Japan, and was thoroughly versed in the language and literature, as well as in Northern Buddhism. Shanghai was reached on the 30th, and the passengers went ashore to look about. I passed some pleasant hours with my compatriots, the American Consul-General, Judge O. N. Denny, Adviser to the King of Korea, Mrs. Denny, and others. I also had as close an inspection of the Chinese town as I shall ever care to make, and was almost choked with the foul smells, which excel anything of the sort I ever came to a knowledge of. In the evening the Master of the local temple of the Hongwanji, and the Chief Priest of a Chinese Buddhist temple, and Mr. Shevey Yessan, Minister of Provincial Military Affairs, came aboard to call on me. The Chief Priest made me the valuable present for our Library of a copy of the *Lalita Vishtara*, or *Legendary Life of the Buddha*, in folio, in several volumes, every other page being faced with a full-page picture engraved on wood. Every important detail of the life of the Buddha, as we have it narrated to us in the canon, is there depicted in outline engravings, which are simply admirable examples of the art. In some there are hosts of figures of men and gods. This [161] is the book first translated by Eugene Burnouf, and which really introduced the story of the Buddha to the notice of the Western scholars. From the Chinese General and the Chief Priest I had a warm invitation to come and make a tour in China like that in Japan, but I had to decline it for various reasons.

Under a queer arrangement of the Messageries Maritimes Company the homeward bound boats wait at Shanghai until relieved, a fortnight later, by the next ship in the list. Thus, we were transhipped at Shanghai to the "Natal" and dropped down the river to Woosung, in readiness to start with the next day's ebb tide. That night I was aroused from sleep to receive visits from the Chief Priest of the Zen-shin Temple and a Delegate from the General, who brought a letter of thanks from him for a reply I had sent to a letter of his. Presents of books were also made me. The ship weighed anchor at 1 a.m. and sailed for Hong Kong. The

day was fine and clear. We reached Hong Kong on the second day, but the weather was so damp and hot that I did not go ashore until the morrow, when I found a scene of desolation in the city. A cloud-burst, two days previously, had discharged 24 inches of water and caused a loss of \$1,500,000 to Government, besides enormous losses to merchants. The main street was buried 3 feet deep in sand washed down from the hills, the sewers had burst, some houses had been swept away, and great trees, uprooted, had been washed down into the town. The funicular railway track, climbing to the Peak,

[162] was broken up, and long stretches had completely disappeared. On the 6th, at noon, we sailed for Saigon, and got there on the 9th. A party of us went ashore to pass the time and see the quaint types of humanity and strange objects that abound. The steamer sailed the next morning for Singapore, and got there on the 11th, and to Colombo on the 18th, without notable incident, save that on emerging from the Straits of Sumatra we were buffeted by the monsoon and had rough weather the rest of the way. Our welcome was enthusiastic at our Theosophical Headquarters that evening. The High Priest presided, W. Subhuti and a representative of the Wimelasara sect were present, and an improvised audience filled the place to suffocation. The room was tastefully decorated with flowers, leaf compositions, and garlands, and brilliantly illuminated with Japanese flags, while trophies of Buddhist and Japanese flags increased the festive appearance of the hall. An hour before the time of meeting the Headquarters was packed, hundreds being turned away for want of standing room. The first number on the programme was the reading of an Address from the Women's Education Society by Miss M. E. De Silva, this being the first time when a Sinhalese young lady had ever read an address in English. A few brief remarks by Sumangala Thero preceded my report of the mission for international religious comity, in the course of which I introduced four young Japanese Samaneras (theological students), who had, on my appeal, been sent here to study under the High Priest [163] and Pandit Batuvantudawe, and take back with them copies of the Tripitakas of the Southern Canon. The Japanese each made short addresses, expressive of the hope of their sects that there might henceforth be a close brotherly relationship between the two hitherto isolated sections of the Buddhist family, after which the High Priest said: "You have all heard Colonel Olcott's account of his mission to Japan, and it must have made you all glad and proud to hear it. The propagation and improvement of Buddhism is the noblest work in the world, and that is the work in which Colonel Olcott has been engaged. It is true that there is a slight difference between the Northern and

Southern Churches, but still the Japanese are Buddhists as we are, and are struggling against the maleficent influence of Christianity as we are, and we therefore look upon them as brothers. We must never forget the cordial reception they have given to Colonel Olcott as our representative, and the brotherly love that they have shown towards us. I trust that this may be the commencement of a real spiritual union between all Buddhist countries.” The four young priests from Japan preceded my return to Adyar by a steamer earlier than mine, under the charge of Dharmapala, and had settled down by the time of my arrival.

A glance at the map of Japan will show the large extent of area which my tour covered, viz., from Sendai, in the extreme north, to Kumamoto, in the far south of the empire. From day of arrival to day [164] of embarkation I was ashore 107 days; during which time I visited 33 towns and delivered 76 public and semi-public addresses, reaching, as above stated, 187,500 hearers. This was more work of the sort than I had ever done before, the nearest approach to it having been in my Galle Province tour for the Sinhalese Buddhistic Fund, when I lectured 57 times within 100 days.

To finish the story of the Japan tour, it will be better that we should insert here the testimony of Mr. Tokusawa, as given by him to the T. S. Convention of 1890, as it gives in a condensed statement the tangible and permanent results of my mission. Mr. Tokusawa said:

“Brothers,—My presence, and that of this Buddhist priest, Mr. Kozen Gunaratne, indicates the influence which your Society, through the President, has acquired in our distant country. With my little smattering of English, it is impossible for me to describe all that Colonel Olcott has done there. The effect of his tour through Japan last year has been so great and so lasting that the current of public opinion has been actually turned in the opposite direction. The letters and newspapers received weekly at Colombo by myself and compatriots prove what I have just stated. It is wonderful that one man could have done so much. When I think of the condition of my religion three years ago, I feel inclined to shudder, because it was then at its lowest ebb. The more I reflect upon these evil times, the more inclined I am to bless our Theosophical Society and Colonel Olcott. A comparison [165] between the state of Buddhism then and now justifies what I say... Till quite recently the more educated of our people regarded Buddhism and its priests with contempt. A few staunch followers of the Lord Buddha’s doctrine tried to counteract the influence of the Christians, but it was in vain. It was at this dark moment that the Buddhists came to hear of the

work of Colonel Olcott, and asked his aid and sympathy. Therefore, last year, Mr. Noguchi was sent to this country to persuade the Colonel to go to Japan and make a lecturing tour through the whole country. This, I am happy to say, he did, and his success was far beyond our most sanguine expectations. Buddhism took life again, and Buddhists began everywhere to undertake the revival of their ancient faith. Among the most conspicuous effects of this revival are the three Buddhist Universities and various Colleges now about to be instituted, and the establishment of about 300 periodicals advocating and defending Buddhism. The spread of materialism and scepticism was checked; the insufficiency of Christianity for our wants was shown, and the truth of Buddhism vindicated. A reaction of a most marvellous character has—as I have remarked—set in favor of Buddhism. The founding of many Buddhist schools, Buddhist newspapers and religious journals are the visible results of the Colonel's mission. Imperial princes and princesses have begun to take a prominent part in Buddhistic education and propaganda. An imperial princess has become the patroness of the Buddhist Women's Society [166] of Nagoya, which was founded soon after he had lectured in that city, and in consequence of his tribute to women. An imperial prince has become President of the 'Dasa Sila Society,' a body founded ten years ago for promoting the observance of the Ten Precepts of Buddhism, but which, owing to the strong opposition of the Christian and sceptical classes, had died out. After the Colonel's mission it has been revived, and is now working. The people now look to the Colonel as their benefactor, and to many he is almost their father. The Christians have ceased to be so aggressive as before: their converts are inventing a new form of their faith. Yes, the mission of Colonel Olcott to Japan will be recorded in history. The Japanese will ever remain grateful to him and to his Society; and I hope, brothers, you will always take a kindly interest in our people."

Naturally, I should have liked to go home and have some rest after the Japan tour, but it could not be done, so I stopped three weeks in the island, visiting Anuradhapura, where I lectured under the shade of the historical Bo-tree (whose original stock, a cutting from the sacred Bo-tree of Buddha Gya, under which the Bodhisattva Siddhartha had attained enlightenment, had been brought from India by the Princess Sanghamitta, daughter of the Emperor Asoka); Matale (where I formed a T. S. Branch); Kandy (where a big procession took me through the streets, and where I gave two lectures); Gampola; Marvanwella, in the four Korales; Kaigalle; Kurunegalle, where I formed another Branch, and where the picturesque surroundings [167] at my open air lecture so vividly linger in my

memory that I must give them more than a parenthesis. How I wished for a photographer to take the scene! Back of me rose a hill in which is excavated a rock temple of Buddha. A spur called Elephant Rock sprang out from the hillside. A crowd of 1,500 or so were clustered in a natural amphitheatre at my feet; to the right, front, and left was a grove of old cocconut trees without undergrowth, and from the trunks were suspended Buddhist flags and other decorations, giving the needed touch of bright color to make the picture perfect. Messrs. Leadbeater, Hogen, and Kawakami, the latter two from Japan, addressed the crowd, and received great applause. The name given to the new Branch, the Maliyadeva, was that of the last of the historical great adepts, the time of whose decease I am not acquainted with, but it was long ago. Since then Ceylon has had no recognised real Arahats, and it is no wonder that its Buddhism has been growing less and less spiritual, until now one would search in vain from Hambantotte to Uva for a single man to whom the Sinhalese could look up with adoring reverence as the embodiment of the truth of the efficacy of the esoteric Yogic system practised and taught by the Founder. That is what makes my work so hard among them; all they care for is the intellectual and moral training of their families; the spiritual is something beyond their grasp; and when I first went to the island, they even told me the ridiculous story that the time for development of Arahats had elapsed, whereas (as [168] shown in the Buddhist Catechism) the Buddha himself expressly declares that there would never be lack of Arahats so long as the members of his Sangha continued to observe the Ten Precepts.²⁰

My tour also took me to several wards in Colombo and to Matara, far away down in the Southern Province, where that saintly woman Mrs. Cecilia Dias Ilangakoon lived, and where I lectured at her large house, in presence of the Chief Priests of the Province, all of whom were interested to hear about the state of Buddhism in Japan. It was during this visit of her that Mrs. Ilangakoon gave into my possession the splendid collection of the Tripitikas, in 60 volumes which she has had copied for me by 12 copyists at a cost of £300, and which work occupied two years in the doing. It is, perhaps, the finest collection of palm-leaf writings to be seen in India. Mrs. Ilangakoon also promised me to add to it the Tikka, or Commentary, which would fill about the same number of volumes; and an old relative of hers at Galle told me last season, when I called on him, that she had put a clause in her will to that effect, but all I can say is, that while I have reason to know that there is a clause ordering the Tikka to be prepared, it has not come to my hands as yet, although her estate was large, and the cost could well

have been afforded. Possibly her representatives or executors are not so [169] friendly in feeling towards us as she was, and so have indefinitely postponed the fulfilment of her wishes. I visited Kataluwa, and then Galle, where great courtesies were shown me; thence back to Colombo, and, on the 8th of July, sailed for Madras. The ever blessed Adyar saw me again on the 11th, as glad a person to get home as ever was.

CHAPTER X

A VISIT TO EUROPE

(1889)

THE arrangement of our Japanese books and pictures, the fitting together of the pieces of a huge brass lantern (a replica of those in the great Shin Shu Temple at Kyoto, which had been made specially for our Library at the expense of the Joint Committee of all sects at a cost of \$250), and the reading up of back files of exchanges to get in touch with the movement, took up my time pretty thoroughly in the first days. Then there were no end of visitors always dropping in and visits to make. On the 21st (July) a reception at Adyar was arranged in my honor by the three “Commissioners” in whose hands I had placed the management of Society affairs, as a precaution against any complications that might happen during my absence from home. It was “largely attended, the Library looked splendid, and everybody seemed pleased”--so says the Diary. Certainly, this cordial good-feeling was very pleasant to me. A great curiosity prevailing in the Indian community to hear about Japan, I gave a public lecture in Pachiappah’s Hall on the 27th.

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Two hours before the time appointed the hall was crowded. Theosophists and others came from Kumbakonam, Coimbatore, and other distant places to hear me, and there was much enthusiasm shown and the best possible feeling for the Japanese. The Hindus seemed very proud of their achievements, and were thrilled when I told them that, invariably, when I had to address the select audiences of political and military personages and the nobles, they asked me to tell them all about the Hindus, and explain why they and the Sinhalese had “lost their countries”. Evidently they determined to profit by the mistakes of other nations, and not do anything to break through the impregnability of the defensive wall of their patriotism. I told the Hindus that I had forewarned the Japanese that their overthrow, like their own, would date from the period when the religious spirit should almost die out of their national character, for then, being given over to the demoralising tendencies of purely worldly ambitions and the pleasures of physical life, the vital sap in them as a nation would dry up, they would become effeminate, and be vanquished and trodden underfoot by some more virile race. I

told the Hindus that I was sorry to see some evidences in Japan of national decadence from this very cause. I found religious observances becoming perfunctory, the priesthood largely slothful (like those of Ceylon and India), and losing their influence day by day. I recall an incident which occurred at a lecture of mine at one of the big towns included in the third portion of my programme, that through the [172] southern part of the empire. I called the attention of a monster audience to the fact that the Buddhist priests were growing less and less respected (there were some 400 present in the audience) because they were not observing the Ten Precepts. As these words were translated to them there was a loud roar of applause and the priests were abashed. I stood still until silence was again restored, and then, stepping forward one step and raising my hand, I cried out: "How dare you condemn the priests in this unthinking way? Are you any better behaved than they? Do you observe even the Five Precepts prescribed for the householder? These men in robes are your own kinsmen, born in your own families, of the same parents, and amid the same surroundings. They are no better nor worse than yourselves; and if they do not realise the ideal sketched for them by the Buddha, it is the fault of the Buddhist community, which shuts its eyes to their weaknesses, but still keeps up the form of saluting their outside dress, as if the man inside might be what he liked and it was nobody's business. If you want your priests to be good, be good yourselves; if you want them to keep the Precepts, keep them yourselves; if you show them that you know how they ought to behave, and will not support them unless they do so behave, then, believe me, you will see the Priesthood of Japan swept clean at once by a wave of reform, and their ecclesiastical rank will once more carry with it the right to be honored." The applause that thundered out after these words was something [173] wonderful. I begged the Hindus to take to themselves this admonition if they wanted to cleanse the foulness out of their most sacred shrines and give the temples of their gods a pure atmosphere in which a real Devata could breathe and act without the sense of suffocation. A pure village community, such as was everywhere to be found in the forefathers' times throughout Bharata Varsha, would make impossible such horrible scandals as turned up now from time to time in the British police Magistrates' Courts in India; no Mahants would have to be prosecuted for seduction, coining, embezzlement, and theft of temple treasures; no sacred fanes turned into brothels, no real jewels stolen and replaced with mock ones in glass, no ruining of families, or connivance in murders of marked individuals, be heard of. I think the better part of my audience approved of my plain talk, but to me it did not matter one cowrie whether they did or did

not: there was a truth to tell, and I told it—that was all.

Other events of no great importance followed, but on 8th August—just four weeks from the date of my return from Japan and Ceylon—I embarked for Marseilles on the French steamer “Tibre,” from which we transhipped at Colombo into the “Djemnah” and went on our way. At Alexandria the two sons of the then reigning Khedive, of whom the elder is now his father’s successor, embarked as passengers, amid the thunders of cannon, the manning of the yards, and bedecking with flags of the war ships in the harbor, and the attendance on board of the several Ministers of [174] the Egyptian Government. At Suez, H. P. B.’s and my old friend Captain Charles Dumont, Traffic Manager of the Canal Co., came aboard to see me. There were the usual dancing, charades, lotteries for charity, and singing on board during the voyage, and I only mention them because among the singers was a Batavian planter, an amateur vocalist, who had such a superb voice that I urged him strongly to go upon the stage. He could reach the *ut de poitrine*, of high C, with perfect ease.

We got to Marseilles on 1st September, and the venerable and learned Baron Spedalieri welcomed me again to France and took me to his house for breakfast. The Exposition Universelle of 1889 was then open, and I was, as usual at such shows, simply crushed with the sense of the vastness of its exhibits, and the impossibility of getting even a fugitive idea of the details. The fact is that one should visit at one of these World-shows only the department of Art and Industry in which he is specially interested, leaving all else to pass the eye as a flitting pageant. But my friend Count d’Adh mar gave me a treat by taking me to see the revolting, yet marvellous, displays of psychical phenomena by the Aïsonas of Africa, the well-known sect of Mussalman mystics and sorcerers, whose feats surpass belief. I saw them stand on braziers of live coals with naked feet, pierce their cheeks, arms, and tongues with iron stilettos or long needles—some having heavy balls of iron or lead fastened to one end—lie with naked stomachs over [175] sharp sword blades while a second man jumped on their backs, thrust daggers through the skin of their sides, chew up and swallow broken glasses and lamp-chimneys, bite scorpions in two, and eat live snakes. The piercing of the tongue transversely by a ball-weighted skewer, and then letting the heavy weight pull it to the perpendicular by twisting the flexible tongue, was a gruesome sight. It was not a show to take hysterical women to see. Before the performance began, the party of Aïsonas sat cross-legged in a semi-circle, with their Chief or Sheikh at the middle, and all beat rhythmical taps on very large tambourines,

say, perhaps—as I recollect them—4 feet in diameter. This went on for a while, the rate of vibration never varying, until at last one of them cast aside his tambourine, sprang up with a shout, knelt before the Sheikh, who passed his hands over him, and then stepped on the live coals, or went on with one of the other feats. After a feat, the performer returned to the Sheikh, removed the weapon or weapons from the wounds, and the Sheikh would just stroke the place with his hand. Not a drop of blood would flow and the wound would close. Now this meant hypnotism, clearly and unmistakably, and the question is who was hypnotised—the performer only, or both he and the onlookers? For I not only saw the transpiercings of the flesh, but was allowed to handle the weapons, and feel the weight of the metal balls on them with my own hands. The rhythmic tapping of the drum-like tambourine was a hypnotic agency. One sees the [176] same thing at Salvation Army meetings, when converts get the “change of heart” as the result of the hypnotising cadence of beaten drums and booming brasses, and the swing of the moving tunes. But this conceded, what next? What is this hypnotic action which makes the human body invulnerable to fire and to wounds by sharp instruments, prevents the natural flow of blood, and makes the open wound to close and granulate on the stroking passage of a hypnotist’s magnetic hands over the surface of the skin? We have not yet begun to get at the mysterious potentialities of this science of Anton Mesmer, widened out and re-christened by Charcot of La Salpêtrière, and other unpopularity-dodgers!

H. P. B. greeted me warmly on my arrival in London, 4th September, at 7 p.m., and kept me talking, after the good old New York fashion, until 2 a.m. I found Mrs. Annie Besant living in the house, having just come over from the Secularists into our camp, with bag and baggage. This was when her subsequent splendid career as Theosophical lecturer, author, editor, and teacher began, only ten years ago; does it not seem strange that she should have ever been anything else than a Theosophist? Is it not almost incredible that she should have once been so incredulous about our ideas, the existence of the Great Teachers, the possibility of infinitely extending human knowledge by widening the area of human consciousness? Strange that she should have been a Materialist, hard as nails against the claims of spiritual existence and the promoters of [177] that philosophy? One thinks she must have been but masquerading then in borrowed robes, while always in her heart a spiritualist. Certainly that is what I saw in her at our first meeting, despite her air of a woman of the toiling class, with her thick, laced boots, her skirts somewhat shortened to keep them tidy when trudging through the muddy streets of the East End, her red neckerchief of the

true Socialist tinge, and her close-cut hair—in short, an Annie Militant. Some of our people of the upper class in society were prepossessed against her, thinking that no great good could come from her importation of her fads and cranks into our respectable body! Some even protested to me against having her living at Headquarters, as it might keep influential women away. But what I found in her is written in my Diary of 5th September, the evening of our first meeting: “Mrs. Besant I find to be a natural Theosophist: her adhesion to us was inevitable, from the attractions of her nature towards the mystical. She is the most important gain to us since Sinnett.” And note that her Autobiography had not then been written to uncover the shine of her awakened spirit “within the day lamp of the body,” as Maimonides puts it; she had not, I believe, made one public discourse in support of Theosophy, nor had she said one word of the sort during the conversation between her and H. P. B. and myself, But when conducting her to the door I looked into her kind, grand eyes, and all this sense of her character passed like a flash into my own consciousness, I recollect taking her then by the hand [178] and saying, just at parting: “I think you will find yourself happier than you have ever been in your life before, for I see you are a mystic and have been frozen into your brain by your environment. You come now into a family of thinkers who will know you as you are and love you dearly.” She will be able to say whether these were not my prophetic words at that first meeting. How marvellously she has altered for the better during these past ten years only those can realise who knew her in 1889; she is not the same woman—she feels her soul. Blessings on her!

On the following day she and I called together on Mr. Bradlaugh at his residence. I had made his acquaintance and heard him lecture in New York in 1873, and had been one of his sponsors for Honorary Membership of the Lotos Club, so our personal relations had a pleasant basis. I found him ageing fast, yet full of that virile strength which made him stand like an oak among men. In the course of the conversation I remarked how deep was my regret that our gain of Mrs. Besant was at his expense, but that the step had been taken of her own motion, not because of any solicitation on our part. He sadly replied that it was a great and deep loss to him, but that Mrs. Besant was a woman who would always act according to the promptings of her conscience, and he had nothing to say. Even if he should, it would be useless.

On the next Sunday evening I went to hear Mrs. Besant on “Memory,” at the Hall of Science—a very able and forcible discourse, the first I had ever heard

[179] from her. So favorable a chance to hear so grand an orator was not to be lost, so I went alone or with others several times to her lectures, and escorted her to the Hall of Science on that memorable evening when she pathetically bade farewell to her Freethinker colleagues, since they had decided that she ought not to be longer allowed to work with them because she had taken up with views so diametrically opposed to theirs. Vivid indeed was her oration when she protested in the sacred name of Freethought against the disloyal attitude of Freethinkers towards an old and tried colleague, who had simply exercised the prerogative for which she had battled during so many years. She showed as clearly as day the inconsistency and shortsightedness of that policy. At the same time her speech brought back to my own mind the fact that their position towards Theosophy was the very one she herself had formerly taken up in the *National Reformer*, the organ of Mr. Bradlaugh and herself. A Madras Freethinker had written to ask of the editors whether a Secularist could consistently be also a Theosophist, and Mrs. Besant, for herself and co-Editor, had answered him editorially that the two were incompatible. We copied that decision with comments into the *Theosophist*, the comments being somewhat strong, with hints that the Secularists of the Mrs. Besant type were getting to be as dogmatic as the Pope. Neither of us then foresaw how soon she would have to drink at the hand of her own party of the bitter chalice she was once commending to our lips.

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Besides the desirable acquaintances made at that time was the undesirable one of the notorious Diss Debar, “the Precipitation Medium of the U. S. A.”: a showy, smooth-talking person, who was either a very remarkable medium or a very extraordinary humbug. The evidence of Mr. Luther R. Marsh, of New York, a great lawyer, and formerly law-partner of Daniel Webster, was enthusiastic in favor of her mediumship, and it was rumored that they were privately married. She told me that this was so, and that Mr. Marsh was shortly coming to London to meet her: moreover, she called herself Mrs. Marsh. She was a stout, black-haired woman, with an ample figure and a sort of fetching way, like that nameless gift of your Parisian woman. She was dressed in black and wore the cross of a foreign order (the Legion, I think) on her bosom—a hit of dramatic finesse, for it might mean so much. My entry says that I was “not convinced” of her good faith. She had picked up some American lady with much money, but not much brains, and had constituted her paymaster. She wanted lodgings for both, so I referred her to a place in the neighborhood and they went there, but

within the next few days there was no end of a row, a seizure of luggage—if I remember aright—bills unpaid, and the flitting of the decorated mistress of wonders. Subsequently, I believe, she was prosecuted for swindling and imprisoned, but my memory has not charged itself with the real facts of the case. She has plunged out of public sight, and I have heard nothing about [181] her for years. But I was informed that she had told wild stories of her intimacy with H. P. B., and some very occult and very wonderful work that they were doing together—all sheer falsehood.

On the 17th (September) I gave my first public lecture in London at South Place Chapel, Mr. Moncure D. Conway's place of worship. The building was packed Mrs. Besant took the chair. My topic was "The Theosophical Society and Its Work". At the close I was fairly bombarded with questions from all parts of the hall, and finally that serio-comic incident occurred which I have mentioned elsewhere, but which may be repeated here, as this is the proper connection. A voice from the right-hand gallery called out loudly: "I would like to know how it is that Colonel Olcott is so familiar with all the Eastern religions when I scarcely know one perfectly although I have given twenty years to its study?" It was a foolish thing to ask, for the answer was so obvious; but just as I was about to say something of a conciliatory nature, a loud response came from the opposite gallery—it was the one word "Brains". That sent the house into convulsions of merriment, and neither Mrs. Besant nor I could refrain from smiling. The querist was a great authority on Assyriology. The London papers gave long notices of the discourse, but a short quotation from the Pall Mall Gazette will suffice:

"It is no unusual thing to see an array of thoughtful faces at South Place Chapel, yet it may be questioned whether the walls of that simple, unpretending building [182] have hitherto looked down upon an assemblage bespeaking more respect, by reason of its high mental capacity and ability, than that which occupied the chapel's sitting and standing room at night. The occasion was Colonel Olcott's Theosophical lecture, Mrs. Besant presiding. There were present bronzed Anglo-Indians, Easterns in fez and goggles, medical, theological, and science students and teachers, representative South Place people, agnostics, freethinkers, and spiritualists—how many different 'ists' were really in evidence it is scarcely possible to set down. To this heterogeneous gathering Mrs. Besant introduced the lecturer Colonel Olcott is—as already mentioned in your columns—a man of striking and commanding personality. His hair is silvery, his flowing beard white and soft, his forehead massive, and his

whole aspect venerable. He neither makes any pretension to eloquence nor strives after effect. He says what he has to say in the plainest possible way. His manner is certainly sincere and his method convincing.”

The Theosophist (Supplement, November, 1889), in taking over the P. M. G.’s report, says:

“There are in London, among a host of ways of making a living, offices called ‘Newspaper-cutting Agencies,’ which supply subscribers with cuttings upon any desired subject from the newspapers of Great Britain and the Colonies. From such an agency we have received already nearly one hundred excerpts from British journals which speak about Colonel Olcott’s opening lecture and Theosophy in general.

[183]

The prevailing tone is one of chaff or bitterness, though there are instances of sober interest in, and respect for, the themes we preach. What is conspicuously shown is the existence of popular interest in us and our doings and sayings. Another striking proof is, that at one and the same time Madame Blavatsky was writing an article on Theosophy, bespoken by the North American Review, the leading review of the United States, and Colonel Olcott one on the ‘Genesis of Theosophy’ for the (Conservative) National Review, of London—the latter article in reply to one on the same subject by Mr. Legge in the same periodical.”

The lecture brought me one bit of bad luck in prompting Dr. Bowles Daly, an Irish journalistic writer and author, to seek our acquaintance. He manifested so much interest in our work and talked so smoothly as to win my confidence. He joined the Society, and after a while came out to Adyar. He had told me that he owned two houses in London, which he should sell, and then follow me out. He would give his services quite gratuitously. Later, it turned out that he had not a copper, and on that plea demanded a salary and allowances from the Sinhalese, among whom he ultimately went to work. He had a certain sort of ability and any amount of self-push, but proved to be quite ignorant of Eastern literature, and so was useless to me as an assistant editor, the capacity in which we had agreed that he was to be engaged. He went, as above said, to Ceylon; enlarged our Buddhist school at Galle into a weak College; did some hard work; gave rein [184] to a furious temper; drove the boarding scholars out of the school building with a belt buckle on Wesak Day because their recitation of the gathas and silas annoyed him upstairs; was chosen a member of a Provincial Buddhist

Committee; tried to wean from me the love of the Sinhalese; insulted and enraged some of the leading Buddhists; denounced wholesale the entire Sangha; and at last moved off to Calcutta, where he tried to prejudice the public against Theosophy, and finally became mixed up in several disagreeable public incidents. At last accounts he was in the Australian colonies. But for his ungovernable temper and his free indulgence in vulgar abuse, he might have done good service to a movement which always needs efficient helpers. I should not have ventured to invite him out to India but for his declaration that his services would be as free and unremunerated as our own; a declaration which he repeated to H. P. B. when I took him to her room, after the agreement had been arrived at between us (and after he had borrowed £20 of me on some excuse about having to make his preparations for leaving, a fact which caused H. P. B.'s eyebrows to rise when I told her about it). The loan was repaid at Adyar.

At the time of my visit I had the chance to see of what infinite tenderness and unselfish compassion Mrs. Besant was capable. An old friend of hers, a fellow-reformer and very well-known man, was utterly prostrated by overwork of the brain, and his life in peril. She took him into her house, nursed him like a sister,

[185] calmed his ravings, and, I believe, saved his life. It made it all the more sad for me when that same man, possibly—nay, probably, it must have been—in another access of nervous debility, turned upon his gentle nurse and said cruel things against her in the press. I was all the more sorry because of my great appreciation of his noble traits of character. I did a good deal of literary work for H. P. B. in those days. She had a table placed beside her own desk, and we fell at once into the old fashion of the New York “lamasery” when we toiled on the composition of *Isis Unveiled*, night after night, until the small hours of the morning. I wrote letters and articles for her magazine, and helped her on her occult teaching papers for her E. S. pupils. She resented my acceptance of invitations for parlor-talks on Theosophy, visits to important persons whom we wanted to interest, and lecturing tours—wanting to keep me tied to her desk-side. But this could not be, for the general interests of the movement had to be considered first of all; and though she called me a “mule” and all sorts of pet names of the kind, I did what was to be done. Yet it was a real sacrifice to have to deny myself the pleasure of the close companionship, for, as in New York, when we two were working together alone, the door between us and the Teachers seemed ever open; uplifting ideas came pouring into my mind, and the spiritual intercourse was very real. Her habit of counting on me as an ever

willing and loyal helper had become so fixed, and our tie was so much closer and so different from that [186] between her and our juniors, that she appeared to delight in the renewal of the latter. In those pleasant hours she used to tell me all she thought of those around her, and consult me as to how to treat them, and the best way to push on the movement. When certain persons would come in and pet and flatter her, she, when they were gone, should the occasion demand it, would paint to me their real characters. Meanwhile, the object of my European visit was silently yet surely being accomplished, H. P. B.'s angry feelings were subsiding, and all danger of a disruption was swiftly passing away. Things which had seemed to her as mountains became molehills when we came to look at them calmly. Thus had it always been. The new Rule about doing away with Entrance Fees and Annual Dues, adopted at the last Adyar Convention, and which had so exasperated the British and American Sections, and dissatisfied even the Indian, was temporarily got over, after much delay, by my issuing the following Executive Notice:

“Pending the final decision of the General Council regarding fees and dues, I hereby direct that the following rule shall be observed. Each Section is at liberty to alter within its own jurisdiction the amount of entrance fees and annual dues (hitherto fixed at, etc., etc.); and each Section, as an autonomous part of the Theosophical Society, shall collect said fees and dues, as determined by them, in the name and by the authority of the Theosophical Society, and apply the same to the Society's work as the sectional governing [187] body shall from time to time determine... The Indian Section... having unanimously recommended that the entrance fee and annual dues shall be restored to Rs. 10 and Re. 1 respectively, the recommendation is hereby approved...”

The fact is that the new resolutions passed by the Convention of 1888 were universally reprobated, and thus fell to the ground one more experiment which I allowed to be tried to stop the clamors of some who thought that in an ideal Society like ours things should not be managed on the prudent business plan, but that we should trust to the sporadic generosity of our members and the general public. The deficit in the year's account was made up by taking from the Theosophist cash-box Rs. 1,308-2-11. Verb. sap.

There was still another matter to be settled, viz., to please the two Western Sections and calm H. P. B. by giving her some delegation of my powers that would really facilitate the settlement of passing questions without the delay involved in a reference to Adyar. She, it will be recollected, wanted to act as my

representative with full discretionary powers; but as I had no great opinion of her discretion in matters of a practical kind, I concluded to make a compromise, to be tried as an experiment. So it was done in this way:

“LONDON, 25th December, 1889.

“In compliance with the unanimous request of the Council of the British Section, and to obviate the inconvenience and delay of reference to Headquarters [188] of current local questions requiring my official adjudication, I hereby appoint H. P. Blavatsky as Chairman, and Annie Besant, William Kingsland, and Herbert Burrows as Members, of an Appellate Board, to be known as ‘The President’s Commissioners’ for Great Britain and Ireland; and, furthermore, I hereby delegate to the aforesaid Commissioners for the United Kingdom the appellate jurisdiction and executive powers conferred upon me under the Constitution and Rules of the Society, and declare them to be my personal representatives and official proxies for the territory named until the present order be superseded.

“Provided, however, that all executive orders and decisions made on my behalf by the said Commissioners shall be unanimously agreed to and signed by the four Commissioners above designated.”

This looked to her a larger Xmas present than it really was, for the words italicised in the concluding sentence made the condition that the four Commissioners, and not H. P. B. alone, should make me responsible for their official decisions. I selected the other three from my respect for their practical good sense and steadfastness of will, believing that they would suffer nothing very revolutionary to be done to upset the steady working of the Society. Some of our worthy colleagues had--as H. P. B. so considerately informed me from time to time in her letters--made themselves merry over my fustian “Executive Orders,” but if either one of them had tried to keep in sound and working order such an incongruous and [189] unmanageable body of eccentrics as the Theosophical Society, so that it might ultimately settle down upon a strong foundation of wise autonomy, being independent within constitutional limits, and yet coherent as a whole Federation, they perhaps would have felt more like crying than laughing. Even now, one very well known Secessionist, whose habitual impulse is to be against every semblance of orderly administration and follow only his personal caprice, is calling the skies to witness how the Society has degenerated into rival camps of slaves, following different popes, and bidding them join his guerilla company. Heaven knows where can be found

another society so conservatively conducted as ours, yet with so little restraint upon individual rights. But there are some whose military conceptions cannot rise above the level of bush-whacking. At any rate, the results have fully justified my policy; and if the Society is ready to enter the twentieth century as a powerful social force, it is because I listened to all good advice, let my cranky associates play with their fads until they themselves threw them aside as unworkable, and when a stress came, showed the “mulish” quality which H. P. B. so vigorously denounced. The complete restoration of pleasant relations between us was proved by her issuing the notice that she had appointed me her sole agent in Esoteric Section affairs for Asiatic countries, with very large discretionary powers, which has been above quoted. So, the cyclone having blown itself out, we went on with our joint literary work in her [190] writing-room at Lansdowne Road. Needless to say, our Indian friends breathed freer when they heard the news.

Before leaving England for home I received through the Rev. S. Asahi, Chief Priest of Tentoku Temple, Tokio, an ecclesiastic of great influence, the following highly gratifying imperial communication:

“TOKIO, 18th October, 1889.

“TO BARON TORUKU TAKASAKI.

“His Imperial Majesty has accepted the present of a stone image and five other articles which were offered him by Colonel H. S. Olcott with an explanatory memorandum accompanying each article. I beg Your Excellency to inform that gentleman of His Majesty’s acceptance.

“VICE-MINISTER OF THE IMPERIAL HOUSEHOLD.”

The presents accepted by His Majesty were, the original model of the Buddhist Flag, a carved stone image from Buddha Gaya, leaves from the sacred Bo-trees of Anuradhapura and Buddha Gaya, and photographs of several noted shrines. With this hint of imperial good wishes, no wonder the nation turned en masse towards the messenger of Southern Buddhism and took to heart the message! It should be added that an explanation of the instant popularity of the Buddhist Flag may be found in the fact that when first shown to the Japanese priests, they consulted their own sacred writings and found that the colors of the [191] vertical stripes were identically as therein described as to be seen in the aura of the Buddha. Some readers may also recollect that the Tibetan Envoy to the Government of India told me at Darjeeling that they were those of the flag of

the Dalai Lama. Our Colombo Buddhist colleagues were therefore wiser than they knew when they suggested the idea of the *Buddhu r  s  * for the proposed Buddhist Flag of all nations.

CHAPTER XI

TRAVELS AND LECTURES IN THE BRITISH ISLES

(1889)

I VERY often paste into my Diary visiting-cards of notable callers, small handbills of my lectures, specimens of admission tickets to our anniversaries, and such like mementos of current events, and find it sometimes useful and always interesting. For example, to those who know H. P. B. only as a name, and regard her as a sort of mysterious Priestess, it would be perhaps interesting to look at the card I am just turning to in the Diary of 1889:

MADAME BLAVATSKY

AT HOME

Saturdays, 4 to 10 o'clock

18 Lansdowne Road,

Notting Hill, W.

And this old one of the earliest days at Bombay:

[A CORONET]

H. P. BLAVATSKY,

Corresponding Sec. of the Theosophical Society,

New York,

Bombay

[193]

There are many cards pasted in the Diary for that year, among them those of some of the most eminent statesmen, soldiers, civilians, and nobles of Japan, and, most conspicuous of all, the cards of the Chinese General and Chief Priests who visited me on board ship at Shanghai. These are on thin crimson paper, 3½[7] inches in size!

On 1st October I left London for a short tour in Wales, during which I lectured at Merthyr Tydvil and Tenby, the audiences being, as I was told, unusually large. From the latter place I went on to Liverpool, where I had the joy

of meeting my sister after a separation of eleven years. She was, in the earliest days of the T. S. in New York, a staunch friend and defender of H. P. B., one instance of her magnanimous loyalty having been her inducing her husband to take a flat in the same apartment house where we had our headquarters and residence, so that by her presence a stop might be put to the silly and malicious gossip that our personal relations were not of a proper character. For this unsuspected act of devotion I was ever afterwards grateful. We talked, walked, and drove, and saw the sights together and lived the past over again. One thing that gave us exquisite pleasure was an organ recital by Mr., afterwards Sir, W. T. Best, at St. George's Hall. The great organ there, it will be remembered, has 8,000 pipes, and its tone and compass are magnificent. Under the master's playing we were enraptured to hear the sounds of rolling and crashing thunder among [194] crags, the echoing fall of waters, the rush of winds, the cries of animals and songs of birds, the strains of musical instruments, and the soaring voices of men and women. We sat spell-bound, and sighed when the last note was played.

My next move was across the rough Irish Channel to Ireland, the unhappy land of the lightest-hearted people in the world. On arrival at Dublin my ever esteemed friend, Mr. F. J. Dick, took me to his house, and, like all our local members, showed me every possible kindness. I found in the Branch T. S. some very earnest and thoughtful men and women, eager to know the truth and brave enough to proclaim it at every hazard. On the 14th, in the evening, I lectured in the "Antient Concert Rooms" on the locally revolutionary subject, "Have We Lived on Earth Before?" Whether because of it or not, the place was crowded, and many were turned away from the doors. The Dublin papers had their say about it, and the Jarvey, or local Punch, printed some funny verses that set the town laughing. But the criticisms also set many to thinking, and strengthened our movement; which being so, the jesting did not matter in the least. Some public speakers do not realise that the only fatal weapon to fear is that of silence; if one's book, article, lecture, concert, or play is left unnoticed, that is bad; abuse, however truculent, is almost as beneficial as praise—much better than flattery. Of course some unkind things were said against us, but what else could have been anticipated from [195] the Irish Press? Yet the Methodist Times showed an unexpected generosity when it said:

"Dublin is being honored by a visit from Colonel Olcott, the President of the Theosophical Society. There has been a Lodge of the Society meeting in the city

for some time, and it is said to number in its membership many students of Trinity College. Whether the President's visit will win adherents for Theosophy remains to be seen; but his lectures have roused much controversy, and public attention is being called to the movement."

With Mr. B. Keightley, who had accompanied me from England, I next went to Limerick, but nearly missed arriving in time for my advertised lecture. A stupid railway porter so misdirected me that at a certain junction we were being carried away towards Cork, and had got as far as Blarney in the wrong train before we could turn back. Of course, no lover of Irish humor would miss the chance of visiting the famous Blarney Castle, although it was raining, and we had to tramp through the mud to it, so we went, and came away satisfied. We got to Limerick in time to eat something at Mr. Gibson's house and make change of dress before the lecture, which was on "Among the Orientals". The next day we regretfully left our friends and returned to Dublin. On the 17th I went by a fast train, in four hours, to Belfast, and lectured in Ulster Minor Hall to a most thoughtful audience, taking the subject of Reincarnation, under the same title as in Dublin. Among the hearers were [196] a good many undergraduates who took copious notes. The Rev. J. C. Street, an Unitarian preacher, of great local fame, made an excellent presiding officer, and nothing could have been fairer than the tone of his introductory and closing remarks. The Northern Whig, the leading paper, I believe, in the North of Ireland, contained the following report of the proceedings:

"The Ulster Minor Hall was very well filled last evening, when Colonel Henry S. Olcott, President of the Theosophical Society, lectured on the above subject. From the composition of the audience, it was evident that curiosity to hear the tenets of the non-fashionable cult expounded by so eminent an authority as Colonel Olcott was the leading motive which had brought them together. There was a fair representation of local scientific men, including Professor Everett, and there were also several clergymen, among whom were Rev. Dr. A. C. Murphy, Rev. Dr. Magee (Dublin), Rev. W. R. L. Kinahan, and Rev. J. Bell. The Secularist Society were in strong force, as was also the student element—divinity and otherwise—while not a few ladies were among the attendance. Colonel Olcott, an elderly gentleman with a fine head and a commanding presence, was introduced by Rev. Mr. Street, who was his sole companion on the platform. The lecturer's style was fluent and forcible, yet quiet withal, and he dealt with his subject simply in an explanatory—never in a declamatory—

manner. His brief history of the origin and progress of the [197] Theosophical Society; and his still briefer treatment of the theory of pre-incarnation, was given with the air of a man who had an immense store of power in reserve. At the conclusion of the lecture a number of questions, more or less pertinent to the subject dealt with, were asked by different members of the audience, and answered by Colonel Olcott. It is not very probable that the Theosophical Society will recruit its membership very heavily from Belfast; but, however this may be, the Society could scarcely have a more able and courteous pioneer to represent them amongst us than their President.

“Rev. J. C. Street, in taking the chair, said he had been asked to do so by the Branch in Dublin, as there was no local representation of the Theosophical Society in Belfast. He was not himself a member of the organisation, and, until a comparatively recent date, he had been unaware even of its existence. He owed his first acquaintance with its objects and aims to the book published by Mrs. Besant, *Why I Became a Theosophist*; and last Sunday, in his own church, he had referred to the subject of that book at some length, quite independently, however, of any connection with Colonel Olcott’s visit to Belfast. After all, therefore, it was not, perhaps, inappropriate that he should have been asked to preside that evening.”

We had a still greater surprise in store for the prejudiced public; it was this:

Lepracaun! Banshee! Deence She! Matha de Danaun!

[198]

A LECTURE

ENTITLED

“THE IRISH FAIRIES SCIENTIFICALLY CONSIDERED,”

will (by special request) be delivered by

COLONEL OLCOTT

(President of the Theosophical Society)

On Monday evening, 21st October, at eight o’clock, in the

ANTIENNT CONCERT ROOMS,

Great Brunswick Street.

“Lay your ear close to the hill,
Do you not catch the tiny clamor,
Busy click of an elfin hammer,
Voice of the Lepracaun singing shrill
As he merrily plies his trade?”

This was said to be the first time that this most popular of Irish beliefs—superstitions, the conceited ignorants call it—had been handled in this serious manner. The Daily News (London) gave an editorial column to it, and said that unquestionably I must be a man of moral courage to stand up and defend a belief that it had been so long the fashion to laugh at—or words to that effect. The fact is, I wanted to give the tens of thousands of good people who secretly cherished this charming tradition the comfort of knowing that, under the classification of Nature Spirits, or Elementals, the existence of their fairies is believed in by a vast majority of mankind. To prepare for the lecture, I spent as much time as I could at the [199] National Library, in Kildare Street, looking up every book that treated the subject. I found most of the authors who pretended to speak in the name of Science displaying as much ignorance as prejudice; and one—I think it was Grant Allen—remarked that “the Irish fairies went out when the Board Schoolmaster opened his doors”. He did not see that the easy way to account for this fact is that the cultivation of the lower rationalistic faculty tends to cut off the finer soul-perceptions which put man in close touch with the finer forces of Nature, and to destroy whatever clairvoyant faculty he may have inherited. So that while the “fairies” do vanish, it is only from the sight of the so-called educated brain, the unspoiled peasantry enjoying now, as they ever did, the realisation of the next subtler plane of consciousness.²¹ One thing struck me, viz., that the Isle of Man is said by tradition to have been a great centre of magic and magicians; and when I put this in connection with the mysterious arms of Man, three bent human legs united at the [200] centre, I recognised it as a form of the Svastika deliberately adopted by the old Manx occultists, probably from still more ancient teachers, to preserve and hand down the concept of the action of spirit in matter which, in the Svastika, forms a component of the T. S. Seal. I had a large and attentive audience at the lecture, and the vote of thanks at the close was moved by that great Keltic scholar and authority, Douglas Hyde, whose words of praise were precious. Mr. W. Q. Judge, who was in Ireland on a visit to his relatives, was present.

Christendom, and only succumbing when the “Board Schoolmaster” opens his doors, and, as above remarked, drowns intuition by the abnormal stimulus of the intellect of the lower Manas. Blackwood’s writer says:

[201]

The next day I returned to Liverpool after a heart-searching fit of seasickness, for the provocation of which this uneasy stretch of water is unequalled if we except that one to be crossed between Tuticorin and Colombo on those cockleshells, the “Aska” and “Amra,” that the B. I. S. N. Co. provide for their passenger victims.

My sister rejoined me in London, and we had a week or so more together.

I was plied with an unusual number of questions after a lecture at Birmingham, in the Masonic Hall—before a large audience. This “heckling” is almost unknown in India, where the audience, after delivering their volleys of applause, let one quietly depart; but it is, I think, a useful custom, for it often makes one see his subject in new lights, and gives him the chance to drive home his arguments by fresh illustrations and altered presentations. It usually happens that the answering of these questions takes up as much time as the original lecture.

[202]

On 4th November I lectured at Lee, Staffordshire, and the next day at Westminster Town Hall, London. On Wednesday, M. A. Oxon, C. C. Massey, intimate friends of fifteen years, and I dined together, and spent a delightful evening in varied talk about persons and things, chiefly Spiritualism and Theosophy. Oxon showed me the cover of one of the mysteriously diverted letters that I describe in the first volume of these memoirs; letters addressed to me at New York from various parts of the world, but by some occult agency arrested in transit, and dropped on the sorters’ tables in the Philadelphia G. P.O., by them stamped on the back and delivered to me at H. P. B.’s house by the city postman, without having passed through the New York G. P.O., or being stamped in the addressed city. This particular one was posted at Hartford (Conn.) and bore the stamps of Hartford and Philadelphia, but not that of New York, although addressed to my office in that city. I had sent the cover to Oxon as a curiosity, as I did all the others received to other friends and correspondents.

Among my visits of the month was one to Middleton Park, the country-seat of my friends the Earl and Countess of Jersey, where, with other notabilities, I had

the pleasure of meeting the recently appointed Governor of Madras, now Lord Northcote of Exeter, and Lady Northcote. I was glad to hear him say that the Conservative party as a whole had great respect for Mr. Bradlaugh for his abilities and his powerful character; they found him also always well prepared [203] for the debates in which he might engage, having evidently studied out his subject thoroughly and having his facts ready for orderly presentation. They would have been but too glad to have won him over to their side, had that been possible. On Sunday our house party went to the quaint old village church, full of ancient reminiscences, and I was greatly interested in the, to me, unique experience.

Returned to town, I had a serious consultation with Massey, in his capacity of a barrister, as to the expediency of allowing H. P. B. to go into Court to prosecute some of her slanderers. He most emphatically protested against it, saying that, however strong a case she might have, there was but faint chance of getting a verdict from the average jury or judge: prejudices were entirely too strong: it was better for her to continue to bear all in silence. This was my opinion also.

Dr. Lloyd Tuckey, now so widely known as an authority on therapeutic hypnotism, had me to dinner one day, and together we tried an instructive experiment. A certain subject whom he had found readily responsive to almost every suggestion he had made to her when hypnotised had suddenly become insensitive, and he could no longer control her mental action. The problem was to be solved, and we were to explore somewhat new ground. After much talk together, I found that her change dated from a certain former occasion when a lady and the Doctor were rather amusing themselves in the presence of the hypnotised, and presumably insensible, subject, with something [204] rather ludicrous in her expression or appearance. It at once struck me that very likely the hypnosis had not been deep enough to completely obliterate external consciousness; and that resenting, as almost every woman will, the idea of affording cause of laughter to another woman in the presence of a physician whom she held in high esteem, and whose esteem she coveted, she had created in herself the rooted determination never again to make it possible for her to be thrown into a state where she should not retain her perfect self-control. The Doctor kindly allowed me to try if I could not remove this prepossession by kind discussion, so I sent him out of the room and remained with the subject alone. I appealed to her natural benevolence of heart to do what she could to make the Doctor better able to treat the sick by increasing his knowledge of abnormal

nervous states, representing as a highly meritorious act her willingness to share in the merit of such altruism. At first she shook her head and set her lips, but little by little the pure springs of her kindly ideal of helping the sick and suffering were touched, and she consented to once more make herself passive to the Doctor's suggestions. He then returned from the other room, hypnotised her, and she was as responsive as before. Has this not a strong bearing upon the question of the perversion of the moral sense in hypnosis at the pleasure of the experimenter? And yet experiments which I saw made by Professor Bernheim at the Nancy Civil Hospital seem to strengthen the view that a really good hypnotic subject can keep [205] no liberty of impulse against the will of an experienced operator. It is a puzzle still unsolved.

Speaking of hypnotism recalls an evening in H. P. B.'s sitting-room at Lansdowne Road, when Carl Hansen, the Danish professional hypnotist, made some experiments of an edifying nature. He is one of the most successful practitioners in the world, and, in fact, so successful have his demonstrations been that more than one Government has forbidden him to give them in public. It was, I think, on the evening above referred to that one of the company present—Mrs. Besant—was made to seem to the subject to have disappeared from the room. Although she stood directly in front of him and spoke to him, he seemed neither to see nor hear her. She took from H. P. B.'s whist-table a handkerchief and dangled it by one corner before the subject's eyes, but he did not see her hand holding it, though he did see the handkerchief, and was much amused at its self-suspension in the air. Turning to H. P. B., he said: "Madame, you must be doing some magic, for I see a handkerchief out there with nothing to hold it up: what is it?" Mrs. Besant then held against her back a playing-card, drawn at random and face downward from a pack, and again the subject saw it, and not Mrs. Besant: her body was transparent to his psychical vision. This was an astounding experiment, for neither Mrs. Besant nor any of the others in the room had knowledge of the value of the card until the subject called it out, and we each verified his accuracy. If Hansen had seen it [206] first, then we might presume that it was a case of telepathy, but he did not. Let the Materialist explain the phenomenon—if he can. A fortnight later, I presided at a private reception and conversazione given him by a lady friend, at which he made other excellent demonstrations. Among them was this: He applied to a person's right upper arm a small silver match-box, telling him that the skin beneath it would become red and inflamed, but the corresponding tract on the other arm would be perfectly insensible to touch or pricking. The experiment was a perfect success at the first

trial. At this, as at two previous soirées at which I had met him, he suggested that a certain one of the company would become invisible to the subject; and so the latter, when asked to count the persons present, invariably failed to count the one designated, or to see anything but empty space at the point where the person was actually standing. His bodily vision was inhibited as to that one individual, but all the others were visible to him.

A London paper having published a statement of its New York correspondent, early in October, to the effect that Dr. Coues had asserted that Madame Blavatsky had been expelled from the Theosophical Society, she addressed to the editor an amusingly combative letter, from which the following paragraphs are quoted:

“If you would have the truth, then I may as well give it you now. Madame Blavatsky, as one of the [207] chief founders of the T. S., cannot be expelled from the Society, for several good reasons, the least of which is that there is no one in the Society having authority to do so—not even the President-Founder, Colonel Olcott—and in such a case Madame Blavatsky might, with as much good right, return the compliment and expel him. But as it is not likely that our President will ever become a lunatic, no such event threatens the Theosophical Society just now.

“Let, then, the Yankee cock-and-bull story—just set afloat by its author, an ex-Theosophist, who WAS HIMSELF EXPELLED FROM our AMERICAN SECTION TWO MONTHS AGO FOR SLANDER, as the whole Theosophical Society knows—remain for what it is worth, and make the INITIATED readers merry.

“London, October 9.”

[The capitals are Madame Blavatsky’s.-ED.]

The comical picture she paints of the two Founders expelling each other reminds one of the equally amusing historical incident of the three Popes of unsavory memory—Gregory VI, Silvester III, and Benedict IX—who contended with each other in the eleventh century for the chair of St. Peter, hurled their bulls of excommunication at each other’s heads, and resorted to military force to sustain their several pretensions!

As I could not return to India in time for the usual Convention, none was held in 1889, but in place of it a Conference at Bombay was arranged for and held.

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There had been something like a deadlock occasioned by the passage of the unpopular Rules of 1888 and the unrest provoked by H. P. B.'s revolutionary action in Europe, but as the Report of the Conference (Theosophist, January, 1890) says: "The meeting was in every respect a remarkable success... One circumstance which greatly contributed to the good-feeling and cheerfulness of the Brothers in Conference was the news that New York, London, and Adyar were in future to pull together in unity and unison, and that, for the present at least, the disintegrating forces... had been overcome and silenced." Our trusty veteran colleague, Judge N. D. Khandalvâla, occupied the chair, and conducted the business of the meeting with perfect and successful impartiality. The Conference recommended the retention of the policy of fees. At the close a very cordial vote of confidence in the Founders was passed by acclamation. As it mirrors the feeling of her colleagues towards H. P. B., and was a great solace to her in her retirement, I will quote it:

"Resolved,—That this Conference of the Fellows of the Indian Section of the Theosophical Society regards with unfeigned indignation the malicious attempts made lately to injure the Society by cowardly attacks on Madame Blavatsky, who, as well as her equally devoted colleague Colonel Olcott, has freely given her whole energies for the past fifteen years to the establishment of a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood, and the revival of Eastern Philosophy and Religion.

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"The Conference wishes to convey to both the Founders of the Society the assurance of its most cordial and grateful recognition of the great services they have rendered to India, and are now rendering to the world at large."

An attempt was made to form a Ceylon Section, under, first, Mr. Leadbeater, next, C. F. Powell, and lastly, Dr. Daly, but it proved impracticable, and was finally abandoned. The Sinhalese are not much given to study, being rather practical than ideal, more workers than dreamers; besides which, they have no class like that of the Brahmins, who have a hereditary proclivity for philosophical and metaphysical speculation. Although Branches which we organised in 1880 are still active and turning out excellent work, it is altogether within the lines of Buddhism. They neither understand nor wish to understand the contents of other religious systems; and when they speak of themselves as Branches of our Society, it is always with this reservation, that they do their best

for Buddhism and acknowledge the President-Founder as their principal adviser and leader—when anything particularly knotty has to be solved, or any great obstacle has to be cleared away.

In the month of December the Society lost a very important worker in Pandit N. Bhashyacharya, F.T.S., Director of the Adyar Library, who succumbed to blood poisoning. He was one of the best Sanskrit Pandits of India; wonderfully well read in that classical literature; a good English scholar; a public speaker [210] equally at home in four languages; a brave man and an enlightened reformer. He gave us his private collection of palm-leaf MSS., thus forming the nucleus of the now large and fine collection in the Adyar Library. A handsome commemorative tablet in chiselled brass has been placed in the Oriental section to his memory.

I was fortunate enough to make, during this visit, the acquaintance of the late Mrs. Louise Cotton, a successful palmist, and author of a handbook on the subject. She came one morning to see H. P. B., and read her palm and those of Mrs. Besant and myself all accurately. Yet, as I have elsewhere said, it seems to me as if this palm-reading partakes more than anything else of the nature of Psychometry, because I have noticed that the palmisters of India and those of the West are about equally successful although reading the hand-lines by two quite opposite systems. For instance, the Line of Life is traced downward towards the wrist in the one system, and upward from the wrist in the other. The same remark perhaps applies to readings by Phrenology, Physiognomy, and Buchanan's Sarcognomy: far better results are obtained by one observer than by another equally skilled, because the one reads character as much by psychometrical faculty, and could be as successful if he read with closed eyes, whereas the other goes by the physical signs observable on the surface of the body. One evening, in 1885, being in London, I took tea with the Governor of Newgate Prison, in company with a dear old friend, Captain Edward Costello, formerly of the Rifle Brigade,

[211] a Peninsular veteran. The conversation turning on Phrenology, as the Governor was showing me the skulls of some notorious criminals, I asked whether he had ever noticed in the heads of great malefactors that excessive development of the posterior portion of the cranium and smallness of the anterior and superior parts which Gall's system associated with criminal propensities. He said he had not noticed any marked difference between them and the heads of ordinary decent citizens. "Here for instance," continued he, "are the skulls of [I

won't be sure, but I think it was Jack Shephard and some other equally notorious rascal]... and... and yet you see they are quite like other men's." They were, in fact; but I told him that Professor J. R. Buchanan, of America, who had proposed some modifications in the rules of Phrenology, asserted that great activity in any organ of the brain caused a gradual absorption of the bone of the skull in the part which touched it. Thus, if that theory be true, we ought to find, on putting a lighted candle inside the skull, such and such parts translucent, while such others as cover the moral and spiritual faculties should be opaque. "Capital idea," said the Governor; "suppose we try the experiment." A lighted candle was brought inserted into each skull, and sure enough the bone over the criminal convolutions was thinnest of all, in some instances so very thin as to let the light shine as through an old horn lantern.

On 29th November I took train for Edinburgh to visit our Branch, which was originally formed in

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1884, under the presidency of the late Mr. Cameron, the penmaker. It may be remembered by my constant readers my surprise and gratification to be accosted at the close of my lecture by the most popular preacher of Edinburgh, with thanks and blessings for the eclectic religious views I had presented as those sustained by our Society, and fundamental in all the great religions; views which, he said, he was preaching from his pulpit every Sunday; and how he had bade me godspeed. It may also be recalled that after the lecture I formed the Scottish T. S., giving it, as I had the Bengal T. S. of Calcutta, a general superintendence and leadership over future Scottish Branches. Well, the continuance of this privilege had not been earned by work, but, on the contrary, the one Branch formed had been long inactive, and had now retired behind closed doors, veiling its activities and the personalities of its members under cover of privacy. As of partly Scottish blood—how many strains have not we Americans—and always an interested observer of the national trend of thought, I had, and have, the deep conviction that, when the chains of narrow sectarian dogmatism are flung off, a body of splendid philosophical leaders will step from Scotland into the European arena of our movement, and push it on to a brilliant future. I am counting on that; it will come.

My welcome at Edinburgh was cordial in the extreme, and I found a most congenial atmosphere in the company of the gentlemen whom I met at a private lecture at the residence of my host and hostess.

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Returned to London, I had a series of public lectures, private calls, conversation-meetings, and other functions to attend to, much to H. P. B.'s dissatisfaction, as above noted. Then came a visit to Bradford, where that joyous-hearted, keen-brained friend, Oliver Firth, has held the fort for us for many years. My visit was with the object of fulfilling an engagement to lecture on "The Awakening of Japan," in a "star" course in which Sir Charles Dilke, Bart., M.P., had given the opening discourse. Mr. W. Pollard Byles, Editor of the Bradford Observer (now M.P.), presided, and said some very kind things at the close. The same gentleman presided at my lecture on "Theosophy" on the next evening. On the 17th (December) I lectured at Newcastle, and the next day returned to London, to preside at a meeting of the British Section, T. S. Finally, my tickets for the return journey to India had to be taken, and on the 26th I left for Colombo via Marseilles, after a most affectionate farewell from H. P. B., and followed by the kind wishes of all friends. I was still feeling badly from the effects of a renewed attack of my old enemy, the diarrhoea of Burmese Expedition and Japan Tour fame, which had troubled me no little during my whole stay in England.

The advantage of a metaphysician putting aside his dreamings and taking to physics when travelling was humorously illustrated in the case of young E. D. Fawcett, the author, who was going out with me to help us at Adyar. At the Charing Cross station he lost the following things: his Gibus hat, railway ticket [214] to Marseilles (cost £6), two boxes of books, and 150 cigars. "Nothing surprising, then, that I should have entered in my Diary: "If he goes on moving about like this he will be in danger of losing his head!" As he does not mind being teased about his absent-mindedness, I have risked telling this story.

The old year going out and the new one coming in saw me on board the "Oxus" at sea, four days out from Marseilles, and bound for Colombo.

CHAPTER XII

TELLS OF THE WORK AND DEATH OF

C. F. POWELL, F.T.S.

(1890)

IT was so cold going down the Red Sea that the men wore their overcoats and the ladies their furs as far as Aden. To those who have only seen the sea in the hot season, when the air is like the draught of a furnace and the people on the ship gasp for breath, this will sound strange, yet it is true. We had as passengers the Siamese Ambassador and family, with whom I made pleasant acquaintance; there were also three members of the Japanese Imperial Commission at the French Exposition, who knew of me and were extremely friendly. A sad case occurred on the ninth day out. A poor young French conscript, bound for Cochin-China to join his regiment, died of starvation, his grief for leaving home being, for some cause or other, so poignant that he had long refused to eat, and at last succumbed on the day mentioned. He was buried on the morrow in a sea as clear and azure as a sapphire of purest water, but the forms observed revolted me, who had seen numbers of similar functions on British [216] ships. There was no appearance of interest on the faces of the crew; some masses were mumbled by a passenger priest, the boatswain blew a shrill blast on his pipe, the coffined corpse, with a shot at its feet and auger-holes bored in the rough box, was pitched through a port, and the ship sails on. But the poor boy piou-piou's heart had broken.

After passing Aden the temperature rose and the punkahs were set a-swinging in the saloons, for the warm hand of Mother India was now stretched out to us, with, to me, a welcome thrill. I had now to face another year of Indian work, and under pleasanter circumstances than when the London friction was grinding our wheels of action.

We reached Colombo on 16th January, at 9.30 p.m., and I went ashore to notify our people in Maliban Street and telegraph to Adyar, but our formal landing was made the next morning. I installed Fawcett at our Headquarters, and then took the Japanese Commissioners to see our College and the busy Headquarters, after which I bade good-bye to the Siamese Ambassador and other

new friends.

One of our very best and most beloved Buddhist colleagues, A. P. Dharma Gunawardene, Muhandiram, lay dying. He was in his 80th year, was President of the Colombo (Buddhist) T. S., Chief Dyakaya (lay supporter) of the High Priest Sumangala's College, and might be called the father of that institution. Respected by the whole Buddhist public, honorable in all his doings, successful in business, simple as a child, and [217] generous in all works of philanthropy, the progress of his disease was watched with deep concern. The Foundation of our Sinhalese journal, the Sandaresa, and our flourishing printing works, is due to his having headed the subscription list with the sum of Rs. 500. He died while I was in the island, and two days later his body was cremated. Three thousand persons walked behind the hearse, and a sea of heads could be seen from the pyre, a towering structure of sandal and other woods, 12X10 feet in size. Sumangala Thero, with about seventy-five other monks, the chief mourners, Mr. Fawcett, Mr. Powell, and I stood close to it. Sumangala deputed his pupil, Gnassira Thero, a very eloquent young monk, to pronounce the funeral discourse on his behalf and to give Pansil; after which, standing on the pyre itself, I spoke on behalf of the Society, and then the son of the deceased set fire to the pile, according to immemorial custom.

The relations between the Sinhalese Buddhists and Tamil Hindus in Ceylon are so friendly that the Hon. P. Ramanathan, M.L.C., the accepted leader of the latter community, had several conferences with me about the feasibility of founding a Hindu-Buddhist College for the benefit of the two nationalities. We consulted our friends respectively and were inclined to think it might be done, but, after all, the project failed to gain the necessary support. Mr. Ramanathan and I were also of one mind about starting a crematorium, which would be a real blessing to the whole public, and this is a thing for the future, when a less busy man [218] than I, and a resident, can devote his time to the business. The Hindus of Ceylon follow the ancestral fashion of burning their dead, but the Sinhalese, save in the cases of their bhikkus and the feudatory chiefs of Kandy, have forgotten that it was formerly considered a disgrace to bury the corpse of any but a very low caste person, and stick to burial for lack of somebody to arouse their attention to the immense advantages of cremation.

At this time Mr. Charles Francis Powell, F.T.S., was serving with us at Adyar, and on tour in Ceylon and Southern India. I found him in Ceylon, but anxious to get back among the Indian Branches. He had been doing excellent work in the

island, visiting schools, starting new ones, giving lectures in villages, and founding new Branches of our Society to the number of seven. He was the son of a Philadelphia millionaire, who must have been very eccentric, for in his will he left Charles the mere sum of \$10. The son had served well and faithfully in a Volunteer regiment during the Rebellion, and later, after various vicissitudes and changes of employment, had found himself in California, where he was attracted into our Society. Possessing a most energetic and enthusiastic temperament, he determined to come out and offer himself to me in any capacity I might choose for him. I set him to the work above described, and the result justified my estimate of his worth. With myself and Fawcett, he now visited several of our schools for boys and girls before crossing over to India on the 27th (January)

[219] in compliance with an Executive Notice, dated 21st January, in which I commended him to the affectionate regards of our Indian members and thanked him for his work in Ceylon. In an address published by himself at Colombo on the same day he said: "Absence from India has shown how strong a love has sprung up in my heart for the land of my adoption and for her sons, and how much a life in that land means to me. That we may be permitted to journey on together to the goal of all our hopes is my earnest prayer." The goal was, of course, the attainment of spiritual knowledge. He was welcomed by the Hindus with open arms, and all seemed to promise for him and for them a loving relationship that would last for many years. True, he was living a life of extreme asceticism, taking far less food than he ought, and that of the simplest kind—a couple of handfuls of wheat, some curds, a few fruits, and tea as a beverage—but when we shook hands on his steamer at parting I thought he looked as strong and tough a man as I had seen for a long time. At Ambasamudram or some other village he had had his horoscope compiled by a good astrologer, and it prophesied that he would live to be 90; but, alas! ten days later he was dead. I shall come to that presently. Meanwhile, I went on with my Ceylon work as usual, finding plenty to occupy my time. H. E. the Governor, Sir Arthur Gordon, hearing of my return to the island, wrote and asked me to come and see him. I found a very kind reception awaiting me. His Excellency wished to know whether [220] I could not manage to secure from Japan a large number of immigrants of the cultivator and mechanic class to take up the extensive tracts of public lands which the repair of the huge irrigating tanks of the interior of the island would restore to their ancient fertility. He thought that, with their industrious and sober habits, Japanese would become most valuable residents, while the identity of their religious creeds with that of the Sinhalese Buddhists

would remove all cause of fear as to conflicts between the two races. It was a statesman-like and far-seeing scheme, and I did what I could in Japan to bring it about; but although the pressure of population there was considerable, and they were looking out for countries in which to colonise, the terms offered by Ceylon were not so good as those tendered to the Japanese Government by Australia, Mexico, and some other Governments. So I left the matter there for further consideration. The Governor and I also had some talk about the Buddhist Temporalities Bill, which was one of the subjects of my conferences with Lord Derby at the Colonial Office in 1884.

As I had become tired of the misrepresentations of Western scholars of the contents of Southern Buddhism, I profited by the presence of so able a metaphysician as Mr. Fawcett to arrange a discussion between him and Sumangala Thero, which should furnish an authoritative exposition of the teachings of the Buddha, as understood by the Southern Church, and expounded in its version of the Abhidhama. The services of the ablest lay Pali scholar of Ceylon, the [221] late Wijesinhe Mudaliyar, Government Translator of the Mahavansa, were obtained, and Mr. Fawcett himself wrote the report of the discussion for the number of the Theosophist for March, 1890, to which the reader may profitably refer. Having my doubts, however, whether the views of the High Priest had been altogether exactly reported, I have submitted the article to him for comment before summarising its points for the present chapter of Old Diary Leaves. A very wise precaution it was, as the High Priest upset the greater part of the structure which Fawcett built upon the very erroneous interpretation of Mr. Wijesinhe. We now have what may be taken as an authoritative declaration of the contents of Southern Buddhism as the High Priest understands it—always provided that his views have not been again misreported. He is conceded to be the most erudite monk in the Southern Division of the Buddhistic Sangha. The interpreter this time was Mr. D. B. Jyatilake, Assistant Principal of Ananda (Buddhist) College, Colombo, and Editor of the Buddhist magazine.

Mr. Fawcett begins by saying that “there are two co-existent but mutually dependent principles underlying cosmic evolution.

“The first is Nama, which may be said to correspond in a general way to the concept ‘spirit,’ that is to say, to a formless subject reality which both transcends, and yet lies at the root of, consciousness. Nama is, in fine, the impersonal spirit of the Universe, while Rupa denotes the objective basis, whence spring the [222] varied differentiations of matter. Consciousness or Thought (vigñana)

supervenes when a ray of Nama is conditioned in a material basis. There is then no consciousness possible without Nama and Rupa co-operating—the former as the source of the ray, which becomes conscious, the latter as the vehicle in which that process of becoming is alone possible.”

We here see the bias in favor of the doctrine taught in the esoteric school of the East, which was so strong as to make the author run away with an imperfectly grasped rendering of Sumangala’s views, for which, as I now understand the latter to say, Mr. Wijesinhe was primarily responsible. The High Priest disputes these assumptions, as the Abhidhama Nama is only a collective name for the four immaterial skandhas, of which consciousness (vigñana) forms one. It is therefore inaccurate to say that Nama “both transcends, and yet lies at the root of, consciousness”. There can be no other distinction drawn between Nama and Vigñana than that which exists between a whole and its part.

Nama and Rupa occur together, and in regard to their interdependence the High Priest furnished an illustration even more striking than the one given by Mr. Fawcett, and borrowed from Hindu philosophy. He compared their relation to the co-operation existing between two men, one born a cripple and the other blind. The cripple seated on the shoulders of the blind man directs the course which the latter should take.

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After disposing, as he thought, of the question of the relative functions of the supposed two factors in cosmic evolution, Mr. Fawcett passes on to the question of Nirvana. He says:

“On this moot issue we found ourselves, like Milton’s dilettanti demon philosophers in hell,

In wandering mazes lost,

the cause of which deadlock was subsequently apparent when, in an answer to a not too premature inquiry, the High Priest expressed his opinion to the effect that the laws of thought do not apply to the problem. The Brahmanical idea of the absorption of the ego into the Universal Spirit was, however, he declared, fallacious, as any such coalescence involved the idea of Cause and Effect obtaining in Nirvana—a state pre-eminently asankatha, that is to say, not subject to the law of Causality. He then proceeded to deny the existence of any form of consciousness, whether personal or that of coalesced Dhyanic entities, in Nirvana; rejecting the most rarefied notion of the survival of any consciously

acquired memories in that state. Subsequently, however, he gave the lie to the annihilationists by admitting that this state was com-prehensible to the intuition of the Arhat who has attained to the 4th degree of Dhyana or mystic development, and furthermore that the ‘true self,’ i.e., the transcendental subject, actually entered Nirvana. The obscurity in which this avowal was veiled might be judged from the fact that, according to him, the refined [224] phase assumed by the ego on the confines of Nirvana cannot be described as one of either consciousness or unconsciousness, the problem as to its condition being thus altogether removed from the sphere of intellectual research. Ordinary empirical thought works piecemeal by establishing unreal relations between ideas, and is hence incompetent to seize upon the mystery.”

I have italicised the sentence to which Sumangala Thero took decided objection. This objection is, of course, the logical outcome of the previous one, which implies that in the constitution of the being there is nothing beyond or behind the five skandhas. The High Priest would not, however, proceed to discuss the nature of Nirvana, which, he said, was beyond the comprehension of the ordinary mortal. To be candid, I must say that I did not like this attempt to waive aside the profoundest of all problems in Buddhistic metaphysics. If the state of Nirvana is something only comprehensible by an Arhat, then why should it be discussed at all by any less spiritually evolved intelligence; and why waste time on so confessedly obscure a teaching? It seemed to me too much like the hushing-up policy adopted towards me by my elders when my youthful mind naturally sought for an explanation of the evident shortcomings and inconsistencies in their theological dogmas: “These are mysteries which God does not mean us to penetrate.” The High Priest put me off at this latest interview as he did Fawcett in that of 1890, and the question is left as obscure as ever. Nirvana, he said, is a condition [225] of perfect beatitude. “Very well,” I replied; “but who can experience it if the dissolution of the four skandhas is synonymous with the extinction of the Arhat? He exists no longer; then how can he distinguish the beatitude from his previous miseries during his course of evolution? According to this definition of yours, he is only first to reach the goal of annihilation.” Sumangala Thero is titular High Priest of Adam’s Peak, so I asked him if he had ever been to the summit. He had. “A man jumping off the verge of the narrow platform would be dashed to pieces at the foot of the precipice, would he not?” “He would.” “Then,” said I, “the Arhat seems to be a man who could run ahead of the others and be the first to take the fatal leap?” The venerable High Priest good-naturedly laughed and said we would not go

farther in that discussion, so I changed the subject, but as unconvinced as ever that we had probed the secret of the Buddha's teaching.

From the above it will be clear that the High Priest is not prepared to accept in their entirety the conclusions arrived at by Mr. Fawcett. He would not admit the reality of an overshadowing soul or self which transcends consciousness. The wisdom of an Arhat is only a higher form of consciousness. In regard to the apparent difficulty of linking one life to another, in the opinion of the High Priest no such difficulty existed, as there was no break between the consciousness of the death-moment and the consciousness of the moment of birth in the next life. The law of cause [226] and effect held good in this connection in the same way as it did in the case of two successive consciousnesses in this life itself. Herein he but repeated the parallel between the linked consciousnesses and moral responsibility for actions in a man of 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 70, or any other epoch in his life—the person being always the same maker and worker-out of previous Karma, although physiologically his body may have been completely made over and over in the processes of growth—and the beings of the present the anterior, and the succeeding births, which he gave me long ago when I was preparing the second edition of the Buddhist Catechism. It was this explanation which threw a bright light upon the whole puzzle of the responsibility of a man for what had been done by him in his next preceding birth, and led me to define for the first time in Buddhistic exegesis the distinction between the “Personality” and the “Individuality”. I am glad to have again drawn from him this most important teaching. This point conceded, the intelligent reader may decide for himself the likelihood or unlikelihood of so persistent a consciousness becoming extinguished at the moment when the being reaches the goal of all his strivings—escape from the miseries of rebirth.

On the 29th, Fawcett took Pansil publicly from the High Priest at our hall and made an address. The High Priest and I also addressed the great crowd which had assembled to witness the ceremony. Mr. Fawcett and I sailed for Madras in the French steamer on 2nd February, and got to Adyar on the 5th, thus [227] finishing a twelvemonth of distant journeyings, of which I had made 29,000 miles by sea. Mr. Jun Sawano, Doctor of Agriculture and Agricultural Chemistry, and Mr. Enri Hiyashi, sent by the Japanese Government as Special Commissioners to report upon the best methods of tobacco raising, curing, and manufacture, and rice and cinchona cultivation, in India, came with me, having accepted my invitation to put up with us at Headquarters. I introduced them in

the proper quarters, and they were invited to a ball at Government House, and given every necessary facility for collecting the desired information. Dr. Sawano was a trained scientist and graduate of Cirencester Agricultural College, while Mr. Hiyashi was just a noted practical farmer, of excellent repute in every respect. Thus the Japanese Government showed its habitual wonderful foresight in so constituting the Commission that the facts brought back should be of the most practical value as a guide for its own treatment of the cultivators and manufacturers of Japan. What wonder that such rapid and complete success has crowned its efforts to raise the people to a high place among the nations when this same wise policy has been pursued throughout since Perry's mailed fist battered in the doors of her exclusiveness. Dr. Sawano told me that his Government was in the habit of engaging very successful farmers to go about in the slack season and explain to other cultivators, in different districts, the best way to raise the crops for which they themselves had earned the greatest credit. Was ever a wiser [228] course pursued? Have we anything to show to equal it? It was for this reason that Mr. Hiyashi was sent to India in company with his erudite colleague--practical and scientific farming experience equally contributing to make the Commission useful in its results.

Just a week after my return to Adyar I got the news of Powell's death from my old friend V. Coopposwamy Iyer, then District Munsiff of Ambasamudram, in the Tinnevely District. From his official report and private letters I compile the touching incidents of the decease of our regretted colleague.²² The first news we had of the event was in a telegram from Mr. Coopposwamy: "Brother Powell died peacefully, ten hours ago, of bilious diarrhoea." India is the land of surprises, no doubt, but this was one we were ill prepared for. I could hardly realise it, and I felt very much like blaming our Ambasamudram colleagues for keeping back from me the fact of his illness, but Coopposwamy had a good excuse. He wrote:

"As he said it was owing to excess of bile in his system, and as he did not wish that we should alarm you by informing you of his illness, and we ourselves had no reasons to fear any fatal termination, we did not write to Headquarters about the matter. He continued in much the same state from Tuesday to Friday last. His physical wants were as carefully attended to by us as was possible under the circum-stances. Yesterday we all thought him in a fair way [229] to recovery; and from his calling for and taking a reasonable quantity of food, we thought he had no more than weakness to contend against."

He further reported as follows:

“Last night, at a few minutes after 8 o’clock, Mr. Powell called for and took a small dose of medicine, which seemed to do him good. He then threw himself on his couch, and while he was telling the Civil Apothecary, our Brother C. Parthasarathy Naidu, who had carefully attended him during his illness of the past few days, how to make for him a vegetable soup, the palm of his left hand was seen to tremble. His eyes and mouth opened. There were two or three hard breathings, accompanied by a low moan or sigh, and that proved to be the last of his life, though none of us could or would believe it. We thought him merely in a state of trance, but ere long we found he had drawn his last breath. Neither he nor any of us suspected he was so near his death. Thus quietly and without a pang did a good soul put off its mortal coil. There was no distortion whatever in the face. On the contrary, there was an air of serene calm, which made a deep impression on us all.

“In the course of general conversation, we had learned that he wished to die in India and to have his body cremated.

“All who have come into relations with Mr. Powell grieve for his untimely end. It would have been well if he had been spared a few years longer to continue his good work for the cause of humanity in general,

[230] and that of the Theosophical Society in particular. We all found in his daily exemplary life a good practical lesson in Theosophy. This is the first Branch founded by him in India. He used to call it his ‘first-born’. His personal influence upon all the members has been so powerful that it is sure to continue throughout life”.

My permission having been given by telegraph, the cremation was duly performed in the Hindu fashion on the evening of the 9th, and Mr. P. R. Venkatarama Iyer gave me the following particulars:

“The body was washed and clothed in his usual dress, Mr. Parthasarathy Naidu assisting us greatly in this. About thirty Brahmins—members and non-members of our Branch—assembled in the Reading-room, where the body was lying. Persons offered their services to carry the corpse on a cot to the burning-ground, thus showing how universally Mr. Powell was liked and respected here. The Taluq Magistrate and other respectable Brahmins walked in the procession, thus giving the event almost the character of a Brahmin ceremony. As he had asked for pomegranates and cooked vegetable food five minutes before his

death, these articles, duly prepared, were placed beside the body on the pyre, agreeably to our custom to scrupulously gratify the last yearning desire of the dying person, and thus prevent any unsatisfied bodily desire to follow the astral man after death. The cremation was scrupulously effected, and this morning (10th February) the Civil Apothecary himself gathered together the ashes and unconsumed portions of bones;

[231] the former to be sent to you for disposal, the latter being put into an earthen jar and buried under the channel of the sacred river Tambraparni, as is the custom among Brahmins.”

Mr. Coopposwamy added in a subsequent letter that it was the intention of the Branch to plant a teak or some other tree on the spot where the cremation took place, so as to secure it from possible pollution in the future. The Branch had also, at a special meeting, adopted Resolutions expressive of their love for Mr. Powell and regret for his loss, and requesting to be furnished with a photograph or other portrait of him to be hung upon the wall of their meeting-hall. In a word, these Hindu gentlemen did everything possible to testify their regard for our lamented colleague, and gave him the highest marks of respect which their religion prescribes. Needless to say how deeply grateful all of us at Headquarters were for this touching kindness.

CHAPTER XIII

DEATH OF SUBBA RAO

(1890)

As my older friends know, I was from 1854 to 1860, almost entirely absorbed in the study and practice of scientific agriculture. The taste for it has never left me, and on two or three different occasions the Government of Madras has availed of my experience in these matters. A few days after the events described in the preceding chapter I went to Salem, an ancient town in Madras Presidency, to serve as a judge of agricultural implements and machinery, by request of Government, and the Japanese Commissioners joined me there, after a short tour of inspection of farms, on which they were accompanied by an expert deputed by the Department of Land Records and Agriculture. Tents had been pitched for us within the railway station compound, and we were supplied with meals at the restaurant at Government expense. I gave one lecture on “Agriculture” at the show grounds, with Mr. Clogstoun, Director of the above-named Department, in the chair, but I refused several invitations to give public addresses on Theosophy, as, for the moment,

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I was a sort of Government officer, and did not think it right to mix up my private concerns in religion and metaphysics with my temporary public duties. It would have been in bad taste, as I told my friends the Indians, but I was quite ready to come to Salem for their special benefit later on if they wanted me. On the third day I returned to Madras and took up current work. Dr. Sawano and Mr. Higashi, having finished their inquiries, left for Japan on 24th February. Dr. Sawano wrote me later that after his return the Japanese Government kept him busy lecturing upon scientific agricultural topics, with illustrations based upon his observations in Europe, America, and India. In his letter to me he says:

“Your name has appeared in nearly all the Japanese papers, in connection with your kind treatment of our Commission and the help you gave us to gather useful information in India. Many Japanese, who yearn after you, come and ask me about the present condition of your Theosophical Society, and of your health. Some eagerly desire to go to India and study under you, and some without

private means would be only too glad to perform any service in your house or on the place, only to be with you, and able to devote part of their time to acquiring knowledge.”

A queer creature of a Hatha Yogi, who leaped about like a kangaroo and made himself otherwise ridiculous, walked twelve miles to see me on 2nd March. He said he had clairvoyantly seen me at a certain temple the night before, and his goddess had [234] ordered him to pay me a visit for his spiritual good. The only phenomenon which he exhibited was to make fall from the air a number of limes, which he presented to me. I can't say how much, the visit profited him, but certainly it did not seem to have much effect on me, beyond making me realise once more how foolish it was for men to undergo so long and severe a training to so little purpose. He gets a certain small amount of wonder-working power—not an hundredth part of H. P. B.'s—some thought reading power, some troublesome elementals dangling about him, and that is all! He violated the good old rule not to prophesy unless you know, by predicting to Mr. Harte and Ananda, whom I sent to see him the next day, that within six years I should certainly be able to perform great miracles. The only miracle that happened within that time was the salvation of the Society from harm when Mr. Judge seceded, along with the American Section; but that was not of the sort he had in mind, though a very good and substantial performance. Ananda, however, was so much impressed by the Swami that he stopped away from Adyar two days, and brought me on his return a poita, or Brahminical thread, phenomenally produced for my benefit, some flowers which had been showered on his head out of space, and a number of stories of the wonders he had seen. The same Yogi paid a second visit to Headquarters on the 9th, and did some phenomena in the Portrait-room of the Library. An orange, some limes, and twenty-five rupees in money [235] were apparently showered about us, and my gold pen was transported from my writing-table upstairs to the Picture-room; a plate of broken stones and pottery was also converted into biscuits. But the affair smelt of trickery, as the man insisted on being left alone to “do Bhakti Puja” before we were admitted, and his movements were not at all satisfactory. The money I gave back to him, as I felt that it had been lent him for the trick by one of the persons who accompanied him.

In answer to an article of mine in the March Theosophist, asking who would come forward and help in the Indian work, Mr. C. Kotayya, F.T.S., of Nellore, volunteered his services, and I accepted them and made him a travelling

Inspector of Branches.

Dr. Daly at last arrived from Ceylon on 13th April, and Harte, Fawcett, and I talked with him for hours and hours—in fact, almost all the night.

As it was finally decided that he should be put to work in Ceylon in the capacity of my personal representative, I spent a good deal of time with Dr. Daly explaining my plans. Among these was the establishment of a woman's journal, to be the property of and edited by the ladies of the Ceylon Women's Educational Society, and to have for title Sinhala Stree, or The Sinhalese Woman: the journal was to concern itself with all the domestic, moral, and religious questions which should come into the life of a mother of a family. As Dr. Daly had had much to do with journalism, it was included in my plan that he should have the general supervision of the editorial work of the proposed journal.

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My first idea in inviting him to come to the East and help me was to have him act as sub-editor of the Theosophist, and during my absence do a good part of the more important correspondence. But as he was evidently unfit for this sort of work, and as the Buddhists wanted him in Ceylon, and he was nothing loth, I issued an official Notice assigning him for duty to Ceylon, and giving him a delegation of my supervisory authority. This Notice was dated 25th May, 1890. I heard nothing more about the journal in question for some time, but at last it was reported to me that he had called a meeting of the Women's Educational Society to broach the idea of the journal, and an issue of the Times of Ceylon in the month of July reported the meeting, and said that the intention was to call it The Sanghamitta; adding that "Colonel Olcott, as Chief Adviser of the Women's Society, has full sympathy with the proposed venture, and has promised his aid". Considering that I drafted the whole scheme from beginning to end, and added my personal pecuniary guarantee for the expenses of the first year, the above statement reads rather mildly. The fact is that Dr. Daly put forth the scheme as his own, and even went so far as to make the condition that the ownership of the paper should be vested in him, as that of the Theosophist is in me. Of course, when I heard that, I immediately withdrew from the scheme. It is a pity that it could not have been carried out, for I think that it would have been a success, and a very great aid to the cause of female education.

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Excellent news came now from Japan about the development of the Women's League movement, which had been one of the results of my tour. Mr. M. Oka, the Manager, wrote that it was indeed wonderful to see what the Japanese Buddhists had done within the half-year since my visit, and as a consequence of it. The Ladies' Association for "producing good mothers, educated sisters, and cultivated daughters," had, started on a career of surprising prosperity. "We have already induced 2 Princesses, 5 Marchionesses, 5 Countesses, 8 Viscountesses, 7 Baronesses, and many famous Buddhist priests, celebrated scholars, etc., etc., to become honorary members, while ordinary members are increasing in number daily." He asked me to become an honorary member, and Dharmapala also. A month later he again wrote with enthusiasm, saying that the membership had increased by 1,000 within the month, and that the Princess Bunshu, aunt of H. M. the Emperor, had accepted the presidency: a journal had been established, and the outlook was most promising.

Another very important proof of the permanent effect of my tour in Japan is given in a letter from one of the most distinguished priests in the Japanese empire, Odsu Letsunen San, Chief Officer of the Western Hongwanji, Kyoto, who said that the fact that I had "greatly aroused the feelings of the people at large was beyond any dispute". But the striking point of the letter is that it breathes the very spirit of international Buddhistic tolerance and sympathy, to [238] arouse which was the object of my mission. Mr. Odsu expresses the hope that the inconsequential differences of sects in and between the Mahayana and Hinayana, the Northern and Southern Schools of Buddhism, "may henceforth be subordinated to the primary object of promoting the spread of Buddhism throughout the world".

On 28th April a public meeting of the Theosophical Society, for the purpose of introducing Messrs. Fawcett and Daly to the Indians, was held at Pachiappah's Hall, Madras. An enthusiastic crowd attended, and the speakers were received most warmly.

An atmosphere of unrest had been created at the Headquarters by the unfriendly agitation which followed after the London troubles and the withdrawal of Subba Rao and his two English followers from the Society; one other feature being the fomenting of unjust prejudice, against Ananda by certain persons I who did not like his ways. Up to that time the business of the Theosophist had been conducted in the same large room where that of the Society had been carried on, but it became unpleasant for both him and me, so I

fitted up the western riverside bungalow at my own expense and removed the magazine and bookshop there, after the usual purificatory ceremony had been performed by Brahmin priests in the ancient fashion.²³ And there it has been [239] kept until the present day. So disagreeable was the sullen hostility at one time that I actually formed a plan to remove the business to quarters in town. As for casting off the faithful Manager, that never entered my head. As a Master once wrote to Mr. Sinnett, “Ingratitude is not among our vices.”

Our evenings have always been pleasantly spent in dry weather on the pavement-like terrace roof of the main building, where, on moonlit or starlit nights, we have the glory of the heavens to look at and the ocean breezes to cool us. I have visited many lands, but recall no more beautiful view than that upon which the eye rests from that terrace, whether by daylight, starlight, or moonlight. Sometimes we only talk, sometimes one reads and the others listen. Often on such occasions, in the months of the Western winter season, do we speak of our families and friends, especially of our Theosophical colleagues, and wish they could float over to us, as the Arhats are described in the Mahavansa as having done, and see and compare with their own climatic miseries the-delights of our physical surroundings. In those May days of 1890 we used to thus gather together, and the newcomers, with their varied knowledge of literature and men, contributed greatly to the pleasure and profit of the little gatherings. Mr. Harte wrote for the Theosophist a series of witty and comical articles, under the title “Chats on the [240] Roof” (spelt without the h in the galley-proof of the Hindu compositor), the discontinuance of which was much regretted by some of our readers.

The late Mr. S. E. Gopalacharlu, nephew and adopted son of the regretted Pandit Bhashyacharya, now took up the appointment of Treasurer of the Society, which I had tendered him. What a pity that neither of us foresaw what would be the tragical outcome of the connection!

When the late King of Kandy was deposed by the British army in the year 1817, he and his family were exiled to southern India, and the survivors and their descendants are still there. The present male representative, known as Iyaga Sinhala Raja, or the Prince of Kandy, came at this time in great distress of mind and besought my good offices to get from Government some relief for his miseries. It appears that, as in the case of all these deposed royalties, the original pension from Government goes on diminishing with the death of the chief exile and the natural increase in the families sharing the bounty. As they imagine their

royal state forbids them to work for their living like ordinary honest folk, and as their pride leads them to try to keep up some show of the old grandeur, the time comes at last when their respective incomes shrink into bare pittance, and, as this young man told me, the domestic attendants and their families come at every meal time and sit around like dogs waiting for a bone while the impoverished master partakes of his meagre meal. The picture which he drew made me, feel that if I

[241] should ever have the bad luck to be a vanquished king, I should adopt the old Rajput custom of killing myself and family, rather than go into exile as a pensioner of the victor. This young prince had had the moral courage to set the good example of preparing himself for civil employment under the Indian Government, and was then holding the small appointment of sub-registrar in a taluk of the Tinnevely District, and was drawing a small salary; but, as he said, this was rather an aggravation than otherwise, for it was barely enough to give himself and family food, and his feelings were always worked upon by seeing these wretched dependants watching every mouthful he ate. He was a nice young fellow, and I gladly helped him with advice as to what he should do.

On the 3rd of June I visited T; Subba Rao at his request and mesmerised him. He was in a dreadful state, his body covered with boils and blisters from crown to sole, as the result of blood poisoning from some mysterious cause. He could not find it in anything that he had eaten or drunk, and so concluded that it must be due to the malevolent action of elementals, whose animosity he had aroused by some ceremonies he had performed for the benefit of his wife. This was my own impression, for I felt the uncanny influence about him as soon as I approached. Knowing him for the learned occultist that he was, a person highly appreciated by H. P. B., and the author of a course of superb lectures on the Bhagavad-Gîtâ, I, was inexpressibly shocked to see him in such a [242] physical state. Although my mesmeric treatment of him did not save his life, it gave him so much strength that he was able to be moved to another house, and when I saw him ten days later he seemed convalescent, the improvement dating, as he told me, from the date of the treatment. The change for the better was, however, only temporary, for he died during the night of the 24th of the same month, and was cremated at 9 on the following morning. From members of his family I obtained some interesting particulars. At noon on the 24th he told those about him that his Guru called him to come, he was going to die, he was now about beginning his tapas (mystical invocations), and he did not wish to be disturbed. From that time

on he spoke to no one. From the obituary notice which I wrote for the July Theosophist I quote a few paragraphs about this great luminary of Indian contemporary thought:

“Between Subba Rao, H. P. Blavatsky, Damodar, and myself there was a close friendship. He was chiefly instrumental in having us invited to visit Madras in 1882, and in inducing us to choose this city as the permanent Headquarters of the Theosophical Society. Subba Row was in confidential understanding with us about Damodar’s mystical pilgrimage towards the north, and more than a year after the latter crossed into Tibet he wrote him about himself and his plans. Subba Rao told me of this long ago, and reverted to the subject the other day at one of my visits to his sick-bed. A dispute—due in a measure [243] to third parties—which widened into a breach, arose between H. P. B. and himself about certain philosophical questions, but to the last he spoke of her, to us and his family, in the old friendly way... It is remarked above that T. Subba Rao gave no early signs of possessing mystical knowledge; even Sir T. Madhava Rao did not suspect it in him while he was serving under him at Baroda. I particularly questioned his mother on this point, and she told me that her son first talked metaphysics after forming a connection with the Founders of the Theosophical Society; a connection which began with a correspondence between himself and H. P. B. and Damodar, and became personal after our meeting him, in 1882, at Madras. It was as though a storehouse of occult experience, long forgotten, had been suddenly opened to him; recollections of his last preceding birth came in upon him; he recognised his Guru, and thenceforward held intercourse with him and other Mahatmas; with some personally at our Headquarters, with others elsewhere and by correspondence. He told his mother that H. P. B. was a great Yogi, and that he had seen many strange phenomena in her presence. His stored-up knowledge of Sanskrit literature came back to him, and his brother-in-law told me that if you would recite any verse of Gîta, Brahma-Sutras, or Upanishads, he could at once tell you whence it was taken and in what connection employed.”

I cannot remember how many similar cases have come under my notice in my visits among our Branches,

[244] but they are very numerous. Almost invariably one finds that those members who are most active and always to be counted on for unwavering fidelity to the Society declare that they have had this awakening of the Higher Self, and this uncovering or unveiling of the long-hidden block of occult

knowledge.

There being an annular eclipse of the sun on the 17th, every orthodox Hindu had to bathe in the sea. Mr. Harte and I went to see the crowd, which was dense and joyous. The surf was splendid, and the scene one of the greatest animation. Imagine several thousand brown-skinned Hindus, scantily clad in their white cloths, jumping about in the waves in pleasant excitement, hailing each other with joyous shouts, leaping over the small surf, sometimes splashing and ducking each other; other thousands standing or sitting on the sands, adding their shouts to the din, and out beyond the bathers the great rollers curling over and booming; overhead, the partly obscured sun, a mystery to the ignorant, and the source of an impurity which must be washed off in the briny water. This took place along the shore-front of Triplicane and Mylapore, villages included within the modern Madras municipality. I have seen nowhere in the world a Marina to match that of Madras, though Sir M. E. Grant-Duff, who had it laid out when he was Governor, tells us that he copied it from one in Italy which had given him great delight. Along the seashore, from the Cooum river to the village of St. Thome, a distance of some four miles, stretches this delightful [245] drive and promenade. On the side of the sea, a broad, gravelled sidewalk with stone curbing, then a broad, noble avenue with the road-surface as smooth as a floor, and inside that a tanned bridlepath for equestrians. The Marina is the sundown resort of the Madrasians, who come there in their carriages and enjoy the delicious sea breeze which almost invariably comes in from the ocean, bringing life and refreshment on its wings.

I was busy in those days revising the Buddhist Catechism for one of its many new editions, amending and adding to the contents, as its hold on the Sinhalese people grew stronger, and I felt that it was getting beyond the power of reactionary priests to prevent my telling the people what ought to be expected of the wearers of the yellow robes. When I published the 33rd edition, three years ago, I supposed that I should have no more amendments to make, but now that the 34th edition will soon be called for, I find that further improvements are possible. My desire is to leave it at my death a perfect compendium of the contents of Southern Buddhism.

On the 27th (June) I had a visitor from Madura, from whom I had the satisfaction of hearing that three of the cases of paralysis which I had psychopathically treated in 1883 had proved permanent cures, and that after an interval of seven years my patients were as well as they had ever been in their

lives. One of these cases I remembered very well, and have described it in my narrative of my tour of 1883. It was that of [246] a young man who came to me one day as I was about sitting down to my meal, and asked me to cure his paralysed left hand, which was then useless to him. I took the hand between my two, and, after holding it a couple of minutes and reciting a certain mantram which I used, made sweeping passes from the shoulder to the finger-tips, some additional ones around the wrist and hand, and, with a final pass, declared the cure completed. Immediately the patient felt in his hand a rush of blood; from having been without feeling, it suddenly grew supersensitive; he could move his fingers and wrist naturally, and he ran away home to tell the wonder. Then I went on with my dinner.

In the first week of July I went to Trichinopoly to preside at a public meeting on behalf of the Hindu Nobles' College, and while there gave two lectures and a brief address at the famous Temple of Ganesha, on the summit of the great rock, one of the most picturesque landmarks conceivable, and seen by every railway traveller passing through southern India.

The reader will easily understand the stress and strain that was put upon me at this time by the eccentric behavior of H. P. B., in herself interfering, and allowing her friends to interfere, in the practical management of Society affairs, a department which, as Master K. H. had distinctly written, was my own special province. In a previous chapter I have mentioned her revolutionary threat that she would break up the Society unless I endorsed their action in reorganising the movement in Europe with her as permanent [247] President; but to make the thing perfectly clear, since the case embodies a most vital principle, I will enter a little into detail. On the 8th of July I received her letter, backed by some of her friends, demanding the above-mentioned change, and accompanying it with the alternative threat. On the 29th of the same month I received an official copy of a Resolution which had been passed by the then existing British Section, without having reported their wishes to me or asked my consent. The Theosophist for August had been printed, except the Supplement, which was then on the press. On receipt of the interesting revolutionary document in question, I drove to our printers, stopped the press order, destroyed 350 copies of the Supplement already run off, and inserted this Executive Notice:

“The following Resolution of the Council of the British Section of July 2nd, 1890, is hereby cancelled, as contrary, to the Constitution and By-laws of the Theosophical Society, a usurpation of the Presidential prerogative, and beyond

the competence of any Section or other fragment of the Society to enact.

“ADYAR, 29th July, 1890. H. S. OLCOTT, P.T.S.”

“Extract from Minutes of the British Section, T.S.

“At a meeting of the Council of the British Section held on July 2nd, 1890, at 17 Lansdowne Road, London, W., summoned for the special purpose of considering the advisability of vesting permanently the Presidential authority for the whole of Europe in

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H. P. Blavatsky, it was unanimously resolved that this should be done from this date, and that the British Section should unite herewith with the Continental Lodges for this purpose, and that the Headquarters of the Society in London should in future be the Headquarters for all administrative purposes for the whole of Europe.

“W. R. OLD,

“General Secretary.”

Who wonders that, after the note in my Diary mentioning what I had done, I added: “That may mean a split, but it does- not mean that I shall be a slave.” What charming autocracy! Not one word about the provisions of the Society’s Constitution, the lawful methods to follow, or the necessity of referring the matter to the President; nothing but just revolt. It only made my own duty the plainer. I must be true to my trust, even though it had to come to a break between H. P. B. and myself; for though we had to be loyal to each other, we both owed a superior loyalty to Those who had chosen us out of our generation to do this mighty service to mankind as part of Their comprehensive scheme.

I leave this on record for the benefit of my successor, that he may know that, if he would be the real guardian and father of the Society, he must be ready, at a crisis like this, to act so as to defend its Constitution at all costs. But this will require more than mere courage—that far greater thing, faith; faith in the inevitable [249] success of one’s cause, faith in the correctness of one’s judgment; above all, faith that, under the guidance of the Great Ones, no petty cabals, conspiracies, or unwise schemes can possibly stand against the divine impulse that gathers behind one whose only ambition is the performance of duty.

CHAPTER XIV

19 AVENUE ROAD, AND OTHER MATTERS

(1890)

I AVAILED myself of the presence at Headquarters of Mr. E. D. Fawcett to get up a course of lectures on the different schools of Philosophy, which he should afterwards bring out in book form under the title of *The Power Behind the Universe*. This young man, then of twenty-four years, has a brain which is remarkably adapted to the study of metaphysics and philosophy, impressed with his intellectual ability on reading the manuscript of his first lecture.²⁴ It was a summary analysis of the whole series of modern metaphysicians, eighteen in number, from Descartes to Von Hartmann. Yet at the same time, as his more recent contributions to the London magazines show, his mind is capable of flights into the realm of pure imagination, and he is very ingenious in inventing thrilling situations for the entanglement of the personages of his story.

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His first lecture was given in our hall at Adyar on the 19th of July. The room looked grand with its decking of palm-fronds, flags, lights, and a large picture of Sarasvati, the Indian Minerva, suspended over the speaker's platform. Every seat was occupied, and the audience, which was mainly composed of University graduates and College under-graduates, was as intellectual an one as any speaker could wish to address. To us who know the Hindus, it is hardly credible how little is known of this side of their character by their official superiors; the majority of military and civilian British officials return home, sometimes after thirty-odd years' residence in this country, with no other impression of the Hindus than that which they have derived in their superficial relations with them in public offices, or from their exasperating experience with their sycophantic, usually illiterate, and often intemperate domestic servants. How could they possibly expect to be on terms of good understanding with high-caste men (i.e., gentlemen) whom they treat in official intercourse with unconcealed disdain, commonly classifying them as "niggers," without caring at all whether it comes to the insulted gentlemen's ears or not? It is inexpressibly sad to me to see this awful waste of good opportunity to bind the Indian empire to the British throne with silken bands of love, which are beyond comparison stronger than all the

steel links that can be forged out of swords and bayonets. At the present writing we are blessed with a Viceroy, Lord Curzon of Kedleston, who has shown a tact [252] more exquisite than any of his predecessors within the past twenty years; and I feel sure that he will leave behind him, on returning to England, a better feeling than has prevailed for many years. Politics, however, are not my concern, and I have only been tempted into this digression because of my own love for the Hindus and my sympathy in all their troubles.

The second lecture of the weekly course was one by Dr. Daly on "Clairvoyance," which I read from the manuscript in his absence, and it was printed in the Theosophist. The third and subsequent ones were delivered at "Kernan Castle," the residence of Mr. Biligiri Iyengar, on the Marina, as we found that the distance of Adyar was inconvenient to the class of men who wished to hear the course. Two of the lectures I gave myself, and Mr. Harte gave one on "The Religion of the Future".

Among the many tokens of affection which I have received from the Hindus was a proposal that came to me in August from Babu Shishir K. Ghose, of Calcutta, informing me that a scheme was afoot for getting up an Indian National Testimonial to me, in the form of a subscription to ensure my future comfort. I declined it, of course, as my modest income from the magazine was quite enough to supply all my wants. The offer was, however, most gratifying. I notice in my Diary that the same proposal was made in a highly appreciative leading article in the Indian Mirror of 21st August.

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There was what the "cullud pusson" calls "a heap of trouble" in our Theosophical groups at Paris at this time. Dr. G. Encausse, better known by his literary sobriquet of "Papus," seemed disposed to play the part of an Ahriman in any organisation in which he was not supreme director, and fell out with his French colleagues, seceded from our Branch, made another one called the "Sphynx," and then asked me for a charter. A file of rather acrimonious correspondence was sent me, and by the same mail came one from the unquiet gentleman himself, giving me direful threats if I should decide to stand by H. P. B. in the current quarrel. She was driving me almost to desperation at about that time, even to the extent of sending out Mr. Keightley to India with a sort of letter-of-marque, apparently intended to destroy the prestige of Adyar, and concentrate all exoteric, as well as esoteric, authority in London. Fortunately for all concerned, he showed this document to one of our strongest Indian members,

who begged him not to show it to another person, for it certainly would give a deathblow to H. P. B.'s influence in India. This was the prickly side of my dear "chum". Yet I wrote by the returning mail a letter to "Papus", which left him, at least, in no doubt as to the unswerving loyalty which I felt for her who had shown me the way in which to climb towards the Higher Self. He inserted in his magazine at one time a dastardly attack on the characters of H. P. B. and Mrs. Besant, for which that loyal friend, the late M. Arnould, sent [254] him his seconds; but in that case, at least, the offender declined a meeting. I also refused the charter, and since that time the Society has not had the honor of counting him among its members; quite the contrary—it expelled him. Some years later, during one of my visits to Paris, he sent me an invitation to witness some most interesting hypnotic experiments at the Hospital of La Charité, at the same time holding out the palm-branch. Much as I wished to see Dr. Luys' experiments, I had to decline renewal of our personal relations until he had made in his magazine the amende honorable towards my two dear colleagues and friends.

I have noted throughout the summer months of that year that gifts, ranging from £100 to £3, for the support of Headquarters, came in from Europe and America; by one mail I received three. It is strange how this thing has been going on from the beginning down to the present day; my wants for the Society, whether great or small, are invariably covered by timely remittances. If I had no other assurance of the overlooking sympathy of the Great Ones, I should be dull, indeed, not to recognise it in these beneficent promptings to those who can afford to give what is needed. In this, as I have elsewhere observed, my experience coincides with that of all unselfish workers for the public good.

It was in 1890 that H. P. B. and her staff settled in the since famous Headquarters, 19 Avenue Road, St. John's Wood, London, and it was here that in the [255] following year she died. As the property has passed out of our hands within the past twelve month, it may be as well to devote a paragraph to a description of it. It was a large house, standing in its own grounds, which formed a pleasant garden, with bits of lawn, shrubbery, and a few tall trees. Mounting the front steps, one entered a vestibule and short hall, from each side of which doors opened into rooms. The front one on the left was H. P. B.'s working-room, and her small bedchamber adjoined it. From this inner room a short passage led into a rather spacious chamber, which was built for and occupied by the Esoteric Section. To the right of the hall on entering was an artistically furnished dining-room, which was also used for the reception of visitors. Back of this was a small

room, then used as a general work-room, afterwards occupied by Mr. Leadbeater as his bedchamber. A door cut through the north wall of the dining-room gave access to the new hall of the Blavatsky Lodge; while one cut in the south wall of H. P. B.'s room led into the office of the General Secretary of the European Section. The upper stories of the house were sleeping apartments. The meeting-hall of the Blavatsky Lodge was of corrugated iron, the walls and ceiling sheathed with unpainted wood. Mr. R. Machell, the artist, had covered the two sloping halves of the ceiling with the symbolic representations of six great religions and of the zodiacal signs. At the south end was a low platform for the presiding officer and the lecturer of the evening. The hall had a seating capacity of about

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200. On the opening night the room was crammed, and many were unable to gain admission. The speakers were Mrs. Besant, Mr. Sinnett, a Mrs. Woolff (of America), and Mr. Keightley. H. P. B. was present but said nothing, on account of the critical state of her health.

H. P. B.'s work-room was crammed with furniture, and on the walls hung a large number of photographs of her personal friends and of members of the Esoteric Section. Her large writing-desk faced a window through which she could see the front grassplot and trees, while the view of the street was shut out by a high brick wall. Avenue Road was a veritable beehive of workers, with no place for drones, H. P. B. herself setting the example of tireless literary drudgery, while her strong auric influence enwrapped and stimulated all about her. This very high pressure of work naturally tended to destroy the feeling of geniality and welcome which members and inquirers visiting London had every reason to hope to find at the social centre of the European Section, and which could always be found at Adyar and in New York when H. P. B. had fewer cares oppressing her mind. I have heard many complaints on this score, and have known of some persons who had intended joining us, but were chilled into a change of mind. Under all the circumstances, I cannot say that I regret that the residential Headquarters have been given up.

On 21st September a telegram from Colombo informed me of the death by apoplexy of Megittuwatte,

[257] the incomparable Buddhist priest-orator. Among Sinhalese Buddhists he had not his equal as a public speaker. He played upon his audience as though

they were some musical instrument which responded to his lightest touch. But he was not a morally strong man, and his behavior towards me was most reprehensible after he saw that I would not give over to his control the National Fund that I had raised for the support of Buddhist schools and other propaganda agencies, and had vested in Boards of Trustees at Colombo and Galle. He built, out of funds collected by himself in lecturing tours, the Temple in the Mutwal ward of Colombo, which most steamer passengers are taken to see by the local guides. Since his death it has fallen greatly in public esteem, and has about as much of the aroma of religion about it as a railway restaurant! And so passes from sight, and already almost from memory, a man who a quarter-century ago was one of the most influential monks in the island.

I have often remarked that the selfsame lecture on Theosophy, provided that its broad outlines are given, and the temptation to wander into the side-paths of details be avoided, seems to be recognised by people of various religions as in each case a presentation of the fundamentals of their particular religion. I have remarked this before, but it again forces itself upon my mind in reading the entry for 28th September in my Diary. On that day I went to a Mussalman meeting at Pachiappah's Hall to hear a Maulvi lecture on "Salvation". It was, I think, my first attendance [258] at a meeting of this community in Madras, and I expected nothing else than to quietly seat myself near the door, so that if the lecture should prove uninteresting I could slip out without being noticed. But the moment I crossed the threshold I was surrounded by Muhammadan gentlemen, who received me with great cordiality, and straightway had me elected as chairman of the meeting! Protests were useless; in vain I declared that I was not a Muhammadan, but a Theosophist and a Buddhist; they said that they had heard me lecture, and I was as good a Muhammadan as any of them. So I took the chair, and after a few preliminary remarks, which were received with great friendliness, invited the lecturer, Maulvi Hassan Ali, the well-known Muslim missionary, to address the audience. He was an eloquent speaker and fervent religionist, and his discourse was listened to with every mark of approval by his auditors. Two days later he called at Adyar and strongly urged me to publicly declare myself a Muhammadan, as I "was undoubtedly one at heart"; he only asked that I should go on lecturing just as I had all along! On my refusal, "he went away sorrowful". He is since dead.

I received, about this time, an urgent request from Colombo to preside at the opening of the Sanghamitta Girls' High School, by the Women's Educational

Society of Ceylon. The invitation urged it upon me as a duty, since it was the first school of the kind ever opened in the island, and the direct outcome of my own efforts. I went, and the function came off on [259] 18th October and was a brilliant success. Great enthusiasm was shown, and the sum of Rs. 1,000 was subscribed in aid of the school. In view of its historical importance, I may mention that the speakers were the High Priest Sumangala, the learned Pandit Batuwantudawe, L. Wijesinha Mudaliar, Mr. A. E. Buultjens, B.A. (Cantab.), Dr. Daly, Mrs. Weerakoon, Babu K. C. Chowdry, and myself.

As my visit to Ceylon extended over a few days, I was, as usual, kept busy with visits and lectures; I also opened a boys' school near Kotte, distributed prizes at the Boys' English High School, the one founded by Mr. Leadbeater, and was gratified to find that the Government School Inspector had given it credit for 90 per cent of passes; a figure high above the Indian average, yet still 5 per cent less than that obtained at last season's examination of the Pariah children in the Olcott Free School, Urur, thanks to Miss Palmer's most able management. I also presided at the anniversary of our Colombo Branch and at the annual dinner, where invariably the best of feeling prevails.

Meanwhile, before leaving home for Ceylon, I had written to H. P. B. my intention to retire from the Presidentship and to give her the entire executive, as well as spiritual management, which she seemed anxious to acquire; I reminded her that our pioneering work was practically finished, and she could easily find half a dozen better educated and more yielding men than myself to help her continue the movement. My intention was also communicated to a number [260] of our leading men, both of the East and West. I was so much in earnest that I wrote to Ootacamund to ascertain what was the best season for me to begin building a cottage which I intended for my old-age retreat—and where this very chapter is being written.

Protests came pouring in from all sides, and a number of my correspondents announced that they should leave the Society unless I consented to remain. H. P. B. cabled Keightley that she would not allow him to read to the Convention a friendly farewell address to myself, which he had drafted and sent her a copy of for approval; she said that the Masters disapproved of my resignation, and by the next mail she wrote him a positive order to return at once if I should retire, threatening to herself withdraw and dismember the T. S. By the next week's mail, which reached me on the last day of the year, she offered to make any sacrifice to keep me in office. As, in any case, the ruin of the Society was

prophesied by so many of my most valued friends, I consented to continue in office for the present, and my announcement of this decision provoked a storm of applause at the Convention when my Annual Address was read. In notifying H. P. B. of my suspended resignation, I told her that my continuance in office would depend upon her readiness to alter the form of obligation which candidates for the E. S. were then taking. It was worded so as to exact the promise of perfect obedience to her in all their relations with the T. S.; in short, giving her quasi-dictatorial powers, and quite nullifying [261] the basis of membership upon which the movement had been built up, and which left each member the most absolute freedom of conscience and action. I was very pleased when she adopted my suggestion, and altered the indiscreet pledge to its present un-objectionable form.²⁵ Had we been together, the mistake would not have been made.

I left Ceylon on the 27th of October for Tuticorin, whence I went on to Tinnevely. Mr. Keightley met me here, and together we made a tour in southern India, which took us to Ambasamudram, Papanassum Temple and Falls, the hill called Agastya Rishi's Peak, Padumadi, Madura, Tanjore, and Kumbakonam, whence we returned to Adyar on the 10th of November. Our visit to the first-named place was very interesting. We were put up in the Albert Hall, a new building for the local library and public meetings, the erection of which was chiefly due to the enterprise of our local Branch, headed by, Mr. V. Coopposwamy Iyer. In the large room hangs a tasteful brass Memorial Tablet to perpetuate the memory of my colleague Mr. Powell, who was greatly beloved in that place. On the evening after our arrival we had the real pleasure of hearing a recitation of Puranas in the ancient style by an actor-pandit; there was a musical accompaniment on Indian instruments by a very good band. One can imagine what a gratification it would be to European Sanskritists if, at one of their Oriental Congresses, [262] they could hear the sonorous slokas of the Aryan Scriptures recited so beautifully as they were by this orator on the above occasion. On the way to the Rishi's Peak we halted at the Banatitham Falls and slept in the Forest Officer's bungalow at Mundantoray! and although there were no doors to keep out the cold air, no furniture, swarming mosquitos to be counted by the cubic inch, and rumors of elephants and tigers being near, we slept the sleep of the weary. The next morning we were ferried across a river on a platform-boat worked by a wire cable overhead. At Papanassum we were the reverse of pleased by the appearance of the dandy ascetic in charge of the temple. His style will give the reader some idea of the stage of his spiritual

development. He was a sleek and sensual person, wearing on his head, coronet-fashion, a string of large rudraksha beads, had gold earrings, around his neck a large gold talisman-case or taviz, and about his body the usual orange cloth. One would as soon expect a fat sloth like that to help one to Moksha as one of the similar-looking spiritual shepherds of our Western sects who fatten on the gifts and tithes of credulous laymen. At Tinnevely I got a young cocoanut from the tree, which was planted in the temple compound in 1881 by a Committee of Colombo Buddhists and myself. So the Hindus had not torn up our “Tree of Brotherly Love,” as our loving friends, the missionaries, had widely reported!

Shortly before the meeting of the Convention, a Committee of Burmese Buddhists notified me that [263] they had raised Rs. 20,000 for a propaganda mission to Europe, of which they wanted me to be the leader and to start in February, all my expenses to be paid. Feeling that the time was not ripe, and foreseeing the uselessness of taking a Committee, with probably a very limited knowledge of English, to argue the claims of their religion with the ablest scholars of Europe, I declined.

In the month of December I suggested to the late Mr. Tookaram Tatya, of Bombay, a scheme to transfer the Adyar property to the Adyar Library, and have him endow it with the sum of Rs. 50,000, which he had long told me he intended to give the Society. My reasons were that by so doing we should give the Library a permanent existence after my death, and despite all chances and changes; the Society to retain, free of rent, as much room in the house and grounds as might be needed for Headquarters business. Even now, after the lapse of ten years, I think the idea a good one, for the Library is tenfold more valuable to-day than it was then; and if we should enlarge it, as proposed, into an Oriental Institute, increase the staff of Pandits, organise series of lectures on the different schools of philosophy and religion, and need classrooms, then it would be indispensable that the Library should be put above beyond all possible contingencies which could be anticipated. This could be accomplished by the plan above suggested. The Society has to face one serious contingency, viz., that my successor might find it impossible to leave his country—supposing [264] him to be a Western man—and take up residence at Adyar, where the temperature is that of the tropics, and where life is so tranquil as to be maddening to one whose nerves have been always mangling in the hurly-burly of a Western city: for particulars, inquire of Mr. Fullerton. No large society could ask for a better executive headquarters than ours; it offers everything to make a scholar’s life pleasant, and

its surroundings one might almost call enchanting. When H. P. B. and I first saw it, it filled her with enthusiasm, and her love of it endured to the last. Then there is our collection of books, comprising more than 12,000 volumes and constantly growing; more than 700 new manuscripts have been added within the past two months. If my successor could not, or would not, live at Adyar, what would be done but break up this executive and spiritual centre of the movement which has cost so many years of loving labor, and become the strong nucleus of the noble aspirations of the Founders of the Society and their working colleagues? H. P. B. expressed in her Will a wish that her ashes should be brought here; and if it be true that she has taken with her into the Beyond her interest in the movement, surely it would give her pain to see our beloved home sold to strangers and our Library shipped away to a distant place. I am glad that the occasion is offered by the record in my Diary to bring this matter to the attention of my colleagues, and I sincerely hope that the way will present itself to settle this question to the best advantage of our Society.

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The Delegates for that year's Convention began to arrive on the 23rd of December; the attendance on the opening day was rather large, and the proceedings were unusually interesting. A large delegation attended from the Bombay Presidency; Mr. Fawcett gave three lectures on Herbert Spencer, Dr. Daly spoke on Technical Schools, and Mr. Keightley on Theosophy in the West. On the 28th—the second day—we constitutionally organised the Indian Section, which I had provisionally formed some time before, and Mr. Keightley was confirmed as General Secretary. There were lectures by Fawcett, Keightley, Nilakanta Sastri, Subramania Swami, C. Kottaya, and Pandit Gopi Nath, of Lahore. The Anniversary celebration on the 29th was a great success, as usual, and there were nine speakers. By the 31st the house was cleared of all visitors and we were left to take up the usual daily routine, and so we come to the last page of the year's Diary, where I have written "Good-bye, 1890"!

CHAPTER XV

BURMESE VISIT AND BISHOP BIGANDET

(1891)

AS soon as I knew that a Burmese Buddhist League had raised a large sum of money to send a preaching party to Europe, and that Delegates were being sent to Adyar to urge it upon me, I telegraphed for Sinhalese and Japanese Delegates to come from Colombo to meet the Burmese. Accordingly two Japanese gentlemen, Messrs. Kozen Gunaratna and C. Tokuzawa, two Sinhalese, Messrs. H. Dharmapala and Hemchandra, and two Burmese, Messrs. U. Hmouay Tha Aung and Maung Tha Dwe, met in committee with me on the 8th of January, 1891. The European mission being put aside, I then laid before them my views and invited full discussion, which went on day by day until the 22nd, when all points of belief in the Northern and Southern Schools of Buddhists having been compared, I drafted a platform, embracing fourteen clauses, upon which all Buddhist sects could agree if disposed to promote brotherly feeling and mutual sympathy between themselves. A fair copy of this document was signed by the Delegates and myself. Besides the nations above mentioned, the Chittagong [267] Maghs, a Buddhist nation in eastern Bengal, concurred through a special Delegate, acting as proxy for Babu Krishna Chandra Chowdry, the leader of the Maghs, who had requested me by telegraph to appoint one for him. Unquestionably this was a document of the deepest importance, for previously no mutual ground of compromise and co-operation had been found upon which the mighty forces of the Buddhist world could converge for the spread of their religious ideas. The platform, it is now generally known, was adopted by the leaders of the Northern and Southern Sections of Buddhism; and when the time comes for me to report the action upon it taken in Japan towards the close of the year, I shall give its text in full.

My programme for that year opened with a proposed visit to Australia for the double purpose of inquiring into the circumstances of the bequest of the Hartmann estate, at Toowoomba, and of visiting our Branches in the colonies. I had intended to start almost immediately after the Convention, but when the Burmese Delegates heard of this they made me an impassioned appeal to visit first their country. They even went so far as to say that the “whole nation”

expected me. Upon mature reflection, I decided to accept the invitation, as my time was my own throughout the year. The Convention had asked me to take a holiday—the first in the twelve years of my Indian service—and I had consented and put the Presidentship in temporary “commission,” giving over my responsibilities and prerogatives to Messrs. Tookaram Tatyā, [268] Norendro Nath Sen, N. D. Khandalvala, and W. Q. Judge to manage the Society until I should be ready and willing to return to duty. So, on the 17th of January, I sailed for Rangoon with the two Burmese Delegates. The tour in Burma was so very interesting that I shall use portions of the narrative which I wrote and published at the time, while the events were fresh in my memory.

Those who have followed my narrative throughout will remember the circumstances under which my first visit to the country was made. Towards the end of the year 1884, I received from the now-deposed King Theebaw an invitation to visit him at Mandalay to discuss Buddhism. The intermediary was his Italian physician, Dr. Barbieri de Introini, now the President of our revived Branch at Milano, Italy. On the chance of getting his Majesty to help the Sinhalese Buddhists, and to bring about more intimate relations between them and their Burmese co-religionists, I accepted, and in January, 1885, accompanied by Mr. Leadbeater, went to Rangoon. A week later I was telegraphed to return, as Mme. Blavatsky was apparently dying. Leaving Leadbeater there, I returned home, only to find that, by one of those almost miraculous changes which happened to her, she was convalescent, and after a week she let me go to Burma. I found that Mr. Leadbeater had worked up so great an interest that almost immediately I was able to organise three Branches. Meanwhile, the inquiries which I made among Burmans as to the king’s character [269] so disgusted me with him that I determined not to go to Mandalay, and just at this time a cable from Damodar informed me that H. P. B. had had a relapse and her recovery was despaired of. So I immediately abandoned the tour, returned to Adyar, and thus ended my first visit to the fertile land over which the long line of Alompara kings had reigned in barbaric splendor.

My reception on this my second visit was most enthusiastic and brotherly. I was put up in the elegant house of a private Burmese gentleman, and called upon by many of the Elders (Lugyies) of the town. It was the season of the full moon, and, as I say in my published account, “to a Westerner it would have been a novel picture to have seen us squatted on mats on the flat roof of the house, discussing the subtle problems of Buddhistic metaphysics. They are a clever

people the Burmans; and as every man of them had passed his time in a kyourg (monastery), according to the inflexible national custom, the questions they put to me were such as to require distinct and thoughtful answers.” I had made it part of my programme to win the approval of the leading priests of Burma for my compromise platform; so, as I found my Rangoon visitors so sharp and eager, I broached the subject and invited their opinions. The discussion led us far afield, and brought up the true and false views of Nirvana, Karma, and other vital questions. The discussion became very animated, and one old luyie, a veteran wrangler, whose furrowed face, sunken cheeks, and emaciated body showed the ascetic training [270] to which he had long submitted himself, was particularly vehement. When a point was raised, he went at it as though he would not stop short of the complete dismemberment of his gaunt frame, and his nervous gesticulations and headshakings threw such a tangle of black shadows on the moonlit terrace as to produce a queer and uncanny effect. As it turned out, he was backing up my positions, and it was down the throats of the others, not mine, that he seemed ready to jump. “The upshot of the two nights’ talk was that my several propositions were found orthodox and according to the Tripitikas: I had no misdoubts after that as to what would happen in Mandalay when I should meet the greatest of the Burmese monks in council.”

On 23rd January I left Rangoon for Pantanaw, an inland town, situate on an affluent of the Irrawaddy, in a small double-decked sternwheel steamboat. With me were my Madras escort and a large committee of leading men of Pantanaw, headed by Moungh Shway Hla, Headmaster of the Government School in that place, a genial, courteous, and kind-hearted gentleman. There were no cabins nor saloons on the little steamboat, only the open deck, crowded in every part with Burmese men, women, and children, and their personal belongings, together with a mixed cargo of sorts, including the fragrant n’pee, a condiment made of pounded shrimps, and ripened, by long keeping, up to that acute point where the Limburger cheese, the perfected sauerkraut, and the air-tainting garlic come into odoriferous competition with the verbena and the [271] tuberose to subdue man’s olfactory nerves to their intoxicating influences. To a veteran traveller like myself, the prospect of a night’s sleeping on a blanket on a hard deck, in such a mixed company and such an atmosphere of spoilt fish, was a trifle—but one out of scores of experiences. So with my Pantanaw committeemen near by and Babula at my side, I got through the night very comfortably. We reached Yandoon at 8.30 a.m., and from thence went on in sampans—those buoyant, easily-oversetting, two-sterned boats, that are rowed by one man who stands to

his work and faces forward. In such frail craft we crossed the wind-swept Irrawaddy, ascended Pantanaw creek, and reached that place at 3.30 p.m. At the wharf the Buddhist flag was flying in welcome, and the chief officials and elders of the town, headed by Mounq Pé, the Extra Assistant Commissioner, received me most cordially.

At Pantanaw I was lodged in the upper story of the Government School building—there being scarcely any travellers' rest-houses as yet in Burma—and was most kindly treated. I availed of some leisure time here to draft a scheme for a National Buddhist Society, with a subsidiary network of township and village societies to share and systematise on a national scale the work of Buddhistic revival and propaganda. On the 25th, at 6 a.m., I lectured at the Shwe-moindin Pagoda, the most graceful in outlines, I think, that I saw in all Burma. The next day I left Pantanaw for Wakema in a long Burmese boat, propelled by [272] three rowers, and with a cabin (!) made by arching across the boat some mats (chiks) of split bamboo. In that blessed place I and my party—U. Hmoay, Mounq Shway Hla, and two servants—had to stop for twenty-two long hours, after which, with aching bones, we came to Wakema. We were accommodated in a suite of rooms in the Court-house. At 5 p.m. I lectured to a large audience, whose gay silken turbans, scarves, and waist-cloths made them look perfectly gorgeous. Shway Yeo (Mr. J. G. Scott), the historian of Burma, says of such a crowd, “wind-stirred tulipbeds, or a stirabout of rainbows, or a blind man's idea of a chromatrope, are the only suggestions which can be offered.” At Wákema I saw for the first time one of their national marionette plays, in which are represented the tribulations and final blissful union of a prince and princess, children of two kings who had had other designs in their heads for the young people. The play began at 10 p.m. and was kept up until 5 o'clock in the morning, that witching hour when the “mower is heard whetting his scythe” and Nature bathes her face in dew. The village was crowded with people come for the raising of a new temple, a congenial work to which all devote themselves with positive enthusiasm. My stay here was protracted until the 30th, as I had to wait for a steamer to take me back to Rangoon. She came at last, and on the “Syriam,” a swift and perfectly appointed boat of the Flotilla Company, I made a pleasant night passage to the city which I had left a week before in the little.

[273] stern-wheeler. That same evening I took the train for Mandalay, and reached it on the 1st of February at about the same hour. The railway was in a wretched condition, giving one, as poor Hqrace Greely said of a similar road,

more exercise to the mile than any other in the world. My head ached and my bones were weary when I came to the journey's end, but, at any rate, here I was in Mandalay at last. And a forlorn, dusty, comfortless place it is; while, as for Theebaw's palace, it is a gilded wooden barn, with not one comfortable room inside where one would care to live, but with a series of roofs and towers that give it a lovely architectural appearance. Seen from a little distance, the buildings composing the palace are extremely pretty, an effect due to the curved roofs and the delicately carved eaves, gable-joints, and finials, where the carver has succeeded in imitating the flickering of flames as rising from the roofs under which those sons of splendor and sources of light, the king and princes, dwelt, like so many Nats in a palace of fairyland!

The brotherly kindnesses I received at Mandalay from the elders and others were such as linger in the memory for years. Truly the Burmese are a lovable people, and a manly, self-respecting, albeit awfully lazy people. Nothing delights them more than to bestow hospitality, and all writers agree in saying that with noble and peasant, rich and poor, the same spirit prevails. I was told, that if I had but visited the capital in the time of the Min-doon-min, the pious [274] predecessor of Theebaw, I should have been treated right royally, and experienced what Burmese hospitality means.

The purpose of my visit being known, I had first to undergo a close questioning by the leading laymen before my visit to the Sangha Raja (Royal High Priest) could be arranged. All doubts having been removed, the meeting was fixed for 1 p.m. on 3rd February, at the Taun-do-Seya-d-Temple, the shrine and monastery where His Royal Holiness—if that is the proper title for a king's brother turned monk—lives and officiates.

The Sangha Raja was a venerable man of 70 years, of an amiable rather than strong countenance; and with the wrinkles of laughter at the outer corners of his eyes. His head is high, his forehead smooth, and one would take him to have his full share of brains packed together under the skull. His orange robe was of plain cotton cloth like that of the poorest monk in the Council—a circumstance which made me, thinking of his, royal blood and of the show he might be expected to indulge in, recall the splendid silken brocades and embroideries of certain high priests in Japan, who are supposed to typify the Tathagatha himself in their temple processions, but who must resemble him rather as heir apparent of Kapilavastu than as the homeless ascetic of Isipatana. The old priest gave me a copy of his portrait, in which he appears seated on a gilded gadi, but still with his

yellow cotton robes wrapped around him, leaving the right shoulder bare.

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The other ranking priests at the Council were similarly enrobed, and I found upon inquiry of themselves that their ages ran from 70 to 80 years each. Behind the chief priests knelt a number of their subordinate monks, and the samaneras, or young postulants, filled all the remaining space to the walls—right, left, and back. I and my party knelt facing the Sangha Raja, to my right was the ex-Minister of the Interior under Theebaw, a cultured, gentleman and earnest Buddhist, who being very conversant with French from a long residence in Paris, kindly served as my interpreter, he taking my remarks in French and translating them fluently and admirably into Burmese. The Council opened at 1 and broke up only at a quarter past 5 o'clock, by which time my poor legs and back were so tired by the, to me, unaccustomed and strained position, that I felt as if I had been run over by a herd of Shan ponies.

Before reporting the proceedings of the Council, I must say a word or two about the room in which we met. Like most of the monasteries in Burma and Japan, this kyoung was built of teak wood. The lofty ceiling was supported on straight shafts of teak, without flaw or blemish, chosen for their perfection of shape and freedom from knots or flaws. They are painted or lacquered in venetian red, and embellished in parts with girdles of gold leaf laid on in graceful patterns. Ceiling and walls are panelled in cunning carpentry, and the whole thickly covered with the pure gold-leaf of Yunnan and Sou-ch'uen, whose rich tone gives a [276] beautiful effect without the least gaudiness or vulgarity. The various doors of the great apartment are bordered with exquisite specimens of the wood-carver's art, which in Burma is carried to a high pitch of perfection. The planks of the floor are spread with glossy, strong, and finely-woven mats of split rattan or bamboo, which come from the jungle-dwellers of the Sthin district. I think they are the best floor covering for the tropics I have ever seen.

Speaking of kneeling, it should be observed that this is the national posture in all social as well as ceremonial gatherings, and in daily life, as the cross-legged posture is in India. Like the Indians, the Burmans learn from childhood to sit on their heels, in which position they find themselves quite as comfortable as the European does on his chair or sofa. There were three or four chairs put away in a corner; and if I had been a British official, I should, no doubt, have been given one, and the chief priest would have taken another. But, considering me as belonging to their own party and religion, they treated me in this matter exactly

as though I had been a Burman born, and I took it as meant, viz., as a compliment, and sacrificed my muscles to the exigencies of custom, as the young damsel of the West does her feet and ribs to be in the fashion, and calls up her fortitude to seem to like it.

The proceedings of the Council were opened by my giving a succinct account of the work of the Theosophical Society in the field of Buddhistic exegesis and propaganda. I told about our labors in Ceylon, of [277] the state of religious affairs when we arrived, of the obstructive and often disreputable tactics of the missionaries, and of the changes that our eleven years of effort had wrought. As I found copies of the Burmese translation of my Buddhist Catechism in the hands of persons present, I spoke of the general adoption of this little work as a text-book in the Ceylon monasteries and Buddhist schools. I told them about our Sinhalese and English journals, the Sandaresa and the Buddhist, and about the tens of thousands of translated religious pamphlets and tracts we had distributed throughout the island. The statistics of our Buddhist boys' and girls' schools I laid before them. Then, as to Japan, I dwelt upon the various Buddhist sects and their metaphysical views, described the temples and monasteries, and did full justice to the noble qualities of the Japanese as individuals and as a nation. I did wish I had had some good photographer with his camera behind me to take a picture of that group of old, earnest-faced Burmese monks, as they leaned forward on their hands or elbows, with mouths half opened, drinking in every word that came from my interpreter's lips! And above all it was a sight to see their faces where my narrative gave them points to laugh at. They share the sweet joviality of the national temperament, and anything I said which struck them as funny made them smile in the most large and liberal way—anatomically speaking.

From particulars I went to universals, and put to them very plainly the question whether, as monks [278] of Buddha, professing his loving principles of universal human brotherhood and universal loving kindness, they would dare tell me that they should not make an effort to knit together the Buddhists of all nations and sects in a common relation of reciprocal good-will and tolerance, and whether they were not ready to work with me and any other well-meaning person towards this end. I told them that, while undoubtedly there were very great differences of belief between the Mahayana and Hinayana upon certain doctrinal points, such, for instance, as Amitabha and the aids to salvation, yet there were many points of perfect agreement, and these should be picked out and

drafted into a platform for the whole Buddhist world to range itself upon. My interpreter then read, section by section, the Burmese translation (made by Moungh Shoung, of Rangoon, and Moungh Pé, of Pantanaw) of the document I had prepared as a statement of "Fundamental Buddhistic Ideas". As each section was adopted, I checked it off, and in the long run every one was declared orthodox and acceptable. I then got the Sangha Raja to sign the paper as "Accepted on behalf of the Buddhists of Burma"; and after him, in the order of seniority, twenty-three other ranking monks affixed their signatures.

The first stage having been passed in our discussion, I then submitted to their criticism a second document, consisting of a circular letter from myself to all Buddhist high priests, asking them to co-operate in the formation of an international committee of propaganda; each [279] Buddhist nation to be represented on the Committee by two or more well-educated persons, and each to contribute its share of the expenses. I admitted in this circular that I knew the Burmese were quite ready to take the entire work and cost upon themselves, but said that I did not think this fair, as in so important a work the merit should in equity be shared by all Buddhist nations. A brief discussion, after several careful readings of the document, resulted in the adoption of the principles sketched out, and the Sangha Raja signed and affixed his official seal to the paper in token of his approval. After some desultory conversation, the expression of very kind good-wishes for myself, and the declaration of all the priests that I had the right to call upon them for whatever help I might need at their hands, the meeting adjourned.

That night I slept the sleep of the muscle-bruised, but not before receiving the congratulations of many callers upon the successful issue of my visit.

The next morning I had my audience of farewell with the Sangha Raja in his private rooms. I wish somebody who is familiar with the luxurious apartments of Romish cardinals, Anglican bishops, and fashionable New York clergymen could have seen this, of a king's brother, as he lives. A simple cot, an armchair, a mat-strewn, planked floor, and he kneeling on it in his monastic robes, the value of which would not be above a few rupees. He was kindness personified towards me, said he hoped I would soon get out a new edition of the Catechism, and declared [280] that if I would only stop ten days longer at Mandalay the whole people would be roused to enthusiasm. I could not do this, my other engagements forbidding, so he said that if we must part I might take the assurance that his blessing and best wishes and those of the whole Burmese

Sangha would follow me wherever I might wander. As I was leaving, he presented me with a richly-gilded palm-leaf MS. of a portion of the Abidhamma Pitaka.

While at Mandalay, I lectured at a splendidly gilt and architecturally lovely pagoda. After my discourse, I was given for the Adyar Library a silver statuette of Buddha, weighing about three pounds, and three volumes of palm-leaf MSS. in red lacquer and gold; the former by the ex-Viceroy of the Shan States, the Khawgaung-Kyaw, and the latter by three noble brothers, MOUNG KHIN, MOUNG PÉ, and MOUNG TUN AUNG.

I visited the gorgeous Arecan Pagoda, Maha-Mamuni, built by the Arecan Rajah, Sanda Suriya; also Atoo-Mashi-Kaoung-daw-gye, the “Incomparable Monastery”. It well deserves its name, for neither in Japan, nor Ceylon, nor elsewhere have I seen anything to match the splendor of the room in which sits the gigantic gold-plated, jewel-enriched statue of Lord Buddha. The image is 20 or 30 feet high, solid, and composed of the ashes of silken garments burnt for the purpose by pious Burmese of both sexes. The coup d’oeil of the whole chamber is like that of some djinbuilt palace of fairyland. Exteriorly, the building [281] is constructed in solid masonry, rising in terraces of lessening areas, and reminding one of the pyramidal terraced pagodas of Uxmal and Palenque. I must mention a circumstance in connection with this kyoung which redounds to the credit of the Burmese Buddhist monks. It was erected by the great and pious Alompara sovereign, Mindoon-Min, the immediate predecessor of King Theebaw, and he had given it the name it bears. He could get no monk to accept it as a gift or reside in it, because in their belief the title Incomparable should rightly be given to the Buddha alone. What do our fashionable Western prelates say to that? Yet this modesty and unselfishness is quite consistent with the whole character of the Burmese Sangha. Says Mr. Scott, the most authoritative writer upon the subject save Bishop Bigandet, whose testimony agrees with his:

“The tone of the monks is undoubtedly good. Any infractions of the law, which is extraordinarily complicated, are severely punished; and if a pohngyee, as the monks are termed, were to commit any flagrant sin, he would forthwith be turned out of the monastery to the mercy of the people, which would not be very conspicuously lenient. In return for their self-denial, the monks are highly honored by the people... Religion pervades Burma in a way that is seen in hardly any other country.”²⁶

I have good warrant, therefore, to expect great results from the auspicious

commencement of my work in this land of good monks and pious people.

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Another thing I visited at Mandalay was the Temple of the Pitakas, the Koo-tho-daw. This is one of the most unique, and at the same time noble, monuments ever left behind him by a sovereign. Its builder was Mindoon-Min the Good. Imagine a central pagoda, enshrining a superb statue of Lord Buddha, and 729 kiosks arranged in concentric squares around it—each of the little shrines containing one large, thick, upstanding slab of white marble, engraved on the two faces with portions of the Tripitakas, in Pali, in the Burmese character. Beginning at a certain point in the inner square, the slabs contain the text of the Sutta Pitaka, running on from slab to slab in regular order until that Pitaka is finished. Then, after a break, the next slab takes up the text of the Vinaya Pitaka; and finally, the outer rows of slabs give that of the Abidhamma Pitaka, or Buddhistic Metaphysic—the life and soul of the Buddhistic religion, its enduring substance and unimpeachable reality; though this fact seems to be unsuspected by nearly all of our commentators and critics, the late Bishop Bigandet being one of the exceptions.

This Koo-tho-daw version of the Tripitakas is regarded by every one in Burma as the standard for accuracy. Before commencing the work, King Mindoon-Min convened a council of monks, who carefully examined the various palm-leaf MSS. available, and out of them selected and compiled the most accurate text for the king's use. Copies of these were then handed over by him to the marble-cutters [283] for engraving. The project is entertained by MOUNG SHOUNG, F.T.S., to issue a cheap edition of this authenticated version. It would cost but Rs. 15,000, and he expects to be able to raise the money.

Setting my face homeward, I left Mandalay and its kind people on the 4th of February, many influential friends accompanying me to the station for a last farewell. Here I had to bid good-bye to that excellent friend and loyal gentleman, U. HMOAY THA AUN, who almost wept because he could not accompany me to Madras, or Australia, or the world's end. My party was thus reduced to MOUNG SHWAY HLA, myself, and two servants.

For the second time—the first being in 1885, as above noted—I lectured at Shway Dagôn Pagoda at Rangoon. My audience was large, influential, and attentive. It cannot be said that I was very complimentary to the priests or trustees of this world-known shrine. When last in Rangoon, I found the trustees

collecting from the public a lac of rupees to pay for regilding the pagoda. Certainly it is a splendid structure, a jewel among religious edifices, but I urged it upon the attention of the trustees that a true social economy would dictate the raising of the lac for publishing the Scriptures of their religion and otherwise promoting its interests, and then a second lac for the gilt, if they must have it. This time, I found the gilt of 1885 badly worn off by the weather, and the trustees talking about going in for another large job of gilding. This was too much for my patience, so [284] I gave them some extremely plain talk, showing that the first thing they ought to do was to raise Rs. 15,000 for publishing the Mandalay stone-registered Pitakas, and after that a variety of things, before any more gilt was laid on their pagoda.

At Rangoon I also had the great good fortune of passing an hour in friendly conversation with the venerable and by-all-beloved Roman Catholic Bishop of Ava, Father Bigandet. The literary world knows him by his Legend of Gaudama, the earliest Western introduction to the life of the Buddha. I had had the privilege of forming his lordship's acquaintance in 1885 while at Rangoon, and would not leave Burma this time without once more paying him my sincere homage as a prelate, a scholar, and a man. I found him physically feeble, somewhat afflicted with trembling palsy, so much so, in fact, as to make writing a very irksome task. But his mind was as clear and strong as it ever was. He told me that the first edition of his book being entirely sold out, Messrs. Trübner had received his permission to reprint it at their own risk, they to keep all the profits to themselves. I urged him to write one more such learned, exhaustive, and impartial book as his first upon Buddhism. He asked what subject I would suggest, to which I replied, the Abidhamma, as contrasted with modern philosophic speculations. He smiled and said: "You have chosen the best of all, for the metaphysic of Buddhism is its real core and substance. In comparison with it, the legendary stories of the Buddha's personality are [285] nothing worth speaking of." But, with a solemn shade coming over his kind and intellectual face, he said: "It is too late; I can write no more. You younger men must take it upon yourselves."

I felt great reluctance to part with him, for he was evidently failing fast, and at his age, 78, one cannot count upon future meetings very far ahead; but at last, gladly receiving his blessing, I left his presence, never to meet him again, as it turned out. Living, he possessed the respect of all Burmese Buddhists who knew of his unselfishness and loyalty to conscience; and now that he is dead, his

memory is cherished with affection.

CHAPTER XVI

AUSTRALIA AND THE HARTMANN BEQUEST

(1891)

I REACHED Madras on the 12th of February and found awaiting me a pleasant surprise in the form of a letter from Professor Leon de Rosny, of the Sorbonne, informing me of my election as Honorary Member of the Société d'Ethnographie, of Paris, in the place of Samuel Birch, the renowned Orientalist, deceased. Professor de Rosny and I had been on friendly terms for several years, having been drawn together by our liking for Buddhistic philosophy. He told me once that he used my Buddhist Catechism in his lectures, and had told his pupils that they would find more real Buddhism in it than in any of the books published by the Orientalists.

Four days later I packed trunk and took the steamer for Colombo en route for Australia. I had to wait at Colombo from the 18th of February to the 3rd of March for the Australian boat, but every minute of my time was occupied. Among other things accomplished was the getting of my Fourteen Propositions, or Buddhist Platform, accepted and signed by Sumangala and Subhuti, the two ranking High [287] Priests of Kandy, and enough more of the principal bhikshus to give it the imprimatur of Sinhalese Buddhism. This answered for the whole of the Southern School, as the Buddhism of Siam is identical with that of Burma and Ceylon. At Wellawatte, Panadure, Kandy, Katugastota, Dehiwalla, and other places, I lectured on behalf of the Buddhist schools, raising public subscriptions in some places, distributing prizes at others. The Buddhists of Arakan, through Wondauk Tha Dway, of Akyab, telegraphed me an urgent invitation to visit their country, and, with the message, telegraphed money for my expenses, but I was obliged to postpone the visit until a future occasion.

At this time an experiment was going on to create a Ceylon Section of the T. S., and I had made Dr. Daly General Secretary. The result, however, was thoroughly unsatisfactory, and so I removed him from office, but experimentally made him General Manager of Schools. I also issued an appeal to the public for the creation of a Wesak Fund to be used for foreign propaganda. I have never been able to get the Sinhalese interested in this work, their whole sympathies and endeavors being concentrated on the regulation of Buddhist affairs in their own

country. The fact is, nowhere in the East have the people any very clear idea of foreign countries and nations, and rarely have I found them in India distinguishing between the white men of different nationalities, who are classified under the general name of “Europeans”; even Americans are so designated.

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There was lying in Colombo harbor at that time a Russian frigate on which the Czarewitch, the present Czar, was making the tour of the world, accompanied by a staff of eminent men. One of these gentlemen, during the Prince’s Indian tour, had called at Adyar during my absence in Burma, expressed much interest in Theosophy, and bought some of our books. I was sorry to have missed him, as also the ball at Government House, to which the new Governor, Lord Wenlock, had invited me “to have the honor of meeting His Imperial Highness the Czarewitch”. Learning from the Russian Consul at Colombo that some of the Crown Prince’s staff would be pleased to make my acquaintance, I went aboard the frigate and spent an hour in delightful conversation with Prince Hespère Oukhtomsky, Chief of the Département des Cultes, in the Ministère de l’Intérieur, who was acting as the Prince’s Private Secretary on this tour, and Lieutenant N. Crown, of the Navy Department at St. Petersburg, both charming men. I found myself particularly drawn to Prince Oukhtomsky because of his intense interest in Buddhism, which for many years he has made a special study among the Mongolian lamaseries. He has also given much time to the study of other religions. He was good enough to invite me to make the tour of the Buddhist monasteries of Siberia. He asked me for a copy of my Fourteen Propositions, so that he might translate them and circulate them among the Chief Priests of Buddhism throughout the empire. This he has since done.

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On the 1st of March Mr. Richard Harte arrived from Adyar on his way to England after about three years’ service at Headquarters.

As above noted, I sailed for Australia on March 3rd, on that noble P. & O. steamer “Oceana”. On the 5th I crossed the equator for the first time, but no tricks were played by the sailors on the passengers. The next day I saw what to me was a marvel, viz., a rainbow lying horizontally, instead of making the usual vertical arch. It seemed to me, as I noted it, “like a stiff rainbow melted down”. The passage through-out was very smooth and pleasant. On the 12th, by request,

I lectured in the first saloon on “The Essence of Buddhism”. The chair was taken by Hon. J. T. Wilshire, M.P., who made a very nice speech at the close. We reached King George’s Sound on the 13th and anchored off Albany, but were quarantined because of the smallpox at Colombo, and were thus prevented from going ashore to have a look at the place. Port Adelaide was reached on the 17th, and Melbourne on the 18th. At the latter place I met Mrs. Pickett, one of our old members, at whose house at Kew there was a meeting of Theosophists to greet me. An old fellow-traveller in Japan, Mr. James Miller, of Melbourne, whom I had also met in London, breakfasted with me at my hotel, and I lunched with him the same day.

We sailed on the 20th for Sydney, and arrived there on the 23rd in the early morning. My old acquaintance, the Earl of Jersey, was Governor of New South [290] Wales at this time; and as I had notified Lady Jersey of my coming, they both received me with the greatest kindness. I attended her Ladyship’s garden-party that same day, and dined at Government House the next evening. A more beautiful view than that from this place is hard to imagine. The building is on a gently sloping point, running out into the world-famous Sydney harbor, and a panorama of exquisite scenery stretches out before the spectator. The old proverb was “See Naples and die,” but, for my part, I should rather substitute, the name Sydney for Naples. Lord Jersey was vastly amused over an exchange of bantering notes in comic verse between Lady Jersey and myself about her joining our Society, which I urged on the score of her intelligent interest in mystical studies, and she declined from an instinct of that conservatism which made her one of the founders of the “Primrose League”. More delightful acquaintances than they I have never met.

I had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with several Theosophists, and on the 25th sailed for Brisbane on the coasting steamer “Barcoo”. A note that I made on the attractive appearance of the dining-saloon, which was finished in light wood in artistic designs, with white and dark marble panels, reminds me to say that most of the steamers plying around the stormy coasts of Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand give the traveller every comfort that he could wish. As for the table, it merits every praise. My trip on this boat is worth mentioning only for one reason

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—that I met, as a fellow-passenger, a man who seemed to me a sort of *lusus naturae*. He was a prize fighter by profession, and a light-weight champion, but

withal as quiet, gentlemanlike a person as one would want to meet; moreover, he was a pianist of great merit. He played with great feeling, and would sit there at the instrument and let his fingers ramble over the keys, bringing out sweet harmonies, while his head would be thrown back and a dreamy expression come into his eyes, as though he were catching at sweet sounds in a higher sphere. I wish I could remember the interesting story of his musical life that he told me; but as I only wrote in my Diary the words "three months' inspiration," it is all gone from me. A vague reminiscence that there was something about his having been overshadowed by the spirit of Harmony, and that this controlled him for the space of time indicated, and that the influence had never wholly left him since, floats before my memory. At any rate, there he was at the piano, improvising music while on his way to fill an engagement in the prize-ring, where he would pummel another brute and be pummelled by him until one or both should find themselves unable to "come to the scratch".

I reached Brisbane on the 27th at 10 a.m. The town is one and a half hours' sail up the river, and one is reminded, by the houses and farms along the banks, far more of America than of England. It being Good Friday, every office and shop was closed, and I could see nobody on business; but, with the "journalistic"

[292] instinct which runs so strong in my veins, I called at the office of the Observer and saw Mr. Rose, a liberal-minded Scotchman, the sub-editor, with whom I at once struck up a friendship. A paragraph in the next morning's Courier brought me a flood of visitors all the next day. Mr. Rose lunched and dined with me at my hotel, and Mr. Woodcock, Chief Clerk of the Colonial Secretary's Office, a very genial and pleasant gentleman, also dined with me. I spent the afternoon with Judge Paul, of the District Court, who has a Japanese house, all the materials for which were imported from the Flowery Kingdom, and set up by Japanese carpenters imported for the job. The Judge is decidedly one of the most interesting friends I ever made; and as we were almost constantly together during my stay in Brisbane, my souvenirs of the visit are delightful. My introduction at the Club brought me into contact with many of the cleverest men in town, among them journalists, and so my visit became town-talk; and when a long interview with me appeared in the Telegraph, it may be imagined how the stream of visitors at my rooms went on increasing. I became acquainted with a couple of charming people, Mr. and Mrs. Brough, the comedians, whose acting I greatly enjoyed, and both of whom became members of our Society.

The objective point of my journey was Toowoomba, as above stated, and for this place I left by train on the 30th and reached there after a ride through pleasant scenery, six hours, later. Mr. Wm. Castles, one of [293] the late Mr. Hartmann's executors, accompanied me, and the other one, Mr. J. Roessle, invited me to put up with him; but as there was friction between the heirs, the executors, and Mr. J. H. Watson, F.T.S., Superintendent of the Hartmann Nursery, I preferred to put up at the Imperial Hotel, so as to be perfectly impartial. I was delighted with the situation of Toowoomba, which has on one side great stretches of rolling meadows, and on the other, blue ranges of hills. On the morning after my arrival I met the Hartmann family—comprising his brother Hugo, his daughter Helena, his sons Carl and Herrman, his two executors, and his son-in-law, Mr. Davis, husband of Helena. Of course, as they had looked on me as an enemy, as legatee of their father, and had done their best to have the will broken without success, at first they received me with cold distrust. When, however, they came to see how little disposed I was to deal harshly with them, their ill-temper gradually disappeared, and at the end of the interview they placed their interests unreservedly in my hands, and declared that they would be satisfied with any partition of the estate, or compromise, which I might be willing to give. Poor things! they had been going about the town denouncing their father, complaining of their wrongs, and exciting prejudice against the Society, so that I was convinced that it would not have taken much to set the mob to stoning me out of the town, or giving me a coat of tar and feathers. And yet I as everybody else at Adyar was as innocent as the babe [294] unborn of all procurement of, or consent to, the deceased man's action, or sympathy with that sort of thing under any circumstances. I had had no suspicion that he intended to leave the Society a rupee, or that he had rupees to bequeath. If he had but hinted to me his purpose, I should have tried to dissuade him from doing a wrong to his family, and thus prevent them from sending their maledictions after him into Kamaloka. Those who are interested in looking through a full report on this case may do so by reading in the Theosophist for August, 1891, my article on "Our Australian Legacy: a Lesson". A good understanding having been arrived at all around, I accepted the invitation of Mr. Watson to come and take up my residence with him at "Hartmann's Gardens".

It is, or was, a charming show-place, of popular resort, with acres laid out in ornamental landscape gardening, a profusion of pines, palms, aloes, and ornamental and flowering shrubs and plants, testifying to the botanical skill of the deceased owner. There was an extensive conservatory full of rare plants, and

another attached to the house, with a lofty roof of wood, and a tower or lantern in the apex. In this latter room were cases of selected shells, corals, and butterflies, and jars of reptilia, all possessing a scientific value, while the four walls were covered with trophies, artistically composed, of strange weapons of war and the chase, utensils of husbandry, and fishing nets, spears, and tackle, as used by the savages of New Guinea. The nursery property is at the brow of a [295] ridge 2,000 feet above sea-level, and from the house-front the delighted eye sweeps over a varied landscape of wild eucalyptus and other jungle and detached clearings, stretching 70 miles away to a range of bluish hills, far beyond which lies Brisbane, the capital of Queensland. Entering the nursery property from the public road, one drives through an avenue of trees indigenous to Oceania, and others of tropical habitat—such as cacti, aloes, and palms—until the way is barred by a fence which encloses the ornamental gardens and admits only foot-passengers. Beyond this, a grassy road as wide as the entrance avenue conducts, in tortuous ways, up to the house, which is perfectly embowered in a grove of umbrageous trees. The place is famed throughout the colony for its beauty, and known to thousands in the other Australian colonies as the home of the winner of several hundred diplomas and medals at their various horticultural shows. Mr. Hartmann was a tireless worker, and, besides attending to his business proper, kept up a correspondence with the most eminent botanists and naturalists, and gave his name to some new species of plants and insects. The gardens comprise 42 acres. Besides this estate, he owned shares in productive mines, and had a nice sum to his credit in bank. This was the property bequeathed to me for the Theosophical Society, my title to which had been declared perfect by the highest judicial tribunal. My readers will see, doubtless, in my renunciation of my rights in favor of the injured natural heirs, a practical lesson [296] in what we Theosophists call altruism. At a rough estimate the estate was then worth about £5,000.

In thinking it all over, it seemed to me that if I gave back to the family four-fifths of the estate, from which they never expected to derive a penny of benefit, and kept one-fifth for the Society, I would, in some sort, be carrying out the wishes of Mr. Hartmann to give substantial help to our cause; it also seemed no more than right that the cost of my voyage both ways should be defrayed out of the money in bank. So, upon full reflection, I drafted and, at the next day's meeting, laid before the family the following offer:

RANGE NURSERY, TOOWOOMBA, 9th April, 1891.

“I made the following offer to the children and brothers of the late C. H. Hartmann:

“I. I will sell to them, or to anybody they may choose as their attorney, all my right, title, and interest as P. T. S. in the residue of the estate for the sum of £1,000 (one thousand pounds) in cash, and a sum sufficient to cover the cost of my travelling expenses from and to India—say £130.

“II. I will execute any necessary legal paper to this effect, and instruct the executors to make over the property, legally mine, to them, in my place.

“III. If they wish it, I will take one-half of the £1,000 in cash, or three-fourths—as they prefer—say £500 or £750—and loan the remainder upon a primary mortgage with interest at six per cent (6%)²⁷ per [297] annum, upon the Range Nursery Property (viz., 42 or 43 acres), with the buildings and improvements as they stand, but not including the nursery or hothouse stock. The mortgage may be left standing for five years or longer as may be hereafter mutually agreed upon between them and myself, or successor in office.

“IV. The family must all notify me of their acceptance of these terms, and of their desire that I shall execute the transfer-papers to one or two of their number as representatives of all the five.

“V. The family must undertake to settle all the legacies to individuals as made in the will.

“VI. This offer to be accepted on or before the 17th April instant.

H. S. OLCOTT, P.T.S.”

Without leaving the room the heirs accepted the offer, with expressions of warm gratitude. The document bears the following indorsement:

“We accept the above offer, and request that Colonel Olcott will recognise the Hon. Isambert, M.P., of Brisbane, as our agent and representative. (Signed) C. H. HARTMANN, H. H. HARTMANN, HELENA HARTMANN DAVIS. In presence of F. Harley Davis and John Roessler” (one of the two executors under the will).

I quote this document from the published narrative above mentioned, as the event is ten years old, and hundreds or thousands who will read this chapter [298] will get from it their first intimation of this event and its sequel, which, I am delighted to say, received the unanimous approval of my colleagues in the Society. Somewhat later, there came a great panic in colonial real-estate values,

and so I cancelled my claim for the £1,000 and gave over absolutely the whole estate to the family, taking nothing out of it save the bare cost of my journey and a few New Guinea curios, worth, perhaps, £5, which may be seen in the Adyar Library.

I was amused to see the instantaneous change of public opinion towards the Society and myself: the heirs now went about singing my praises, and the Australian press echoed the feeling, some saying that I had acted in a more truly Christian spirit than the trustees of a Scotch Presbyterian Church, who, being bequeathed a fortune of £16,000 by a fanatical woman, refused to give her pauper sister even a small annuity to keep her out of the workhouse. The first effect at Toowoomba was an invitation to deliver a public lecture on “Theosophy and Buddhism,” at which the chairman was an M. P. So it happened in every town which I visited. Even clergymen came each time to hear me, my rooms at the hotels were thronged with ladies and gentlemen of the highest social position, anxious to question me and join the Society; and—tell it not in Gath—Christian clergymen of orthodox repute and much influence joined the Society, whose bones the missionaries in India have been for years trying to gnaw!

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When I went to Australia we had but three weak Branches in that part of the world—those at Melbourne, Wellington (New Zealand), and Hobart (Tasmania). The one which Hartmann tried to open had utterly failed, and I found the unused charter among his papers, together with a number of diplomas of fellowship, dated 1881, but never delivered. When I left the country there were seven good ones, among whose members were thoroughgoing Mystics and Theosophists, from whom I then expected much, and who have not disappointed me. Before leaving Adelaide, S.A., I issued on 26th May the usual official Notice authorising the formation of a Section. I was not fortunate, as it turned out, much to my disappointment, in my nominations of the General and Assistant General Secretaries; but in the course of time everything has been settled for the best, and we have now in the colonies a body of men and women who compare favorably with the members of any other section of the Society.

I had bespoken my passage from Sydney to New Zealand, and on the 9th of May went to the company’s office at 2 p.m. with the money for my ticket, but, it being Saturday, found it closed, and so came away again. I was expected at Wellington, Auckland, and elsewhere, and great results were counted upon, among others the formation of new Branches. The Tasmanian friends had also

engaged a public hall, and arranged for my accommodation and all other details. The death of H. P. B. changed my plans, made me cancel [300] the New Zealand and Tasmanian programme, cable orders for a London Council, and embark for "home," via., Colombo on 27th May, in the S.S. "Massilia"; on board which staunch vessel I lectured, by invitation of the passengers, and at kind Captain Fraser's request for the benefit of that deserving charity, the Merchant Seamen's Orphan Asylum. The tickets were one shilling each, and the neat sum of £4 10s. was realised for the object specified. Captain Fraser was good enough to ask me to at least take half the proceeds for the Adyar Library, but I declined, as the money had not been paid for that purpose.

My first intimation of H. P. B.'s death was received by me "telepathically" from herself, and this was followed by a second similar message. The third I got from one of the reporters present at my closing lecture in Sydney, who told me, as I was about leaving the platform, that a press message had come from London announcing her decease. In my Diary entry for 9th May, 1891, I say: "Had an uneasy foreboding of H. P. B.'s death." In that of the following day it is written: "This morning I feel that H. P. B. is dead: the third warning." The last entry for that day says: "Cablegram, H. P. B. dead." Only those who saw us together, and knew of the close mystical tie between us, can understand the sense of bereavement that came over me upon receipt of the direful news.

CHAPTER XVII

FROM THE ANTIPODES TO AVENUE ROAD

(1891)

I CANNOT turn my back upon the Colonies without mentioning a few more of the notable acquaintances I made besides those mentioned in the last chapter. First, then, Mr. A. Meston, of Chelmer, near Brisbane, a well-known littérateur. He was a Magistrate, an ex-member of the Queensland Legislature, was leader of the Government Scientific Exploring Expedition of 1889, and an author and journalist of wide reputation. A sumptuously illustrated work on the British acquisition of Australia, which came under my notice, had filled me with a horror of the devilish cruelty and merciless extirpation of the dark races by the conquering whites; and in introducing to our readers an article contributed to the *Theosophist* by Mr. Meston²⁸ on the subject of the Aborigines, or so-called blackfellows, I said that they were being treated “with the same concomitants of ferocity, selfishness, and [302] faithlessness as darken the history of Mexican and Peruvian conquests by the Spaniards. From what I have learned on the spot, from living witnesses and current histories, I am inclined to believe that my own Anglo-Saxon race is as devilishly cruel upon occasions as any Semitic, Latin, or Tartar race ever was”. The historical work above mentioned gave among its illustrations a picture of armed white men hunting black-fellows in and out of a stone-quarry as if they were so many goats or monkeys; and one could see in one place murdered victims who had fallen, and in another, other poor wretches brought down from the steep walls of the quarry up which they were scrambling for their lives by the gunshots of their “civilised” pursuers. It was when my blood was boiling with indignation from this cause that I met Mr. Meston, who was recognised as the best-informed authority on the subject of the religions, languages, manners and customs, and ethnical traits of the black people. His article in the *Theosophist* embodies more information on these subjects than any other publication made up to that time; I recommend my readers to refer to it. It appears that there are many tribes, and almost everyone with its own dialect--in Queensland alone there are perhaps fifty. Mr. Meston described them to me as a light-hearted, laughter-loving people, with a keen sense of the ludicrous, excellent judges of character, and having astonishing powers of mimicry and

caricature. "Some of them," he says, "are born low-comedians,

[303] and if trained as such would excite shrieks of laughter in any theatre in the world. They imitate the cries and movements of birds and animals with surprising fidelity. Some are capable of sincere gratitude, possess keen sensibilities, and can be faithful even unto death. Many are ungrateful, treacherous, revengeful, and as cruel as the grave; but exactly the same verdict may be passed on all civilised races of men. Human nature is the same in London as in the tropical jungles or western plains of Australia, in New York as in equatorial Africa. In fact, the great cities of the Old World can show human specimens far baser and more degraded than any Australian savages. The race would be noble indeed in comparison with the ruffianism of Paris and the scum of London."

The other day Reuter published an interview with the Rev. S. E. Meech, the first refugee missionary to reach England from China since the recent dreadful massacres. Mr. Meech tells us that the Boxers, finding seventy Catholic Christians at Larshuy, hiding in a pit, threw in fuel and literally burnt them alive. Christendom stands aghast at these horrors, as it does, equally, at every similar tale of non-Christian savagery but after a few lip protests, it seems always willing to throw a veil of oblivion over identical acts of pitiless cruelty towards a dark race on the part of the representatives of Christianity. The last survivor of the slaughtered Aborigines of Tasmania died but a few years ago, and desolation has everywhere followed [304] in the track of the white man's relations with the poor, usually helpless tribes, whose countries they wish to steal under the hypocritical pretext of "promoting civilisation". Does anyone remember the story of the stormings of Badajoz and Ciudad Rodrigo by the British? In 1858 I lived two months in the Tower of London with one of Wellington's veterans, who wore the medals of the forlorn hope given to the storming parties on those two occasions, and he told me the sickening details of the brutal cruelty shown when those places were captured. But why go back so far when similar black pages have been written ever since in the world's military history? We have seen what the Boxers did to the Catholic Christians; on the other side, the correspondent of the Times at Neuchwang tells us in his letter of the 13th August last that the Russians butchered from 1,500 to 2,000 fugitives indiscriminately, and says that "outside the walls, men, women, and children were killed, and from all sides came reliable reports of violation of women. There is no possible doubt about the truth of these reports... The soldiers, both infantry and Cossacks,

have been allowed to do what they liked for some days". Furthermore, the N. Y. Evening Post of 21st September publishes an account by Mr. Wright, of Oberlin College, Ohio, giving details of the alleged massacres by Russians in Manchuria. The peaceful inhabitants of Blagovestchensk, numbering from 3,000 to 4,000, "were expelled in great haste, and being forced upon rafts entirely inadequate to the passage [305] of such numbers, they were mostly drowned in attempting to cross the river. The stream was fairly black with bodies for three days after". So that Mr. Meston was right in saying that the race of the poor black-fellows would come out nobly in the comparison of all the evil things they had done with the ruffianism of us whites. My interesting conversations with that gentleman were held at Brisbane and out at his country-place.

Two points struck me forcibly in his narrative. It is the custom of the southern tribes, when a man dies, to tie his hands and feet together, sling the corpse on a pole, and carry it off to the grave. It was there placed in a sitting posture in a hole about 5 feet deep, covered by sticks and bushes, overlaid with mould crumbled to the fineness of flour, and all crevices carefully closed to keep the ghost, or "Wurum," from escaping. He also, but another informant more fully (Honorable W. O. Hodgkinson), told me that for three days and nights the tribesmen carefully scrutinise the loose mould over the corpse for marks of a track or tracks of an animate creature—be it a bird, insect, or beast—as from them may be known what sorcerer has compassed the death of the supposed victim, and in which direction to look for him. It interested me much to hear this because, in his Travels in Peru, Dr. Tschuddi relates that among Peruvian Indians it is the custom to shut up a corpse in the hut, after sprinkling the floor with wood-ashes, and then watch and wail outside until morning. The door is

[306] then opened, and, from bird-tracks or those of animals or insects seen in the ashes, the state of the defunct is ascertained. How remarkable a coincidence that this mode of divination should be common to two dark races separated by the diameter of the earth! The other point which I noted was the black-fellows' use of the rock-crystal as a divining-stone, and the way in which it is carried by the wearer. Mr. Meston told me a legend of theirs that the tribes of the Russell River had been long engaged in deadly warfare, and so many of the young men were being killed that all the women assembled and united in a pathetic appeal to the souls of their ancestors for help. Then there came down from the stars the beautiful spirit of an old chief called Moiominda, who appeared in a gigantic shape, and in a voice of thunder that made the mountains tremble called the

hostile tribes together and ordered them to make peace. This being consented to, “the mighty Spirit called up the oldest man from each tribe, and advised them all night on the top of Chooreechillam, and gave each one a magnificent rock-crystal, containing the light and wisdom of the stars, and departed in the morning to the Pleiades, leaving the tribes at peace from that day to the present time.

“The rock-crystal is regarded as a mysterious power by many Australian tribes. With some it is always in the possession of the oldest man, who never, allows it to be seen by the women or the young men. I have seen famous chiefs wearing the crystal rolled up in the hair on the back of the head, or concealed [307] under the arm, attached to a string round the neck.” Now if the reader will turn to *Isis Unveiled*, ii, 626, he will see what Madame Blavatsky says about a carnelian divining-stone in her possession, and its unexpected and favorable effect upon a Shaman to conduct her through Thibet. She says: “Every Shaman has such a talisman, which he wears attached to a string, and carries under his left arm.” How the magical powers of the stone worn by the Shaman were proved she tells in a most picturesque narrative, well worth the reading.

I have just barely mentioned above Mr. Justice G. W. Paul, of the District Court of Brisbane, but he is worthy of much more notice than that. Judge Paul is—for happily he still lives—one of the most brilliant counsellors and erudite judges in all the colonies. The tie of the friendship which sprang up between us had, however, nothing to do with our common profession, but it was based originally upon our common interest in spiritual philosophy and practical psychical research. When I met him he had been for many years, like myself, studying these problems, and while in London on a vacation, had become intimate with the family of Florrie Cook, Mr. Crookes’ medium. The stories he told me of the wonders he had seen in the privacy of the domestic circle were even more wonderful than any which I have seen reported in connection with the mediumship of Miss Cook. The Judge has also made many most successful experiments with mesmeric subjects. I could well believe all he told me because of his strong personal [308] magnetism. The evening when he went with me to my lecture at Centennial Hall, some Sinhalese were present, so, by request of the audience, I gave them “Pansil”. To the several clergymen present this incident was especially interesting.

My return journey from Brisbane to Sydney was made by rail, which gave me the chance of seeing the back country of the two colonies. I was much struck with its resemblance to the rural districts of the Western States of America in the

appearance of the buildings, the fencing, the slovenly cultivation, and the appearance of the people whom we saw clustered at the railway stations. At Sydney I met a gentleman, a successful young physician, whom I mention because he was a type of a certain class whom every public man is continually meeting. I withhold his name because I shall have to speak of him in terms not quite complimentary. He had become interested, it seems, in Theosophy, and when my name was mentioned to him at our introduction, he seemed ready to explode almost with enthusiasm. He counted as precious every minute he could snatch from his professional engagements to spend in my company; went about with me, especially to the theatre, and took me every night to his house for supper, keeping me up to chat until the small hours of the morning. I never met a more enthusiastic candidate for membership in our Society. Out of the crowds of visitors who called at my hotel, I had no great difficulty in getting members, nor in forming the Sydney T. S. My fervent friend was [309] unanimously elected President, and I left the place with rosy hopes of the benefits that would accrue from the acquisition of this ideal President. But he was a Roman Catholic, and a considerable share of his practice came from the patronage of the Bishop. He, hearing of the monstrosly heretical action of his protégé in joining a Society which was anathema maranatha, gave him very clearly to understand that he would have to choose between the loss of his practice or loyalty to his new connection. Alas! our colleague's courage was not equal to the strain; he swallowed all his fine professions, resigned office, and from that time to this—if he be still living—buried his Theosophical aspirations in the cesspool of self-interest. Many cases like this have combined to make me very suspicious of over-protestations of new members, and exaggerated declarations of affection for myself and other leaders of our movement. In Bulwer's play of Richelieu, the great cardinal, standing and looking after his familiar agent, Joseph, who had just left the room with a profound obeisance, says, in a thrilling aside: He bowed too low. How often and often have H. P. B. and I, after some unusually gushing visitor had departed, said as much as this to each other! Though no words would pass between us, my eyes would sometimes put to her Hamlet's question: "Madam, how like you this play?" and her responsive look would suggest the Queen's reply: "The lady doth protest too much, me thinks." Fortunately for the welfare of our Sydney Branch, it contained members, like Mr. George Peell [310] and some others, who were made of entirely different stuff, and in whose hands it has been carried on from that time to this on the footing of a working body, and has exercised much influence on contemporary thought in that part of

the world.

I was fortunate enough to meet some of the leading statesmen of different colonies whose names have figured largely in the recent Federation movement, such as Sir Samuel Griffith, Hon. Mr. Barton, Sir George R. Dibbs, Alfred Deakin, Hon. John Woods, and others. Two or three of them occupied the chair at my lectures, and my conversations with them, both upon occult and political matters, were highly interesting; they have enabled me to follow recent events with intelligent understanding of the undercurrent of colonial feeling.

On 17th May, at Melbourne, I enjoyed the rare pleasure of hearing a Christian clergyman, the Rev. Dr. Buchanan, in preaching to an audience of 1,500 people on "Buddhism and Christianity," praise our Society. Well, I thought, the old saying is true—wonders will never cease!

From Sydney to Melbourne, and Melbourne to Adelaide, as from Brisbane to Sydney, I travelled by rail, so that I may say that I have had very fair chance of seeing the country. No sleeping-berth being available in the train from Sydney to Adelaide on account of a crowd going to the races, I passed one of the most miserable nights in my life in a compartment crowded with horse-jockeys and book-makers. In the [311] abstract, it was worth while having experience with those animals on two legs, but the knowledge was gained at the expense of a whole night in an atmosphere of pipe-smoke, whisky fumes, profanity, and vulgar language, the like of which I never heard before: may I never have it again!

The notable person at Adelaide, for whose sake this paragraph is written, was Mr. N. A. Knox, who was a man extremely worth knowing. He was one of the most influential men in the colony, a member of, I think, the oldest law firm of Adelaide, prominent in the local club, and the owner of a beautiful place at Burnside, a suburb of Adelaide. Both he and his gifted wife are leading spirits in the local Branch which I formed during the visit in question. Miss Pickett, the devoted daughter of Mrs. Elise Pickett, of Melbourne, had volunteered to go to Colombo and take charge of our Sanghamitta School, and her steamer touched at Adelaide on the second day after my arrival there. Mr. and Mrs. Knox and I went by rail to Largs Bay, and thence by steam launch to her steamer, to visit her, but she had gone ashore and we missed her. Mr. Knox, finding that she was travelling third-class from motives of economy, and appreciating this proof of devotion and self-sacrifice on the part of a refined young lady, with characteristic generosity paid the difference and had her transferred into the second-class

saloon. This is one of those unconsidered trifles which indicate the character of a man as clearly as any amount of panegyric.

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My work in Australia being finished, I embarked on 27th May for Colombo on the P. & O. S.S. "Massilia," as above noted, and was warmly welcomed by Captain Fraser, the commander, whom I had met at dinner at Government House, Sydney, and who took me to his own table. Barring the lecture on Theosophy already mentioned, the voyage homeward was pleasant and uneventful. We reached Colombo on the 10th of June, and our steamer, leaving Adelaide two days later than Miss Pickett's, anchored in Colombo harbor a few hours earlier; so that I was able to go on board her boat with a committee of Sinhalese ladies, bring her ashore, and escort her to Tichborne Hall, the school building. Mr. Keightley, happening to be in Colombo at the time, was also present, and I made an address of welcome on behalf of the Women's Education Society. Calling up Mrs. Weerakoon, the President, I had her take Miss Pickett by the hand, give her a sisterly welcome, and acknowledge her as Principal. The hall was decorated with the taste for which the Sinhalese are conspicuous, and Miss Pickett was charmed with her first view of her new home. The next morning I took Miss Pickett to see the High Priest and his College; and as she was willing and anxious to become a Buddhist, the High Priest and I arranged for a public meeting at our hall the next evening, for her to take Pansil. The room was packed to suffocation, and there was a roar of applause after she had gone through with the simple ceremony. By request, I lectured on the Buddhistic incidents of [313] my Australian tour. The creation of a Blavatsky Scholarship Fund for the education of Buddhist girls being suggested, I took subscriptions to the amount of Rs. 500 towards it, but the idea was never carried out. On the following day a garden-party in honor of Miss Pickett was given at the Sanghamitta School. At this time Dr. Daly was showing the worst side of his nature, and he had grossly insulted the faithful Sinhalese Committee, who had been working so hard with me during the previous ten years. The situation was altogether very strained; and when I left for Marseilles with Mr. Keightley, on the French steamer, on the 15th of June, the feeling was very bitter on both sides.

The homeward voyage was smooth and without notable incident: we reached Marseilles on 2nd July, Paris on the 3rd, and London on the 4th, where I arrived at 6 p.m. W. Q. Judge, who had come over from New York in response to my telegram, met me and took me to the Headquarters at 19 Avenue Road, where I

had an affectionate greeting from Mrs. Besant and the other residents of the house. Mrs. B. and I visited the bedroom of H. P. B., and, after a time of solemn meditation, pledged ourselves to be true to the Cause and to each other. The death of my co-Founder had left me as the recognised sole centre of the movement, and it seemed as if the hearts of all our best workers warmed towards me more than they had ever done before.

A general Convention of our Branches in Europe having been called for the 9th of July, the Delegates [314] from Sweden reported themselves on the 6th, and others from different countries, including Great Britain and Ireland, kept coming up to the time of opening. I have noted in my entry for the 8th of July a domestic incident which I think worth registering here, because it is so illustrative of the spirit of devotion to our Society which has been showing itself at intervals throughout our whole corporate history. Although it poured in torrents on the day in question, a number of ladies and gentlemen, one or two, I believe, of noble birth, gathered together at Avenue Road and shelled peas by the bushel, scraped bushels of potatoes and other vegetables, and did a lot of miscellaneous housework in preparation for the entertainment of Delegates in a large marquee erected in the garden. There were grave literary men and women, artists, members of the learned professions, and others of dignified social position cheerfully undertaking this menial work for the sake of the Society which they loved. On that same evening, by request, I gave personal reminiscences of H. P. B. to an informal meeting of Delegates; and the questions put to me elicited an amount of detail about the private life, habits, and opinions of our dear, never-to-be-replaced, Helena Petrovna. It touched me to see the evidences of her strong hold upon the affections of all who had been associated with her. Smarting, as I was, from a bereavement which was to me inexpressibly greater than it could have been to any of the others who had been less mixed up in her life than I, their evidently sincere grief [315] strongly excited my emotions. It was only now, when I stood in her London home, where we had passed many pleasant hours together during my visits to London, and saw myself surrounded by the objects she had left on her desk, the latest books that she had been reading, the big chair she had sat in, and the dresses she had worn, that I felt the full sense of our irreparable loss. Although I had known for years that she would die before me, yet I never expected that she would leave me so abruptly without passing over to me certain secrets which she told me she must give me before she could go. So it seemed almost as though there was some mistake, and that, instead of having gone on the long journey to the higher

sphere, she must have just taken temporary leave of us, with the intention of coming back to have those last words with me, and then get her final release. I even expected that she would come to my bedside that night, but my slumbers were not interrupted. And so I braced myself up to carry the heavy burden that had fallen upon my shoulders, and do my best to keep the vital power unweakened within the body of the Society which we two had built up together.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE FIRST CONVENTION IN EUROPE

(1891)

THE meeting of the European Branches on 9th and 10th July, mentioned in the last chapter, was an important event in our history, as it was the first Annual Convention that we had held in Europe. At that time, it will be remembered, we had in Europe two Sections, viz., the British Section and the tentative European Section that H. P. B. had irregularly formed, and which was afterwards officially ratified. In the latter were included the London Lodge, Ionian T. S., Vienna Lodge, Swedish T. S., Dutch-Belgian Branch, Le Lotus, our French Branch, and the Spanish group of Madrid, from which Senor Xifré came as Delegate. Miss Emily Kislingbury was Treasurer, and Mr. G. R. S. Mead, General Secretary. In the British Section there were eleven Branches, viz., the Blavatsky, Scottish, Dublin, Newcastle, Bradford, Liverpool, Birmingham, West of England, Brighton, Brixton, and Chiswick; the Treasurer was Mr. F. L. Gardner; the General Secretary, Mr. W. R. Old. All the above took part in the Convention.

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The meeting was held in the hall of the Blavatsky Lodge, in Avenue Road. I took the chair, and appointed Mr. Mead, Secretary, and Mr. Old, Assistant Secretary of the Convention. Mrs. Besant then rose and, addressing the Delegates first, and then myself, bade me welcome in words so sweet, so characteristic of her own loving temperament, that I cannot refrain from quoting them here. She said:

“It is at once my duty and privilege, as President of the Blavatsky Lodge, the largest in the British dominions, to voice the welcome of the Delegates and members of this Convention to the President-Founder. It is not necessary for me to remind you of the past services he has rendered the cause to which his life has been dedicated. Chosen by the Masters as President for life of the Theosophical Society, associated with their messenger H. P. B., bound together by every tie that can bind, no words we can utter, no thought we can think, can add anything to the loyalty which every member must feel to our President. We welcome him with added warmth because of the promptitude with which, on receiving the

notice of H. P. B.'s departure, he has come from Australia, where he had gone to recover the health lost in the service of the cause. He came across the ocean without delay, in order that by his presence he might strengthen and encourage us here in Europe, that everyone may go promptly forward in the work. And in bidding you, Mr. President, welcome to this Convention, we can assure you of our steadfast loyalty [318] to the cause, you who are the only one who represents the mission from the Masters themselves. We are met here to-day to carry on the work of H. P. B., and the only way to carry on her work and to strengthen the Society will be by loyalty and faithfulness to the cause for which she died, the only cause worth living for and dying for in this world.”

The full report of the Convention appeared in the Theosophist for September, 1891, but as a whole decade has passed, it has, of course, been forgotten even by the readers of our magazine; and as the book into which these pages are destined to pass will come into the hands of hundreds who have never known about this historical meeting, I take the advice of friends and reproduce here the substance of my Address to the Convention. I do this the more readily because there are certain views expressed in it which ought to be widely known in the best interests of our Society. I quote, therefore, as follows:

“Brothers and Sisters,—When I try to concentrate my thoughts to speak to you, I find a very great difficulty in translating them into words, because my heart is so oppressed by the grief that has fallen upon us, by the presence of this empty chair, by the memories of seventeen years of intimate association, that the tongue refuses its office, and I can only leave you to infer what my feelings are on coming to meet you here... It was not until I came to this spot that I realised that H. P. B. was dead. We had, for the last few years, been working apart. I had not been accustomed,

[319] as before, to see her every day and hour, and therefore I did not realise the fact that she was gone until I came here and saw her empty room, and felt that we had indeed been bereaved. I passed some time alone in her room, and I received there what was necessary for my guidance in the future; I may simply say, in one word, the gist of it was that I should continue the work as though nothing whatever had happened, and I have been delighted beyond measure to see that this spirit has been imparted to her late associates, and that they have become inspired by her zeal to that extent that, while their hearts have been wrenched by this blow, their courage has never faltered for a moment, nor has there been the least vacillation nor the least intimation that they were ready to

abandon the work in which she had enlisted them. Now, for the first time, I feel ready and willing to die. It has been the great anxiety of my life, since we left New York for India, lest I might die in the various exposures to which I have been subjected, and thus leave the movement before it has gained vitality to go on. 'If H. P. B. and I should die,' it has been said by the Hindus everywhere, 'the thing would collapse.' Now her death has shown that it will not collapse, and therefore I feel much more fearless than I have been heretofore as to exposing myself in different parts of the world. I feel now that this movement has acquired an individuality of its own, and that nothing in the world can drag it down. I have had recently in Australia the most striking proof of the existence [320] throughout the world of this yearning after the Secret Doctrine, after Mysticism, after the truths to be obtained by soul development. I found everywhere throughout Australia latent inclination, potency in this direction, which only requires an excuse to manifest itself. I found it in Great Britain, and Mr. Judge has found it in America, so that now I feel satisfied that though the most of us who are engaged in this work as leaders should die, the movement itself is an entity, has its own vitality, and will keep on. How it shall keep on is a question for us to consider. We have heretofore had within easy reach a teacher who, like an inexhaustible well of fresh water, could be drawn upon at any time that we were thirsting for information. This has been an advantage in one way, but a great detriment in another. The very inaccessibility of the Masters is an advantage to all those who wish to acquire knowledge, because in the effort to come near them, to get any communion with them, one insensibly prepares in himself the conditions of spiritual growth, and it is when we are thrown upon our own resources that we are enabled to bring out the powers latent in our characters. I consider that H. P. B. had died at the right moment. She has left work unfinished, it is true, but she has also done work which is quite sufficient, if we make use of it properly, to supply us for many years to come with the help that we need in Theosophical progress. She has not gone away and left us absolutely without unpublished remains; on the contrary, she has left a large body of them, and in the [321] custody of her chosen depositary, Mrs. Besant, who, in the proper way and at the proper moment, will give them out to the world. But I maintain that even though not another book had been written save *Isis Unveiled*, that would have been enough for the earnest student. I may say that my Theosophical education has been obtained almost entirely from that book; for my life has been so busy of late years that I have had no time for reading. I cannot read anything serious when I am travelling, and at home my

mind is so overwhelmed with the anxieties of my official position that I have no time and no inclination to sit down and meditate and read; so that of what I know about Theosophy and Theosophical matters, a large part has been obtained through Isis Unveiled, in the composition of which I was engaged with her for about two years. Our effort should be to spread everywhere among our sympathisers the belief that each one must work out his own salvation, that there can be no progress whatever without effort, and that nothing is so pernicious, nothing is so weakening, as the encouragement of the spirit of dependence upon another, upon another's wisdom, upon another's righteousness. It is a most pernicious thing and paralyses all effort. Now a method that is pursued in schools of Yoga in India and in Tibet is this: the Master gives at first no encouragement whatever to the would-be pupil, perhaps he will not even look at him, and frequently persons attach themselves to a Yogi as chelas, despite his trying to drive them away, perhaps with blows, or, at any [322] rate, despite their being apparently scorned and put upon in every possible way by the Yogi. They perform most menial offices, sweeping the floors, making the fires, and everything of the kind, while perhaps the Yogî will reward them with indifference for months or years. If the aspirant is really desirous of obtaining the truth, he is not discouraged by any of these rebuffs. A time finally comes when, having tested him sufficiently, the Master may turn to him and set his foot on the path by giving him the first hint. Then he waits to see how he will profit by that hint, and the rapidity of his subsequent progress depends entirely upon his own behavior. But we may say we have been far better off than that. We have had H. P. B. with us as an active worker for the last sixteen years, during which time she has given out in various channels, in the Theosophist, in Lucifer, her books, and her conversation, a great volume of esoteric teaching, and hundreds of hints which, if taken, understood, and followed up will enable anyone of us to make decided progress, in our Theosophical direction.

“I have been for a number of years holding Conventions of Delegates representing the Society. On these walls you see photographs of some of those Conventions. This is the first one that has been held in Europe. You are behind America, where they have been having splendid Conventions for several years past. But everything must have a beginning, and this is the beginning in Europe. We have a fair representation of our movement in different parts of Europe, but nothing [323] like as full an one as will come after this initiative has been understood and followed up. At the threshold of the work we have every promise before us of an immense extension of our movement. We have every reason to

be satisfied with the outlook. When we consider the enormous reactionary influences at work in different parts of Christendom; when we consider the progress of vicious tendencies and of materialistic opinions in European countries; when we look at the distribution of our literature, and see how devoted persons in different countries, like our splendid Spanish group, are rendering the works into their vernaculars and are circulating them in their countries, and see what results we are obtaining, I think my observation is correct, that we have great reason to be satisfied with the outlook. I wish that every Delegate in this Convention representing any country might take to heart to avoid as a pestilence the feeling of local pride or local exclusiveness. With political divisions we have nothing to do; with distinctions of rank and caste and creed we have nothing to do. Ours is a common, neutral ground, where the standard of respect is the standard of a purified humanity. Our ideals are higher than those of time-serving communities. We have no king, no emperor, no president, no dictator here in our spiritual life. We welcome everybody who is eager after the truth to a seat beside us on the bench, on the sole condition that he or she will help us in our studies, and will receive in a kindly and brotherly spirit any help that we are ready and able [324] to give. We should therefore know no England, no Scotland, no France, no Germany, no Sweden, no Spain, no Italy. These are geographical abstractions. For us the terms do not exist in our Theosophical consciousness. We have Swedish brothers, and German brothers, and French brothers, and Spanish, and English, Irish, Welsh, and so forth; as brothers we know them, as brothers we are bound to them, and in every way; so that in your work in your different countries you should try to imbue your fellows with the feeling that this is a union that has no regard to geographical or national boundaries or limitations, and that the first step in the development of the Theosophist is generous altruism, forgetfulness of self, the destruction and breaking down of the barriers of personal prejudice, an expanding heart, an expanding soul, so as to unite oneself with all peoples and all the races of the world in trying to realise upon earth that Kingdom of Heaven which was spoken of in the Bible, and which means this universal brotherhood of the advanced and perfected humanity which has preceded us in the march of cosmic evolution. And now, not to detain you longer, I welcome you with a full heart and an outstretched hand to this family meeting of the Theosophical Society.

“I wish you to feel that this is a Section of the General Council of the Society, that you represent the dignity and the majesty of the Society, and that your interest is as deep in the things that are transpiring in the American Section, and

in the Indian [325] Section, and in Ceylon and other Sections, as it is in what is merely transpiring within the geographical boundaries which are represented in your respective Branches. I hope the spirit of amity may dwell in this meeting; that we may feel that we are in the presence of the Great Ones whose thoughts take in what is transpiring at any distance as easily as what is transpiring near by, and also that we are imbued, surrounded, by the influence of my dear colleague and your revered teacher, who has left us for a while to return under another form and under more favorable conditions.”

Resolutions in honor of H. P. B. were offered by the Countess Wachtmeister, seconded by Señor Xifré, and carried by acclamation. Mr. W. Q. Judge offered resolutions for the creation of an “H. P. B. Memorial Fund,” which were seconded by Mrs. Besant in an eloquent speech, and supported by Mr. B. Keightley in a fervent address. The resolutions were carried unanimously. I then read a letter to the Convention suggesting a partition of the ashes of H. P. B.’s body, recommending that one portion each should be given to Adyar, London, and New York. I recalled the fact that this plan had been followed in the disposal of the ashes of Gautama Buddha and other sacred personages. The Theosophical career of H. P. B., I said, had been divided into three stages, viz., New York, India, and London--its cradle, altar, and tomb. I did not overlook that it had always been understood between us that the one of us two who survived should [326] bury the other’s ashes at Adyar. I was moved to this plan of the partition because I could plainly see that if I took all the ashes back with me, feelings of resentment would be excited. In fact I noticed that, in seconding the motion of Mrs. Besant for the acceptance of the proposal, Mr. Judge said that “it was a question of justice; and if any other arrangement had been adopted, though he himself personally would have made no claim, he felt sure that the American Section would have done so”. Of course the offer was at once accepted.

The Countess Wachtmeister transmitted an offer from the great Swedish sculptor, Sven Bengtsson, to make an artistic urn as a repository for the share of the ashes apportioned to London. Naturally, the offer was gratefully and enthusiastically accepted, and I appointed an art committee to examine designs and settle preliminaries, with the artist as a member.

The keynote of harmony having been struck, the proceedings of the two days’ sessions were interesting and cordial throughout. Mr. Mead gave a masterly survey of the Theosophical outlook in Europe, which he declared to be highly encouraging. Results have proved his prognostic to have been fully warranted,

for the movement has spread and strengthened to an extent not then dreamed of.

The uselessness of having two Sections to cover in a great part of the same territory was so apparent that an arrangement was come to to dissolve the British Section, and further strengthen and consolidate [327] the European Section. To carry this legally into effect, I issued on the 17th of July, at London, an Executive Notice, officially recognising the latter, ordering the issue of a Charter to Mr. Mead and associates of the Executive Committee, and officially ratifying the unanimous vote of the British Section to dissolve its organisation. The European Section was instructed to take over the records, liabilities, and assets of the British Section as from the 11th of July. Mr. Mead was unanimously confirmed by the Convention as General Secretary.

I had just refused, in Brisbane, the bequest of one fortune, and now another was offered me. At a garden-party at Avenue Road, a French-Swiss member, M. C. Parmelin, F.T.S., a resident of Havre, until then stranger to me, took me aside and asked me to accept his small fortune of fcs. 30,000 in cash for the Society. He explained that he had no use for the money, and wanted to do something practical to help on a movement in which he felt the deepest interest: especially he wished to aid the work in France. In answer to my questions respecting himself, he told me that he was a bachelor, with no desire or intention to marry; that his salary as a bank employee was ample for all his wants; and that on the death of his mother he would inherit another handsome sum. In reply, I pointed out to him that it was unwise for him to strip himself of all his reserve capital, for in case of serious illness he might lose his employment and find himself in want; but as he had the prospect of an inheritance, and [328] also of the continuance of his income from his salary, and as I recognised the right of every member of the Society to give as freely as I did myself, I would accept half of the sum offered, leaving him the other half to use in case of necessity, with the understanding that when his inheritance fell in he could, if he chose, give me the other half. But, for the sake of a permanent record, I requested him to put the offer, as modified, in writing. This he did the same day. I then called Mrs. Besant and Mr. Mead into a consultation with M. Parmelin, and we came to the following agreement; (1) The offer should be accepted; (2) The money should be lodged in bank in the names of Mrs. Besant, Mr. Mead, and the donor himself, my determination being that he should give his signature with that of the others, on every cheque drawn, so that all disbursements should be made with his knowledge and consent; (3) That, as his wish was to help the movement

generally, as well as particularly the French portion of it, the sum of £100 each should be given to Adyar, London, and New York headquarters for general purposes, and that the remainder should be used in aid of the operations in France. This being agreed to, I received, ten days later, through Mrs. Besant, the £100 for Adyar, and it will be found in the Treasurer's report for February, as assigned to the Library Fund. I have given the foregoing details about this affair for two reasons: one, that so well-intentioned an act of beneficence should be recorded in our history; and the other, because, later on, the donor seemed to have [329] changed his mind about it to some extent, and to be disposed to cast imputations against us three persons, who were—as the above facts prove—only striving our best to carry out his own wishes and apply his gifts to the very purposes he had himself designated. Fortunately, I had induced him to put into writing the offer first made to me verbally, a precaution born of long experience in the study of human nature, and one which I strongly recommend for adoption by all my present and future colleagues.

I was extremely shocked on receiving news from Colombo of the accidental death by drowning of our dear Miss Pickett, only ten days after I had installed her as Principal of the Sanghamitta School. It appears that she was subject to occasional attacks of somnambulism, and that she rose in the night, passed noiselessly out of the house, wandered over the lawn, and fell into a well which was only protected by a low parapet wall. It was a very sad and tragical case. She had left Australia with her mother's blessing; her new home was a beautiful one; she began her work with zeal, and, as far as we knew, was in vigorous health; her reception had been so warm as to fill her heart with joy; there was even a strong probability of her mother's joining her very soon, and I had given half the price of the passage ticket. There was no apparent cloud on the horizon of her young life, while the future opened out before her a smiling prospect. The day after the accident 7,000 persons came to see the drowned body, and in a long, sad, strange procession,

[330] all clad in white garments, they followed it to the cemetery, where Mrs. Weerakoon, the President of the W. E. S., lighted her funeral pyre. I have, at the mother's request, the sacred ashes in my custody.

So serious an event as the death of Madame Blavatsky could not occur without exciting in timid minds throughout the world of Theosophy apprehensions as to its -probable effect upon our movement. At this critical movement it behoved me to step forward and lay down the policy which would

be pursued. We have seen that a stupid notion prevailed to some extent that the death of one or both of the Founders would mean the destruction of the Society. I dealt with this in the address above copied into this narrative; and to reach the many who would not be likely to read the Convention proceedings, I issued at London, on 27th July, the following Executive Notice:

“As the survivor of the two principal Founders of the Theosophical Society, I am called upon to state officially the lines upon which its work will be prosecuted. I therefore give notice—

“1. That there will be no change in the general policy, the three declared objects of the Society being strictly followed out, and nothing permitted which would conflict with the same in any respect.

“2. The Society, as such, will be kept as neutral as heretofore, and as the Constitution provides, with respect to religious dogmas and sectarian ideas; helping all who ask our aid to understand and live [331] up to their best religious ideals, and pledging itself to no one more than another.

“3. The untrammelled right of private judgment and the absolute equality of members in the Society, regardless of their differences in sex, race, color, or creed, is reaffirmed and guaranteed as heretofore.

“4. No pledges will be exacted as a condition of acquiring or retaining fellowship, save as provided in the Constitution.

“5. A policy of open frankness, integrity, and altruism will be scrupulously followed in all the Society’s dealings with its members and the public.

“6. Every reasonable effort will be made to encourage members to practically prove by their private lives and conversation the sincerity of their Theosophical profession.

“7. The principle of autonomous government in Sections and Branches, within the lines of the Constitution, and of non-interference by Headquarters, save extreme cases, will be loyally observed.”

Any officer of a Branch, or other person concerned in the management of any portion of the Society’s activity, who will keep strictly within the lines placed in the above Notice, will not go far wrong nor compromise the Society in the eyes of the public.

CHAPTER XIX

HYPNOTIC EXPERIMENTS IN PARIS

(1891)

ON the 20th (July) Mr. Harte brought to see me a distinguished Hindu gentleman who expressed so much interest in my lifework as to surprise me; he went so far as to entreat me to either write, or let Mr. Harte write, my biography, offering to advance the whole cost of publication; he said that his compatriots, at least, would never forget me for what I had done for them and their country, and that I owed it to them to put on record the story of my antecedents and different branches of work. I thanked him sincerely for his evidence of good-feeling, but had to decline, as, being a firm believer in the evolution of the human entity through numberless reincarnations, I considered these vauntings of a single personality as trash. As he also, being a Hindu, was of necessity a reincarnationist, I bade him tell me, if he could, the details of either one of his past lives, among which some must have been very influential, or else he could never have evolved up to his present degree of intellectual and moral strength. I asked [333] him to recall to mind the thousand and one architectural monuments erected by sovereigns of Indian provinces, in their time considered mighty and never to be forgotten, but whose very names and epochs are now the subject of mere conjecture. He had to confess the justness of the position, but still continued to importune me until I gave him the decisive answer that I should refuse. What a pity it is that members of our Society, pretending to familiarity with our literature, and accepting the theory of reincarnation, cannot apparently show the least proof of their sincerity! They cling to and try to exalt their pigmy personalities, and to the end of their days live within the impassable ring of their nationalities and social or caste prejudices. Orthodoxy they spell autodoxy.

Mr. Judge and I, being such old acquaintances, and, until somewhat later, personal friends, passed most of our time together and discussed the situation in all its aspects. As I have before stated, he had developed enormously since the early days at New York, when he was a very insignificant party, both as to character and position; his capacity only developed itself in 1886, eleven years after our meeting. My confidence in him, however, received a severe shock, for he made pretences of intimacy with the Mahatmas which were absolutely

contradicted by the whole drift of his private letters to me since we parted at New York; he had been constantly importuning me to get messages from them, and complaining of their obstinate silence. He even went so far as to lay on my table,

[334] inside the open cover of another letter, a message to me in Mahatma handwriting, and then clumsily told me, when he found I had not said anything about it, that the Mahatma bade him tell me that there was such a note on my table. The message itself, when found, turned out to be a palpable fraud. A variety of other things happening at this same time lowered him very much in my esteem, and from that time forward I had no confidence in his pretended revelations and occult commissions. But all this is now a matter of history, and has been published in connection with the case instituted against him later on. The worst of his operations were the deceptions he practised upon that dear woman, Mrs. Besant, who was one of his most fervent admirers, and reposed in him a touching confidence. But we shall come to this in its proper place. However, the exposure had not yet come, and so we were on the footing of the old friendship. He and I went and bought two bronze vases and divided H. P. B.'s ashes; of which I carried the Adyar portion with me around the world, with a notification on the wrapper that in case of my sudden death en route the package was to be forwarded to Adyar by whomsoever should take charge of my effects. It goes without saying that if I had had the least prevision of the future secession of the American Branches and Judge from the Society, I would not have given him one grain of the precious dust.

Mrs. Besant and I arranged that she should come out and make a tour in India the next season, and a [335] preliminary notice was issued by me to that effect. This programme was, however, cancelled by her, although her passage was actually engaged, on receipt, through Judge, of a bogus Mahatma order, the particulars of which are now historical. My present conviction is that he had a double purpose in view, viz.; to keep Mrs. Besant within easy reach, and to prevent her from comparing notes with me at Adyar about his occult messages and pretensions. The tour was ultimately made in the year 1893-4, and will be described in a future chapter.

During my stay in London I paid a visit to a Working Girls' Club at Bow, which had been started by H. P. B. with the £1,000 given her by a sympathetic friend who ordered his name withheld, and who left to her discretion the way in which it should be used for the benefit of working women. Naturally, she

consulted Mrs. Besant, having had no experience whatever herself as to the needs of that class, and they decided to use it for the founding of a social club in the heart of the East End. A roomy, old-fashioned house, just opposite the church, was rented, plainly fitted up, and the good Mrs. Lloyd engaged as matron. I was very much pleased with the appearance of things, and did my best to help make the evening pass pleasantly for the working girls. Miss Potter, an American elocutionist, recited admirably a number of pieces; there was piano-playing and singing, an informal dance, a collation; and, laying aside my official dignity for the time, I yielded to a request of Mrs. Lloyd's and sang some [336] Irish songs. It will surprise no one to learn that this style of music was better suited to the tastes and capacities of the audience than the most brilliant pieces played on the piano. I was greatly amused on receiving next day, from the matron, a note begging me to send her the words of "The Low-backed Car," with the remark that the girls would give her no peace until she had written me. The experiment of the Bow Club, albeit superintended by Mrs. Annie Besant, whom the working girls fairly worshipped, proved a failure in the end, and the house had to be closed.

It was thought best that I should visit New York and pass through the country to San Francisco, so as to help to cheer up our American colleagues; this, moreover, would give me the chance of taking counsel with the principal Japanese priests about my platform of the Fourteen Principles. So this was determined upon, and I engaged passage for New York by the Atlantic greyhound "New York" for the 16th of September. My movements were closely calculated, so that I should get back to Madras in time to make the usual arrangements for the Convention.

Having determined to gratify a long-felt wish to study at first hand the theories and experiments of the rival hypnotic schools of Paris and Nancy, I crossed over with Mr. Mead to Paris on the last day of July, and we reached our destination without all notable incident on the way. Invitations to dinner from Lady Caithness (Duchesse de Pomar), Madame Zambaco the sculptress, and another lady member of [337] the Society awaited me. On the next day I had the pleasure of visiting again Professor de Rosny of the Sorbonne, and the honor of making the acquaintance of Emil Burnouf the Sanskritist, and brother of the world-renowned late Eugène Burnouf, the master of Professor Max Müller, from both of whom Mr. Mead and I received a most cordial welcome. M. de Rosny has been known throughout the literary world for years as a lecturer on and

advocate of Buddhism; he is one of the most erudite sinologues in the world.

At this time the brilliant and still handsome Countess of Caithness was enjoying excellent health and spirits, and was full of interest in the Theosophical Society, of which she had long been a member. We had become great friends during the visit of H. P. B. and myself to her favorite winter resort, the Palais Tiranty, Nice, and she was always extremely cordial to me on the occasions of my visits to Paris. During the present one she had me to dinner, drove me out to the Bois, invited friends to meet me, and showed other civilities. To signify her friendship, she had made for me, in diamonds and rubies, a miniature copy of our Society's seal, arranged to wear in the button-hole. She was a woman who in her youth must have been the great beauty which tradition affirms. Her first husband was a Spanish count and general, afterwards raised to the dignity of Duc. His family name was Pomar, and the fruit which the word represents was blazoned on his coat-of-arms. By him she had a son, now the holder of the title, and a young man of most agreeable manners,

[338] and known in literature as the author of several romances. Some years after her husband's death she married the eccentric Earl of Caithness, representative of one of the most ancient families of Great Britain. He was a great expert in mechanical science. Lady Caithness' father owned large sugar plantations and many slaves in Cuba. From all these sources her ladyship inherited, it is said, a large fortune; certainly, if the possession of a splendid palace in Paris, gorgeously furnished, and probably the finest diamonds outside royal regalia in Europe, go for anything, we may well believe the story. She had been for many years an ardent spiritualist; previously to that, a deep student of mesmerism. The natural graduation from such a preliminary course was Theosophy, which takes them both in and explains them as no other school of thought can. She was not a woman of fixed ideas, but, on the contrary, impulsive and changeful. As her son had no wish to marry—at least so she told me—she speculated much as to how she should leave her fortune, and at the time I speak of, was balancing between a little spiritualistic group that met at her house, and that she had christened the “Star Circle,” and our Society. Later on, she summoned Mr. Mead and the Countess Wachtmeister to help her frame a will bequeathing us, I believe, the reversionary interest of her whole property upon the death of her son, with certain legacies to the medium or mediums who had helped her keep up the “Star Circle” meetings. But this was a flash in the pan, and in point of fact she made no bequest of the [339] kind, but her whole estate

passed to her son. She left behind her several books on occult subjects, of which one at least testified to her industry in compilation. Like most of us, she had her illusions, but they were harmless, the chief one being that she was a reincarnation of Mary Queen of Scots. She published one brochure entitled *A Night at Holyrood*, in which she describes a meeting between her and the spirit of the unfortunate queen. H. P. B., with characteristic frankness, posed her with the question how she could be at one and the same time the embodied Lady Caithness and the disembodied Mary. Her "Star Circle" was held in an exquisite little chapel in her Paris palace, built expressly for it. At the place where the altar usually is was a niche, at the bottom of which was a really splendid picture, in full-length, of Mary Queen of Scots. From gas-jets, masked behind the side pillars, an admirably arranged flood of light was thrown upon the picture, and the chapel being in deep shadow an effect of startling realism was produced; it seemed almost as though Mary would step out of the canvas and advance to receive the homage of her adorer.

Another old friend of H. P. B.'s and mine, of whom I saw much during my visit to Paris, was the Countess Gaston d'Adhémar, F.T.S., a great American beauty, married to the representative of one of the noblest families of France. She was a true American, a warm lover of her country and compatriots. She and her sister, also married to a French gentleman, were two [340] of the handsomest women I ever saw, but they were not alike in their love of Occultism; the Countess alone took up with Theosophy, and she proved her sincerity by editing and publishing for a whole year a Theosophical magazine called *La Revue Théosophique*, which filled the gap made by the collapse of our first French magazine, *Le Lotus*. In her introduction the Directress explains the intention of the magazine to be, "to make known a science as old as the world, and yet new for the West of our day". It was something really remarkable that a lady of her position should freely give her name as the founder of such a periodical, and request that all editorial communications should be sent to her, to the address of her private residence.

My first move in the direction of hypnotic research was to call on my acquaintance Dr. J. Babinski, formerly Professor Charcot's chief of clinic, and who had assisted at the experiments made by his master for me at the time of my first visit to La Salpêtrière. We had a most interesting conversation on our favorite subject. He told me that he had made many experiments pointing towards thought-transference, but, by Charcot's advice, he was keeping them

back. I have a note giving the bare mention of two or three examples which he related. The experiment was made with two hypnotic sensitives, of whom one was in an upper room, the other in one beneath it; let us call these Nos. 1 and 2. To No. 1 was given the suggestion that she was at the Jardin des Plantes, and her attention was specially called to the big elephant kept there;

[341] patient No.2 received the same hypnotic illusion. Again, No. 1 was, by suggestion, made speechless; No.2 also became mute. Again, No.1 was made to see red melons growing on a tree; to No.2 this illusion was gradually transferred. Then there were illusions of a flag, a staff, etc. Unfortunately, I only made this bare mention of these interesting facts, and the multiplicity of my mental impressions within the subsequent ten years has quite obliterated the memory of the details necessary to give scientific value to the experiments. He was going his daily round of visits to private patients, and took me along, leaving me in the carriage while he entered the houses. The way was enlivened by his many anecdotes, some of them very funny. Here was one. Charcot was holding his clinic one day when a white-aproned nurse came in and announced that a gentleman was waiting in the ante-room for an interview, as he had something very important to communicate. The Professor said that it was impossible for him to leave the clinic, and asked Babinski to see what was wanted. The latter found in the ante-room a thick-set, red-haired individual, with his coat buttoned up to his neck and his hands clasped behind his back, tramping up and down, and seemingly in a rather nervous state. When the young doctor appeared he approached, bowed impressively, and asked if he was speaking to the great Dr. Charcot. Babinski explained that he had been sent to inquire as to his business, as the chief was too much engaged to come out. "Then, sir," said the man, "listen to me.

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I believe that your school denies the reality of thought-transference, but I, sir, can give you a most crushing proof." "Ah, indeed; that is most important. Pray tell me what it is, for this is what science has been waiting for." "Listen, then, M. le Docteur. My profession is that of a commis voyageur (commercial traveller), and my business takes me usually to South America. Between my wife and myself exists the closest possible sympathy; our hearts beat together, we share each other's thoughts. We have acquired during the long years of our ideal marriage the power of holding communion with each other in dreams, howsoever far apart we may be in body. Well, sir, on arriving home recently after

fifteen months' separation, I found that we had an addition to our family." The hard-headed Babinski, being a disbeliever in thought-transference, could not prevent the shadow of a cloud of doubt from passing over his face, which perceiving, the visitor exclaimed. "You seem to doubt me, sir; but I can assure you that this is not the first time!" Dr. Charcot's emissary thereupon saluted him gravely, said he should certainly report this evidence to the chief, and dismissed the happy husband.

Professor Charcot being away from Paris when the letter announcing my intended visit came, he sent instructions to his then chef de clinique, Dr. Georges Guinon, to conduct the experiments for me in the laboratory.²⁹ My first séance was on 5th August, and the female patient operated upon a well-known [343] sensitive, whose case has been described in several medical works. The experiments made were so suggestive and intrinsically valuable that they deserve a more permanent record than can be gained in the pages of a magazine, and so I shall again draw from a back number of the Theosophist portions of my printed report, as I could not possibly make the narrative any clearer by rewriting it. In the first day's experiments, now under discussion, "Dr. Guinon produced the three stages of Charcot—'lethargy' by pressure upon the eyeballs, 'catalepsy' by simply lifting the eyelids and exposing the pupil to the light, and 'somnambulism' by pressure on the vertex or crown of the head. The patient was made to pass from one stage into another with perfect ease, and in whatever one she was, one of the characteristic phenomena described above was exhibited. As Dr. Guinon, on behalf of the Charcot school, denied the existence of a mesmeric fluid or aura, I suggested to him the experiment of making the patient stand with her face close to the wall, then extending his hand towards the nape of her neck as if it were a magnet he held, and then slowly withdrawing it, at the same time willing intensely that the head should follow his hand, as a suspended needle would a magnet. He did so, and some degree of attraction was proved. This, Dr. Guinon thought, might be due either to his having made a slight current of air to pass over the hysterical girl's supersensitive skin, or she might have felt the animal heat of his hand. Either of these might act as a suggestion, and put the idea [344] into her head that she was expected to let her back approach the Doctor's hand. To meet this theory, I suggested that her head and shoulders should be covered with a cloth. It was done, and there were still some signs of attraction.³⁰ I purposely abstained from making the experiment myself—one that I have made hundreds of times successfully in India—that whatever result there was might be produced by Dr. Guinon's own hand. I was led to believe that his

absolute scepticism as to the existence of such a magnetic or mesmeric force prevented his getting a much more satisfactory result, simply because he created no will-current. However, it was a beginning. Among other experiments this day, Dr. G. called in a second sensitive, and placing two chairs back to back, caused the two girls to sit thus with their heads close together, yet not touching, and put them into the hypnotic sleep. A paralysis (contracture) of the right arm of one of them was then artificially produced (by simple friction along [345] the muscles of the inside surface of the arm), and a large magnet being laid gently on the table against which both their chairs touched, the paralysis in the first girl's arm gradually disappeared, and the same arm of the second girl became contracted. This mysterious phenomenon, the Charcot school says, is due to the direct auric action of the magnet; for when the trick has been resorted to of using a wooden magnet painted to resemble the real one, or a magnet made of simple unmagnetised iron, the transfer does not take place. At least, it has not at La Salpêtrière, though Dr. Guinon admitted that it had in England and elsewhere. Professor Charcot showed Mr. Harte and myself this same experiment in 1888, but the next day Mr. Robert, the celebrated magnetiser, of Paris, did the same thing for us without using any magnet, but merely his meerschaum cigar-tube. So that it is still a disputable question to what extent, if any, the magnetic aura is an active agent in the experiment described. The school of Nancy says it has no effect at all—it has been tried a hundred times without active result, and the phenomenon is due to unconscious suggestion and expectancy.

“Another interesting experiment was shown me. One of the girls being sent away, the other was given a package of letter-envelopes, and told that she would find upon one of them a fine portrait of Dr. Charcot walking and followed by his big dog. (While both girls were out of the room, I had marked one of the [346] envelopes in the fold inside the flap with a slight pencil-point speck. He held this envelope for an instant before her, and said that this was the one which bore the picture. The envelope was then returned to the pack and all shuffled.) She went through the pack carefully yet rapidly, and presently selected one and examined the imaginary portrait with apparent pleasure, saying how good was the likeness, and asking Dr. Guinon if it had been taken by the photographer of the clinic. I asked her to let me look at it; it was my marked envelope. She was then restored to her ordinary consciousness, and the freshly shuffled pack given her with the intimation that there was a present for her in one of the envelopes. She looked them over, uttered a cry of pleasure on coming to one of them, and when asked what she had found, said: ‘Why, a beautiful likeness of Dr. Charcot; see for

yourself.' I looked: it was my marked envelope. Thus unerringly did she, in full waking state, choose out the envelope shown her, when hypnotised, as bearing a picture, without there being a single peculiarity of spot, mark, shape, dent, or crease, so far as my eyes could detect, to show her that this was the right one. The Charcot school says the patient discovers by her hypersensitive nerves of vision or touch physical peculiarities in the envelope not visible to normal vision. It may be, but I do not believe it; I think it is a species of clairvoyance.³¹ I suggested this experiment to Dr. Guinon: [347] for him to take a package of envelopes, select out one, put a private mark inside, lay it on the table, fix his attention powerfully upon it, and try to visualise to himself as upon the paper some simple object, say a triangle, a circle, a splash of some color, etc.; then to mix the envelope with the rest of the pack, recall the girl, and see if she could pick it out. He tried it and failed—a fact tending to substantiate the Charcot theory, yet not conclusive, for similar experiments of various kinds have been often successfully made by mesmerists—by myself among others; and the supposition is warranted that Dr. Guinon, from lack of faith in the possibility of the thing, did not really visualise any thought-picture at all on the envelope for the sensitive to find there. The color experiment I tried once at Rangoon with Mr. Duncan, Superintendent of the Fire Department of that town. He made a sensitive Hindu boy of his sit near an open door with his back to the wall, so that he could not see what was going on out in the verandah. He stood before him holding an open handkerchief in his hand. I had in mine a paper-seller's sample-book containing many samples of various colored papers. The experiment was to see [348] if, when I showed Mr. Duncan a paper of a given color, he could make his handkerchief appear of the same color to the subject without his varying his questions or giving any other hint as to what color was being shown to him by me. Under the conditions described, the mesmerised boy named color after color correctly, thus proving the transfer of thought-images from the operator to the subject. It is not unreasonable therefore, to say that the whole truth has not yet been reached at La Salpêtrière."

This ended my first day's observations. I had fully intended to devote about two months to the study of practical hypnotism in the rival French schools, but the engagements that came thronging upon me prevented my giving more than a bare week to each. Since I rode on the trottoir roulant at the Paris Exposition, it has seemed to me that it is a kind of symbol of my official life—my engagements ever moving forward under the impulsion of a concealed power, and I borne along with them, try as I may to step aside for a rest. Well, that is far

better than inaction, for by action alone are the world's great movements carried on.

CHAPTER XX

A DISQUISITION ON HYPNOTISM

(1891)

THE intelligent reader who ponders upon the experiments recorded in the last chapter, and especially upon the footnote about the power of a mesmeric or hypnotic sensitive to pick out a given object by her ability to detect the aura of a person impregnating it, will see how the whole of the Salpêtrière house-of-cards theory about the selection being due to the subject's exquisite perception of trifling physical peculiarities in the texture of the suggestion-impregnated paper crumbles when one realises that the detection is made by auric perception, and not by physical sight or hearing. In fact, the recognition of the existence of auras gives the key to a large group of apparent hypnotic mysteries. The most that can be said in excuse for the prejudiced misconceptions of many scientists is that they are ignorant. On the second morning of my researches with Dr. Guinon, "the first experiments were to suggest by gestures and facial expression, but silently, the presence of birds, rats, and puppies: a wavy motion of the hand in the air made the girl [350] see a bird; the attitude of listening suggested its singing and caused her delight; proper manipulation of the fingers along the floor made her see a rat and jump upon a chair to escape it; and an imaginary puppy was placed in her lap and she caressed it. These are, of course, examples of suggestion without words, I got Dr. Guinon to try again to visualise and transfer to the sensitive a thought-picture. Selecting a spot on the table easily recognisable by a small dent in the wood, I laid down a bright coin and asked the Doctor to gaze at it until he felt sure he could retain the image at the spot, removed the coin, and got him to call in one of his quickest sensitives, and tell her that she might take the coin she saw lying there. But she saw nothing; and though it was tried in various ways, the experiment was a failure.

"Another day we repeated the experiment of transfer of a paralysis from one subject to the other, by laying a magnet on the table, back of the second girl's shoulder, but no further explanation was arrived at. The subject of metallotherapy (healing diseases by employing the metal or metals that are sympathetic to the patient) was discussed. Dr. Guinon called in a woman who could wear no gold about her person because she found it strongly antipathetic

of her temperament. She had silver bangles, and, I believe, other ornaments of the same metal. We tested this by applying to her wrist a golden coin, concealed from her sight by being held in the Doctor's hand. Immediately contraction of the muscles of the arm occurred."

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Now this again is a subject of active dispute, not only between the rival hypnotic schools of France, but also between distinguished members of the same school, some maintaining that the effect of different metals upon patients is real, others that it has no foundation, and is simply the result of suggestion. Dr. Albert Moll, of Berlin, author of the standard work, *Hypnotism*, without inclining to either side, fairly holds the balance between the two. "Certain persons," he says, "were supposed to be influenced by particular metals—copper, for example—which even caused symptoms of disease to disappear. The later investigations on the action of drugs at a distance apparently proved that certain drugs in hermetically closed tubes would, when brought close to human beings, act in the same way as if they were swallowed. Thus, strychnine was supposed to cause convulsions, ipecacuanha vomiting, opium sleep, alcohol drunkenness, etc. The experiments were first made by Grocco in Italy, and Bourru and Burot in Rochefort. They experimented with hypnotised subjects and confirmed them; he even found distinctions, according as the ipecacuanha was applied to the right or left side.

"It is known that these experiments have been repeated in other quarters, e.g., by Jules Voisin, Forel, Seguin, and Laufenauer, without result; Luys brought the subject before the French Academy of Medicine, which appointed a commission (Brouardel, Dujardin-Beaumetz, and several others) to test the question in the presence of Luys; they came to a [352] conclusion opposed to his. Seeligmüller has confuted the experiments in a much better and more scientific way, which appears to me the only proper one for coming to a decision. It consists of examining the conditions of the experiments; the reports of commissions have no particular value." He makes the sage reflection that "when we consider the history of animal magnetism we see that commissions always find what they wish to find; the result is always what they expect. Commissions, in fact, are much influenced by auto-suggestion". It was the realisation of this fact that made me refuse to accept the decision of the Committee of the Paris Academy of Medicine that the action of drugs at a distance was an illusion. As a rule, one should never take the report of any committee, composed, even in part, of

sceptical or prejudiced members, as final.

Professor Perty, of Geneva, an extremely well-known scientific observer, says about this action of metals: “The same metals act differently upon different somnambulists. Many cannot bear iron, others gold or silver, but generally gold acts beneficially upon them, but in many cases its action is exciting. Bochart, in Heilbronn, could not put a girl, 8 years old, affected with chorea, into the magnetic sleep when he forgot to remove the two gold rings he wore from his fingers. Silver placed on the region of the heart of Dr. Haddock’s somnambulist, Emma, demagnetised her; Dr. Haddock could not mesmerise her as long as she had a piece of silver on her head. A looking-glass held before the

[353] somnambulist Petersen gave rise to muscular contractions, which terminated in spasmodic actions; spasms were also induced by her holding zinc or iron in her hand. Silver had a calming effect; copper produced no result.

“The somnambulist Käehler magnetised by ‘passes’ a piece of steel, which attracted large needles, whereas before it only attracted iron-filings. This subject was so sensitive to the influence of mineral magnetism that she felt the presence of a magnetic needle from afar, and could act upon it with the finger, and even by her mere look and will, according to the statement of Bähr and Kohlschüler. From a distance of half a yard, she made, by a look, the magnetic needle decline 4° to the west, and a like result recurred three times by the influence of her mere will—on one occasion the needle turned to 7° , always westward. A similar fact is confirmed by the Countess R., who, approximating her breast to the needle, set it in a trembling motion. Prudence Bernard, in Paris, by moving her head to and fro, made the needle follow these movements (Galignani’s Messenger, 31st October, 1851). Count Szapary records a similar phenomenon as occurring in a somnambulist.”

Another day Dr. Guinon attempted to show me the transfer of mental hallucinations from one subject to a second. It was done in this way. Girl No.1 was hypnotised and put into the stage of “somnambulism,” in which, it will be recollected, suggestions are easily made. The Doctor then made [354] her think she saw on the table a white bust of Professor Charcot, not with his usual clean-shaven face, but with a heavy military moustache. She saw it clearly, and laughed at the astonishing change in le Maître’s appearance, and was then plunged into a deeper state of unconsciousness. Girl No. 2 was called in, made to sit with her back to the back of the other, their heads touching, and she was

also hypnotised. The magnet was laid upon the table between them. We waited quite long enough for results, but the experiment failed, the illusion was not transferred, and one of the patients fell into convulsions (*crise de nerfs*), from which she was speedily rescued by the Doctor's compressing the region of the ovaries. We repeated the attraction experiment, this time covering the subject's head and neck completely with a bag of thick linen to prevent any current of air or animal warmth from the hand from affecting her skin. Dr. Guinon again operated. It succeeded with the two girls employed; and while it was nothing in comparison with results I have often obtained, there was at least enough to show Dr. Guinon that the subject was worth considering for its bearing upon the problem of the existence of a magnetic fluid.

“These were all the experiments I was able to make under the circumstances of the dead season, Professor Charcot's absence from town, and the cessation of lectures and clinics. It was not much, yet it was something—a beginning of a work which will need [355] time and patience, and which is well worth the taking of any amount of trouble.

“The office or consulting-room of Professor Charcot at the hospital is a small one, between the public waiting-room and the chemical laboratory. The walls are painted a dark color, and completely covered with engravings and sketches illustrative of hypnotic crises and illusions. The latter are mainly copies of world-famous pictures by the Italian masters, representing incidents in the lives of saints, such as the casting out of devils, all of which effects, it hardly need be said, are regarded by both schools of hypnotism as phenomena of pure suggestion. Placed in the same category are engravings representing the neuroses provoked by Mesmer around his famous baquet, the miraculous cures effected upon pilgrims to the tomb of the Abbé Paris, and the wonderful phenomena in levitation and wall-climbing of the convulsionaries of St. Medard. The clinics of Charcot and Bernheim daily produce hypnotic marvels as ‘miraculous’ as anything in the annals of any of the churches or sects.”

This brings us up to the 12th of August. Before starting for Nancy to continue my studies, I spent several days in receiving and making visits. Among the matters attended to was the arrangement with Baron Harden-Hickey, since deceased—a descendant of one of those chivalric Irish refugees who took service in the French army, and established new branches of their old Celtic families—for the bringing out of a new French translation of the Buddhist Catechism.

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The first edition had been translated from the 14th English edition, but since that time seventeen more editions had appeared, with extensive additions to the text; and as the Baron was equally familiar, with both languages, and kindly offered to be at the trouble of a new translation and publication, I was glad to avail myself of the chance. I passed a night at his suburban residence at Chantilly, and made the acquaintance of his lovely young wife, formerly a Miss Flagler, of New York. I was the more inclined to accept the Baron's obliging proposal because my friend Commandant Courmes, of the French Navy, was then in command of the naval forces on the coast of Africa. In this new edition there were twenty-eight new questions and answers, covering the Buddhistic ideas upon the transcendental powers of the Arhat, or Adept; the fact of their relations with individual temperaments; the condemnation by the Buddha of indiscriminate exhibition of psychical phenomena; the difference in the degree of occult powers possessed by his two principal disciples; a definition of the successive stages of psychical evolution, etc. At the Baron's request, I wrote an introduction to this edition adapted to the French temperament. In the course of this I said: "The remarkable success of the lecture courses of M. Léon de Rosny, the learned Professor of the Sorbonne, and the constant and increasing demand for Buddhistic literature, prove, I venture to think, that the enlightened minds in France are sympathetically drawn, amidst this crisis of the ancient religions,

[357] towards a philosophy which vaunts no master, which encourages the perpetual exercise of good sense, which repudiates the supernatural, which counsels tolerance, which solves the most complex problems of life, which appeals to the instinct of justice, which teaches the purest morality, which is absolutely in accord with the teachings of modern science, and which shows to man a superb ideal.

"In the seventeen years in which I have been in contact with Buddhism, I have never found it revolting to the brave thinker, to the religious spirit, to the humanitarian, nor antipathetic to the man of science. It is a diamond buried in a swamp of superstitions. If Eugène Burnouf, that brilliant luminary of contemporary French literature, had not been prematurely snatched from science, France would certainly have taken the lead in the movement of the Buddhistic renaissance." As I was then on my way to Japan to consult the chief priests, I could not include in this edition the platform of the Fourteen Principles.

I was not fortunate enough to make the personal acquaintance of Burnouf's

erudite daughter, Mme. Delisle, whose husband was the Director of the Bibliothèque Nationale, as she was in the country, but she very generously sent me, as a souvenir, a most excellent plaster medallion portrait of her great father, which suitably mounted, now hangs in the Adyar Library.

I reached Nancy, the ancient capital of Lorraine—the country where that saintly girl, Joan of Arc, was [358] born, and where her memory is cherished and adored by the whole population—on the 14th of the month. Before describing the results of my observations at this place, it will be well if I define as clearly and succinctly as possible the radical difference between the theories propounded by the two schools of Salpêtrière and Nancy. I may remark, by way of preface, that within the past ten years the opinion of the medical profession as a whole has been inclining towards the view taken by Dr. Liébault and his colleagues. I find this to be perfectly natural, because it is in the nature of things that the exhaustive study of the theory of evolution should lead us from the observation of physical phenomena to an inquiry into their origin, and this means a transfer of our studies to the plane of spirit, whence come the impulses which provoke manifestation on the lower plane of existence. Briefly, then, the theories of the rival schools may be stated as follows: While Charcot's school regards the phenomena as of purely physiological character, Nancy maintains that they are psychological—the effects, in short, of mental suggestion, whether consciously or unconsciously made. Let me make this plain. If I say to an impressible subject, “It is a hot day,” the feeling of atmospheric heat is created, and the subject shows signs of it in his actions: this is one of the most elementary experiments of the travelling mesmeric exhibitor. But audible words are not indispensable; I need only look hot, remove my coat, wipe my forehead, or otherwise act as persons do on a warm summer day, and the [359] subject will interpret to himself the meaning of my acts, and sympathetically respond by similar ones of his own. A physician visits a patient seriously ill, say of typhoid fever; he finds the symptoms discouraging; his anxiety shows itself in his expression (unless he is very experienced in schooling his face, voice, and bodily movements), and if the patient is looking at him he reads his danger and grows worse, perhaps dies. The doctor may speak encouragingly, but “his looks belie his words,” as the wise folk-lore proverb expresses it, and the scientific verdict in his face is read by the invalid as though it were writing on white paper. This is unconscious suggestion. Both Paris and Nancy will admit that; but we Oriental psychologists detect in it the subtle action of the mysterious, all-potent factor of thought-transference. So, then, while Nancy observes the Paris phenomena upon

which Charcot rests his theory of three stages of hypnotic action, the “somnambolic,” Nancy says they are imaginary, not really normal stages, and are due to conscious or unconscious suggestion from the experimenting physician, whom they regard as the pupil of a master theorist, who first deceived himself, and then implanted his illusive hypothesis in the brains of his followers. It is a monstrously broad question, this; far-reaching, deep-descending, almost all-embracing. By this key, the Nancy people say, one may understand ninety nine-hundredths of all collective social movements—the evolution of religions, arts, politics, national impulses, social customs, tastes, and habits. A great man,

[360] differentiating from his species under the law of evolution, and the type and forerunner of a later stage of average human development, thinks out, let us suppose, a system of government, finance, religion, or morals; he imbues with his thought one or more disciples; they found a party, a policy, or a school, which gradually, by speech, writing, or action, captivates the national mind; one generation transmits it to the next, and so on until (by suggestion becoming hereditary) the original man’s idea moulds the destinies of races and changes the aspect of human society. A child born of the fifth or sixth or twentieth generation who have inherited this—hypnotically suggested—theory or predilection is certain to take it up spontaneously because it is “in his blood,” he is heir to an expectancy (scientifically speaking), and “does what his forefathers did” without question. The exceptions—the Protestants among Conservatives, the heterodox among orthodox—are found in the cases of children who have been, as we Eastern psychologists say, drawn by a purely physical Karma to take their bodies from a family of this or that race, while their mental and spiritual affinities are with another human family. History teems with examples of this differentiation of a child from its family environment. Without the help of the above theory, the phenomenon is veiled in mystery; with it, all becomes clear. I am thoroughly convinced that Western science will be compelled in the near future to accept the ancient Eastern explanation of the natural order of things. We have had more than [361] enough of talk about “mysterious providences” and extra cosmic interferences; we have outgrown superstitions because we have conquered some of our ignorance; and since we see the daybreak glimmering beyond the encompassing hills of our ignorance, we will never be satisfied until we have climbed to where the light can shine upon us. It requires courage still to profess oneself an uncompromising seeker after truth, but the whole race is moving in its direction, and those who first arrive will be those who, by keeping alert through a long and complicated course of evolution, have gained the knowledge and the

strength to outstrip their contemporaries. I am of those who believe that great profit is to be gained by the student of Karmic evolution, by the reading and digesting of the Jataka Tales, or Buddhist Birth Stories (Jatakathavannana), of which Professor Rhys Davids has given us an admirable translation. At the same time it is the oldest collection of folk-stories in existence so far as at present known, and depicts, with minute accuracy, the social life and customs and popular beliefs of the common people of Aryan tribes.

Our discussion having led us so far afield, the account of my experiments and observations must be deferred to the next chapter.

CHAPTER XXI

EXPERIMENTS WITH DR. BERNHEIM

(1891)

WE now come to the experiments. The reader will please observe that I did my best to keep the judicial frame of mind, giving no clue as to my own beliefs, and in copying the account I ponder over each detail in the light of subsequent experience, with the desire to say nothing which shall be open to adverse criticism. My first visit was to the Faculté de Médecine, where I found the eminent Professor, Dr. H. Bernheim, who received me most courteously. His appearance is very attractive, his manners suave and refined. In stature he is short, but one forgets that in looking at his rosy face, kind and cheerful eyes, and intellectual forehead. His voice is sympathetic and perfectly attuned to his gestures. I mention these personal details because they have much to do with Dr. Bernheim's marvellous success as a hypnotiser, as I saw with my own eyes. The Professor obligingly gave me two hours of his overcrowded time that afternoon, and we discussed the issues between his and Charcot's schools. He expressed very strong incredulity about the reality

EXPERIMENTS WITH DR. [363] of his great rival's tripartite hypnotism, declaring that his (Charcot's) hysteriacs were all under the control of suggestion. The next morning, by appointment, I met him in his clinic at the Hôpital Civil, and spent the entire morning in the different wards, following him from bed to bed, and watching and recording his hypnotic treatments and demonstrations. The reader will kindly understand that hypnotism is used here only as an auxiliary to pharmaceutical and dietetic prescriptions, not as a substitute. He was, of course, attended by his chief subordinate, Dr. Simon, chief de clinique, and also by Dr. Voirin, Dr. Sterne, and others—all skilled and erudite hypnotists. I learnt more about practical hypnotism from watching him that one morning than I had from all my book-reading; and having myself had to deal with several thousand Indian patients in the way of therapeutic suggestion, or mesmeric healing, his looks, tones, and gestures possessed for me a world of significance. I made up my mind that he was one of the most consummate actors I ever encountered. While he was telling his patients that they were this or that, or would feel one or the other sensation—they watching him closely every instant

—there was not a tone of his voice, a change of his countenance, or a movement of his body which did not seem to confirm the, sometimes preposterous, ideas he suggested, and no patient looking at him could have had the least suspicion that the Professor did not believe what he was telling him or her to believe for their good.

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Dr. Bernheim first led the way to ward II in the men's department. He comes to a patient, tells him to look at him for a moment, tells him to sleep, the patient does so; he recalls him to consciousness, produces by suggestion muscular contraction, with insensibility to pin-pricks, and then silently presenting his hand to either side of the head, to the back and to the forehead, the patient's head or trunk quickly inclines towards the operator's hand, as a suspended needle towards an approaching magnet. Suggestion, simple suggestion by gesture, the Professor explains.

In bed No.4 lies a patient not hitherto hypnotised. He is put to sleep almost immediately, the Professor saying in a low, persuasive voice, something like the following: "You have pain now? Yes? But it will pass away; see, it lessens; your eyes grow heavy, heavy; yes, they... grow... heavy... and you feel like sleep... ing. It is good for you to sleep... sleep... good... good... Now you sleep... Do you understand?... sleep... sleep!" And it is done: in less than three minutes he is asleep. The Doctor tests him by suddenly lifting an arm and letting go. If the patient is not asleep he will naturally keep the arm suspended, not knowing what the Doctor wishes of him. If asleep, the arm will fall heavily as soon as let go. If the eyelid be lifted, the eyeball is seen rolled upward and fixed. Stick a pin into him anywhere, he does not feel it: he is an inert, unresisting carcase that you may carve and cut, burn and pinch.

EXPERIMENTS WITH DR. [365] as you choose, without his knowledge that aught is transpiring.

While we were at this bed another patient, an asthmatic and very sensitive man, entered the ward and saluted the Professor. The latter simply said "Sleep!" and there, in his tracks, as he stood, he fell into obliviousness. Then the least hint that he saw, felt, heard, or tasted anything was instantaneously accepted. The Doctor, pointing to me, said: "You met this gentleman yesterday on the Place Dombasle and he lost something." The patient said yes, he recollected it all, and thereupon invented a scene to fit the suggestion. Glibly he said I had lost my

purse, the police were called, he searched for and found the purse; I had given him two francs as a reward, he had spent the money for liquor, got drunk, was engaged in a quarrel, and waked up this morning, somehow, in the hospital, feeling bad, with headache and a bad taste in his mouth!

Dr. Bernheim went to another patient, a convalescent, a person of good character, hypnotised him in an instant, and told him that when he came to himself again he would watch until we had gone to the extreme end of the ward, and then cautiously go to another man's bed, on the opposite side of the room, and steal something from him. Awaking him, the Professor led us on from bed to bed until we had reached the end of the ward, where we stopped as if engaged in looking at another patient, but in reality keeping an eye upon the one under a suggestion to act criminally.

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Thinking us unmindful of him, he rose, looked right and left as if to see if the coast were clear, swiftly crossed to the bed indicated by the Doctor, stole some small object, which he concealed in his hand, returned to his own bed, and thrust it under his pillow. The Doctor then returned, and, putting on a severe expression, demanded what he had been doing over at the opposite bed; saying he was convinced that he had stolen something, and thus for the first time had become a thief. The man's face flushed, his eyes fell, but presently he looked the Doctor squarely in the face and denied that he had taken anything. "Why do you lie to me, my man? I saw you go and take something." The victim tried, but in vain, to stick to the falsehood, and as the Doctor moved towards the bed, he anticipated him, drew the stolen object—a snuff-box—from beneath his pillow, and stood looking like a detected thief. Being pressed to say why he had done it, whether it was voluntary or because of suggestion, he said he had done it entirely of his own accord without the Doctor's prompting: he had seen the box lying there, fancied it, and went and took it. The Doctor then rehypnotised him, told him to forget the entire transaction, and forbade him to receive such a criminal suggestion again from anybody whatsoever. Thus, the Doctor told me, he killed in the germ any possible evil effect the suggestion might otherwise subsequently have had upon the man's moral sense. Let my readers take warning and invariably counteract and extirpate any wrong predisposition they may have engendered by

EXPERIMENTS WITH DR. [367] suggestion in a hypnotised or mesmerised patient's mind while under their control, otherwise they incur an awful

responsibility.

In bed No. 14 lay a square-built, pale-complexioned, blue-eyed man, suffering from rheumatic knee-joint. The joint was stiff and greatly swollen, and so painful that the man could not bear even the weight of the bed-clothes. He was passing sleepless nights, racked with pain. Within two minutes Professor Bernheim had thrown him into the hypnotic lethargy; insensible to everything, he let us touch, press, pound, and raise his inflamed knee. He was told in few words that the acute inflammation would begin to subside, the pain would be gone, he could bear touching and handling it, and could bend and unbend the bad knee as well as he ever could. He was awakened, yawning as if from sound natural sleep, and seeing us about his bed, seemed surprised, and looked inquiringly from one to another: evidently he had forgotten all that had passed. "And how are you, my man?" asked the Professor; "how is your knee?" "Knee?" echoed he; "why, M. le Docteur, it is as before." "No, you are mistaken, my man; the pain is gone." The patient thought, felt his knee, found no pain there, and joyfully said to the patient in the next bed: "Vraiment c'est partie, la douleur aiguë!" (Really, the sharp pain is gone.) "And now you can move it," continued the Professor. "Impossible, M. le Docteur," rejoined the sufferer. Assured that he could, and ordered to try, he very cautiously extended the foot, then more and [368] more until the leg was straightened. He cried out to all his neighbors to see the miracle, and we moved on. The whole thing had not occupied five minutes. I saw the man daily for a week after that, and there was no relapse, and he was rapidly convalescing.

The epileptic young man in bed 3 bis of ward IX was the subject of an interesting experiment. He was easily hypnotised while in the act of eating his dinner, just brought him. The Doctor made him keep on eating while asleep, and while we stood by he finished his meal and the plate was removed. But he kept on eating, "dining with Duke Humphrey," as if the plate and food were still there. After letting him go on thus for a quarter of an hour he was awakened, and at once cried out for his dinner, denying that he had eaten it, and complaining of being so hungry that he had cramps in the stomach. Though the empty plate was shown him, he still disbelieved, and charged the nurse with having stolen his dinner. At last he was again hypnotised, told to recollect having eaten, reawakened, and then, when asked if he was hungry, said he had eaten quite enough and was satisfied.

An old man in bed 12 was hypnotised and told that yesterday he was in Paris

and had been electrified. It was curious to watch the development of this suggestion. He went on to tell us that he had been in Paris, and, crossing the Place de la Concorde, he had seen a man there with an electrical apparatus and had taken a shock. The memory of it was so vivid that he again grasped the terminal tubes of the battery,

EXPERIMENTS WITH DR. [369] again felt the current running through him; he writhed and twisted until he could bear (the maya) no longer; tried, but could not let go the tubes; cried out to be released, was released, and fell back in bed exhausted, with the perspiration oozing out all over his forehead and wetting his hair. It was reality itself, yet nothing but an illusion—the product of a suggestion. For some minutes after being awakened he kept rubbing his arm, and complaining of the pain that had been caused by an electrical treatment he had undergone. The illusion was then removed and he was once more comfortable.

In the female ward No. xiii was a young woman of 24, a hysteric, who had undergone a long course of suggestive therapeutics. She was a fidgety and quick-tempered person, and in her neurotic crises apt to be troublesome and rebellious to the house surgeon when he would try to hypnotise her. He had treated her successfully, but had failed to destroy her waking sensitiveness to touch and contact with a magnet. Upon coming to her bed, Dr. Bernheim hypnotised her and made the suggestion that upon awakening she would see a pretty bouquet of flowers on her bed. Being awakened, she saw it, smelt the visionary flowers, and went through the motions of putting the bouquet into the empty glass on her bed-table. Suddenly she fell into a hysterical crisis, whereupon the gentle-faced, kind-looking Doctor showed his latent decision of character. The more she rebelled against taking his suggestions, the more positively and peremptorily

[370] he repeated them; the more she thrashed around, the sterner grew his voice; at last the wild rebel succumbed, and he imposed upon her whatsoever suggested idea he chose.

The young woman in bed 1 of female ward xiii was a most interesting subject. Her name we will call Hortense; she was unmarried, not bad-looking, had a sweet smile, was very sensitive, and evidently a young person of unblemished character. She was subject to gastric pains and insomnia. At the first word from the Doctor she slept as calmly as a child. He told her she had taken from the postman a letter from her sister, and, being requested to read it, went on fluently composing a letter in German (she is of Alsace). The Doctor then suggested a basket of fine peaches; she saw them, and generously

proceeded to distribute them among us. Then a dog covered with mud was suggested; she drew her tidy skirts about her and tried to drive it away. Then the Doctor gave us a splendid example of the wonderful fact of “inhibition”. He told her when hypnotised, that upon awaking she would neither see him, feel his touch, nor hear his voice; he should seem to her as if absent. Awakened, Dr. Simon asked her where Dr. Bernheim was, saying that all of us had stepped away for a moment, leaving him by her chair. She looked at each one of us in turn, Dr. Bernheim among the rest, and said she did not know; he must have gone into the other ward. “But I am here, Hortense; do you not see me?” said the Doctor in a rather

EXPERIMENTS WITH DR. [371] loud tone. She seemed deaf to his voice, although he actually stood beside her, and went on chatting with Dr. Simon. Then Dr. Bernheim bawled into her ear; he passed his hand over her face, pinched her ear, tickled her nostril and the corner of her eye with a feather; then he scratched the cornea with a knifepoint, lifted a side of her dress and pricked her on the leg below and above the knee, but she showed no sign that she either saw, heard, or felt what he was doing. But when Dr. Simon made as if he would lift the other side of her skirt to examine the other limb, she blushed from offended modesty and pushed his hand away. It was most evident that Dr. Bernheim had, for the time being, been obliterated so far as her senses were concerned. The reader will now understand the value of the statement I made in the first chapter of “O.D.L.” in the Theosophist for March, 1892 (footnote), on the alleged sudden disappearance of a Coptic adept from the sofa whereon he was sitting in H. P. B.’s room at Cairo. There is no difference whatever between that and Dr. Bernheim’s case as regards the psychological principle involved; both are examples of “inhibition” of the senses; but there is this difference in detail, that our hypnotist audibly speaks his command, while the Eastern adept simply thinks it.

But Hortense afforded us another and still more serious bit of instruction. Dr. Bernheim said, pointing to me: “Do you know this gentleman?” “No, sir,” she replied; “I see him now for the first time.” The Doctor told her she was mistaken; that she had met [372] me in the street the day before; that I had taken a fancy to have her as a mistress, had agreed upon a salary of fcs. 100 per month, and had actually paid her fcs. 25 on account of the first month’s salary. The girl’s face first expressed indignation that she should be taken as such a person; but she pondered over it as though testing the story by memory, her face changed, a

less noble expression came across it, she looked at the Doctor and myself attentively and then said: "Why, certainly, how could I have forgotten it? It all comes back to me now." Saying so, she rose and told me she was ready. "Ready for what?" asked Dr. Bernheim, "To go with monsieur." "But, Hortense, reflect a moment; you cannot do that, you are a virtuous girl; and then, again, what will your sister and other relatives think?" "I care nothing for my family," she petulantly cried; "they are nothing to me. The gentleman spoke to me very kindly yesterday, he offers me a good salary, has paid me something on account; so I shall go with him." "But where?" asked Dr. B. "Wherever he likes," she said. "And do what?" "Whatever he wishes." Saying nothing, I moved away towards the door of the ward, went down the corridor, and descended two or three steps of the grand staircase. Hortense followed at my heels without a word. I stopped on the stairs and asked her where she was going. "With you, monsieur," she replied. "Ah! yes; now I remember," I said; "but first let us return for a moment, as I did not bid Dr. Bernheim good-bye." She followed me

EXPERIMENTS WITH DR. [373] back, Dr. Bernheim dehypnotised her, ordered her to forget all that had passed, and we went on to another bedside. I saw her on several following days, but she showed no sign of anything of an unusual nature having passed between us. I asked the Professor if he really believed that the young woman would have followed me to my hotel and abandoned herself to me. He replied that most certainly she would, and cases of the sort had already come before the legal tribunals; the moral nature was in such cases completely paralysed for the time being. The suggestion would ultimately wear off, but meanwhile the victim would be absolutely powerless to protect herself. I commend the subject to the attention of people, female or male, old or young, who thoughtlessly permit themselves to be hypnotised by the first comer. Here we have seen a virtuous girl compelled to surrender herself to a strange man's pleasure, and an honest man turned into a thief and a liar. Beware the hypnotiser whose perfect purity and benevolence of purpose and experimental skill are not known to you. There is less risk in entering a tiger's den unarmed than in exposing yourself indiscriminately.

Professor Bernheim made other experiments for me, but the above will suffice to show his great skill and his exceeding kindness to his Indian visitor. We lunched together that day, and his conversation was extremely interesting and instructive, as may be imagined. As his plans were all made to take his family to Switzerland the next morning, he could not pursue a full course of

experiments with me as he [374] desired, but obligingly turned me over to Drs. Simon and Sterne, with whom I completed, so far as I could, the researches which led me to Nancy. They principally related to the problem of metallotherapy (the alleged pathological effect of certain metals upon contact with the skin of persons of different temperaments), and to the action of drugs at a distance. Dr. Burcq, of Paris, first called the attention of the Faculté de Médecine to the former, and gave it its name, while Dr. Luys, Director of La Charité Hospital, was the godfather of the latter.

In my article upon the Salpêtrière researches I reported a single experiment made for me by Dr. Guinon upon a woman in whom muscular contraction of the arm was provoked by laying a gold coin upon her wrist, but at Nancy our experiments were much more serious. I had with me an English sovereign, a silver 1 franc piece, a copper sou, a silver 2 franc, an American (gold) quarter-eagle, and a sugar cough-lozenge. All were wrapped in paper, and, of course, indistinguishable from each other. We tried them twice upon the turbulent hysterical girl, several times upon Hortense, also upon another female patient, and upon a boy of 9 years in the Children's Ward, No.7; we tried them both wrapped and uncovered, and neither of them produced the least effect unless it was suggested by the doctors that this metal would do so and so, and the others something else. Upon suggestion, gold made one patient laugh, another weep; silver made one sing, caused a blister on another; and copper,

EXPERIMENTS WITH DR. [375] similarly, made one sneeze, another cough. In one case, the patient being put to sleep, there was no effect either from the coins or the sugar lozenge, even when suggestion was resorted to, the reason being—as I was told—that the patient had sunk so deep into catalepsy that even the Doctor's suggestions did not reach her inner consciousness. With Hortense the most excellent subject in the hospital, no normal effect followed the application of either metal, but when she was told that the lozenge was gold and would burn her, she instantly pitched it off and began rubbing her arm, upon which a redness of the skin was observable at the point of contact. In the case of the troublesome girl, she seemed at first sensitive to gold and silver, but indifferent to copper, while they were visible to her, but when wrapped in paper and indistinguishables all proved equally inert. I varied all these experiment, many times, always with the same result. The Nancy school, as before remarked, ascribe the Salpêtrière results of this kind to pure suggestion, and of course it would be fair for me to apply the same rule to their own tests; their disbelief in

metallotherapy being as potential in influencing their hypnotic patients to resist the action of metals, as the contrary belief of Professor Charcot's school might cause the hypnotised patients to be sensitive to metals. But how about my own case? If anything, I inclined to the theory of Burcq and Charcot, that metals do affect persons; in fact, I might even go further and say I actually believe it; yet the Nancy patients, though given over [376] to me to experiment upon as I chose, and by me tested and tried in many ways, were not acted upon by my gold, silver, or copper coins, and were powerfully affected, upon suggestion, by the simple, inert tablet of sugar! I leave it, therefore, with the Scotch verdict, "Not proven."

It will be seen that the question is a very delicate one, and we are very far from having got to the bottom of it. The experiments at Nancy are interesting and important, but so we may say have been the very numerous observations made by different mesmeric experimentalists on the effects of metallic substances upon their subjects. It cannot be at all certain that a physician of the standing of Dr. Burcq could have been utterly mistaken as to the influence of metals upon sick patients having been so marked as to warrant his reporting them to the Academy of Medicine as the basis for a new system of therapeutics. Then, again, there are many persons who, on touching brass, taste its peculiar aura on their tongues; furthermore, what are we to say as to the well-known fact that a globule of mercury held in the palm of the hand will sometimes produce salivation? Last of all, there are the delicate and multifarious researches of Baron von Reichenbach, whose eminence as a metallurgical chemist is historical, and about whose discoveries something will be said in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XXII

MRS. BESANT BIDS ADIEU TO THE SECULARISTS

(1891)

WE now pass on to the question of the action of drugs at a distance. The experiment with bottled drugs I could not try, because the matter had been deferred to my last day at Nancy, the experimental bottles in the hospital laboratory were empty, and I could not wait over to get them filled. But from the entire staff, including Dr. Bernheim, I heard that they had thoroughly tested the matter many times, and found that the drug action under such circumstances was due to suggestion. An apothecary in Nancy had repeated Dr. Luys' experiment over and over again, until he became perfectly convinced that that eminent savant's theory that drugs would affect persons from a distance was correct. He then asked Dr. Bernheim to try the experiment for himself. The Professor took eight vials of dark brown glass, so opaque as not to be seen through, and filled them with scammony, emetics, strychnine, a salivant, etc. and one with plain distilled water; the vials being numbered, but not marked so that [378] either of the experimentalists could know the contents; they were also hermetically sealed. Not one produced its proper symptoms in a patient. After giving five hours to the tests, at last both the Professor and the apothecary were satisfied that whatever action there was had been provoked by suggestion alone. Bernheim tells me he has repeated all Charcot's published experiments, with contradictory results. Among other things, he has produced a blister artificially by hypnotic suggestion, and by suggestion prevented a real fly-blister from blistering; while upon the same patient, at the same time, another blister, made exactly like the other and of identical materials, blistered the skin upon suggestion.

Again I say that I do not consider the case closed, for the evidence is not all in. Some years ago, as I have related in an early chapter, I assisted at some experiments made in New York City by Professor J. R. Buchanan in the psychometrical perception of the properties of dry drugs wrapped in paper on which were no external distinguishing marks. The tests were made in the presence of a number of newspaper reporters and others. There were equal quantities of such differing substances as tartaric acid, opium, ginger, quinine, soda carbonate, salt, cayenne pepper, black pepper, sugar, etc., all in powders,

and all done up as powders are prepared by the apothecary. About eight or ten of the company, if my memory serves, were selected for the experiments. The packages were put into a hat, shaken up and passed around to the

MRS.[379] experimenters, who each drew out one. They were then bidden to hold them in the palms of their closed hands, make themselves passive, have no preconceptions, and see if they could tell what was in the packages. The majority failed, but two of the number succeeded with their packages, and also with others successively given them to hold. One young man, of about 25 years of age, rapidly distinguished the substance under his observation, and the correctness of his impressions was verified by opening the papers and examining the contents. Then, again, if I am not mistaken, we ought to regard as a higher form of this same faculty that intuitive power which is possessed by many clairvoyants, of seeing what remedy, chemical, vegetable, or other, is a specific for the malady which she also clairvoyantly detects in the patient. If we do not postulate the existence of auras throughout all the kingdoms of nature, we could hardly understand, on any commonsense hypothesis, the different phenomena above enumerated; whereas, conceding the auras, and also a certain condition of nerve-sensitiveness to them in the individual, the mystery is explained. We may supplement these observations with a reference to Baron Von Reichenbach. His renowned and classical work appeared in English translation in 1850, one edition having been brought out by the late Dr. Gregory, Professor of Chemistry at the University of Edinburgh, the other by the famous pioneer of mesmerism, Dr. Ashburner. Von Reichenbach was one of the greatest chemists of his day, the discoverer [380] of glycerine and creosote, and renowned for his metallurgical researches. His announcement of his discovery of a new and potent force of nature, which he called Odyle, drew upon him the malevolent attacks of contemporaries whose envy and malice were aroused by the grandeur of his success. Not even yet, after fifty years' interval, has justice been done to him; but Karma can wait. The chief point in his discovery was that there exists in nature a force which is neither electricity nor magnetism, but has, nevertheless, polarities like them; it flows at right angles with the electric current, impregnates the whole globe, affects all the different kingdoms of nature, and extends throughout space, every celestial orb being apparently, like our earth, a focal centre of it. The Baron made experiments for years with a number of persons of both sexes and different social conditions, some invalids, others in robust health, which showed that this force when associated with crystals and other bodies—the human body included—has luminosity as well as polarity. He divided the

positives and negatives in groups, the reading of which is very instructive: the odylo-negatives gave the sensitives a feeling of warmth, odylo-positives one of cold. The reader will find the classification on pages 177-9 of Dr. Gregory's translation. To the touch "almost all metals felt warm to the hand, but all, also, yielded the emanations which the patient called cool air. In the order of their energy they were nearly thus: chromium, osmium, nickel, iridium, lead, tin, cadmium, zinc, titanium, mercury,

MRS.[381] palladium, copper, silver, gold, iron, platinum. A thin copper plate, of nearly 800 square inches, placed near and opposite to the bed of the patient, caused the sensation of a lively current of fresh, cool air, which by degrees seemed to penetrate the whole bed, and was very agreeable to the patient. A zinc plate of the same size produced a similar effect, but not so powerfully. Plates of lead and iron were still weaker". When the surface of a mirror was turned towards the patient the effect was marked. "The radiation from the polished metal through the glass diffused that ethereal and delightful coolness described in section 182 as proceeding from sulphur and gypsum, also through glass. She felt her whole person, from head to foot, pervaded by a pleasurable sense of comfort." But the crushing fact for the opponents of the theory that substances can act at a distance is, that the Baron was able to conduct the emanations of metals through wires to distances of more than 100 feet. For example (op. cit., p. 150), "Mlle. Reichel felt the sulphur to diffuse coolness at 124 feet. Astonished at this, I tried a copper plate of more than 4 square feet. It diffused warmth to the distance of 94 feet.

A plate of iron, 6 feet square, was felt
warm at 146 feet.

Thin lead foil of the same size,... " 75 "

Tin foil, " 70 "

Zinc plate, " 64 "

Silver paper (genuine) of 1 square foot, " 24 "

Gold paper (genuine) of 3 square feet, " 67.5 "

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An electrophorus plate, 16 inches in
diameter at 98 feet

A mirror of about 10·5 square feet, “ 106 “

A small bottle of oxygen gas, ... “ 19 “

“A number of other substances, such as brass utensils, porcelain vessels, glass, surfaces of stone, colored paper, 60 boards of wood, linen, open or shut doors, lustres suspended from the roof, trees, human beings, horses, dogs, cats approaching her, pools of water, especially after having been long exposed to sunshine—in short, all and everything of a material nature acted on her, diffusing in some cases warmth, in others coolness; and many things acted so strongly as to attract her attention and annoy her; others so feebly that, becoming accustomed to them, she no longer regarded them.”

From the foregoing results he deduced a general principle, which he formulates in the following words:

“All solid bodies in contact with persons sufficiently sensitive excite peculiar feelings, differing in degree according to their chemical nature; these sensations are chiefly those of an apparent change of temperature, such as cool, tepid, or warm, with which a pleasant or a disagreeable sensation keeps pace, more or less uniformly. Lastly, these reactions are in all respects similar to those produced by the force of magnets, crystals, the human hand, etc.”

And now, to avoid prolixity, I shall conclude with a few words about the discoverer of “the therapeutic

MRS.[383] suggestion,” the future of which seems so full of promise as a remedial agency to the human race. This public benefactor is a French physician named Ambroise August Liébault, a native of Favières, in the department of Meurthe et Moselle. He was born September 16, 1823, and was the twelfth child of his parents, who were cultivators. They wanted him to be a priest, and he was put to study with that object; but he felt it was not his proper vocation, and took up the study of medicine, and in due course won the degree of Bachelier ès Lettres (our B.A.); that of Doctor of Medicine he took in 1851 at Strasbourg. The French Academy Committee’s report of 1829 on Animal Magnetism interested him much, and he tested the theory by many practical experiments. Later, the report by the great surgeon, Velpeau, to the French Academy, upon the subject of Braidism, i.e., Hypnotism, caused him to continue his researches with additional ardor, and they resulted in his discovery of Therapeutic Suggestion (the healing of disease by suggestion), which has made his name known throughout the medical world. He was obliged to go on very cautiously in the dissemination of

his theory on account of the prejudiced opposition of the profession, and at last removed in 1864 to Nancy, where he hoped to find a freer scope and less dogmatic intolerance. But he was disappointed, for the Faculty of the College would not even listen to him or look at his experiments, regarding him as a crack-brained innovator. They would even have persecuted him as a charlatan if he [384] had not confined his hypnotic treatments to the poorer classes, and cured their diseases without money and without price.

When I tell the reader that this sort of thing went on for eighteen years, he ever playing the part of public benefactor, and his proud colleagues standing aloof Bernheim included, it will be seen how loyal Liébault was to his discovered truth, how persistent in altruistic well-doing. The Faculty were unanimous in the assertion that he was crazy because he took no fees from the sick poor who crowded his consultation-room! But the tide turned at last: after he had hypnotised ten thousand patients and produced an infinity of cures, some of almost a miraculous character, a friend of Professor Bernheim's personally testified to the latter as to what he had seen in Liébault's clinique, and Dr. B., still overcautious, came, saw, tested, retested, managed patients in his own way, tried some in the hospital, was successful, and, with the moral courage which characterises great souls, stepped forth as the disciple, defender, and interpreter of the patient, generous little Nancy doctor of the Rue-Grégoire. Of course, he brought over in time all the rest of the Faculty of Medicine, and non-medical men, like Professor Liegois and others whose names are now celebrated, and the Nancy school of therapeutic suggestion became a fact, and Bernheim its prophet. From the first, its chief antagonist was the Charcot school of La Salpêtrière, which includes some very clever and world-renowned advocates, and so the

MRS.[385] whole profession is now ranged in two parties, and bitter controversy ranges all along the line.

Almost like a pilgrim before a shrine, I knocked one day at the heavy wooden gate in the wall that encloses Dr. Liébault's house and garden. Presently it was opened, and there stood before me, courteously bowing, an elderly gentleman, with shortish, grizzled hair and full beard, a straight nose, firm mouth, serious and determined expression, and a full, broad forehead, well rounded out in the superior region—that, phrenologically speaking, of the intellectual faculties. I presented my card and mentioned my name, whereupon the old gentleman grasped my hand with warmth, declared that he knew me well through mutual friends, and bade me enter. It was a small garden, with gravelled walks, and

thickly planted with flowering bushes and fruit and shade trees. A turn towards the right brought us to the house, and, as the weather was fine, we sat outside in garden seats. After the usual exchange of courtesies, we engaged in a lengthy conversation about hypnotism and cognate subjects, which was most interesting. He introduced me to his wife and daughter, the latter a sweet girl, evidently the apple of his eye. They kept me to dinner, and the Doctor showed me with honest pride a splendid bronze statue by Mercié of "David slaying Goliath," which had been presented to him on 25th May, 1890, by a number of eminent physicians of different lands on the occasion of his formal retirement from practice. They had flocked [386] to Nancy from their various distant lands to offer their homage to the veteran psychologist, had given him a public banquet, and placed in his hands an album filled with their signed photographs. These tardy honors had not spoiled the old man in the least; he was as modest and gentle as possible in speaking of them and of his realised triumph, in old age, over the bigoted professional prejudice against which he had had to fight his way for twenty long years. I have jokingly told him that the artist Mercié had well symbolised in his bronze the Doctor's battle and victory over Ignorance. I have met great men in my time, but never one who wore his greatness more humbly and unpretentiously than Dr. Liébault. I have a list of the contributors to this testimonial, numbering sixty-one names, all well known, many eminent in the medical profession in Germany, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Spain, the United States, France, Great Britain, Holland, Italy, Russia, Sweden, and Switzerland. The *Revue de l' Hypnotisme* for June 1891 contains a full report of the banquet and the moving speeches of M. Dumontpallier, of Paris, Van Renterghem, of Amsterdam, and Dr. Liébault's response. Dr. van Renterghem voiced a great fact in saying:

It has often happened—too often, alas! as history shows—that the pioneers, the workers of the first hour, have had, as their sole reward for all their efforts and sacrifices, only contempt and outrage. The instances are rare, and may be counted, where such

MRS.[387] admirable lives have at length been crowned with honor and glory. But such a rare fact is here produced, and, remembering the injustice with which humanity has so often made its benefactors to suffer, we feel happy indeed to be in the way of repairing the injustice of which one public benefactor has been the victim during long years—the more so since the injustice has been borne in the noblest manner. Most frequently, great souls, ignored, let themselves

fall into despair and misanthropy. But let us testify frankly that one cannot imagine to himself a man less bitter, less misanthropic, than the venerated M. Liébault. Alexander von Humboldt said that the first condition of genius is patience. You will concur with me that in this respect M. Liébault has surpassed all the geniuses of his time.”

I quote this as corroborative of my estimate of this dear altruist, in whose company I passed delightful hours during my visit.

When I come to look at it, everyone of us practises suggestion every day of our lives: as parents, giving children our rules of conduct; as business men, persuading each other as our interests prompt; as lawyers, persuading jurymen and judges; as preachers, winning over people to our sects; and as priests, keeping them in the straight paths of our doxies: the physician cures his patient by suggesting hopes of recovery and the efficacy of medicines; the flag in the forefront of battle is a suggestion that the nation honors its braves; the lover suggests domestic bliss to his sweetheart—and [388] so on throughout the whole tangle of human relations. Finally, by the practice of Yoga we teach ourselves to suggest to ourselves self-control and the development of latent spiritual potentialities. From birth to death, the whole family of mankind are acting and reacting upon each other by interchange of thought, called psychical suggestion, and by interblending of auras, resulting in sympathetic mutual relations; the ideal outcome of which should be, in that far-distant day when humanity shall have progressed, the establishment of a reign of good-will on earth and a loving brotherhood of nations. And the modern discoverer of this power, which the good may use, like gods, beneficently, and the bad, like demons, with infernal selfishness, was Dr. Liébault, founder of the Nancy school of hypnotism.

I left Nancy on the 21st of August for Spa, viâ Longwy and Luxembourg. Through the stupidity of the railway officials I had to make a detour of 50 leagues, and so pass the battlefield of Mar le Duc, where there was a desperate struggle between the French and Germans in 1870; slept at Luxembourg, and reached Spa before noon on the next day. The occasion of my visit was to meet an American lady, a very earnest member of our Society. It certainly gives a serious man a profound contempt for high society to see its representatives wasting their time in the inane amusements of the gambling-rooms at these fashionable watering-places. Fancy a lot of full-grown, presumably intelligent men and women

MRS.[389] crowding around a long table on which are a number of tiny toy

horses, with tiny jockeys astride them, moved by mechanism, and running races towards a goal—at best a pastime for children—working themselves up into a state of excitement and betting large sums as to which little horse will get in first! The spectator of such a scene can hardly help reflecting what a pitiful waste of time this is, and how blind to the real dignity of their humanity must these well-dressed idlers be, as though the supply of soul-stuff had run short just before they were being made.

To a travelling American, the sight of a king is always interesting, and so I was gratified to see and exchange salutes with the tall, handsome, soldierly-looking King of Belgium, who walked about, with his wife and daughter, amid the crowds with perfect freedom.

I found on reaching London most of the staff of Headquarters away on their holidays, Mrs. Besant was there, and I had the opportunity of hearing her give a splendid lecture at the Blavatsky Lodge on “East and West: the Future of the T. S.”. On the 28th I went to Canterbury to see my dear old friend Stainton Moses, the most brilliant of the writers on Spiritualism, so well known as “M. A. (Oxon)”. No two men could have been more drawn to each other than he and I; our friendship, begun through correspondence while I was still at New York, had continued unshaken throughout all changes and frictions between our respective parties, the Spiritualists [390] and Theosophists. The recollection of this visit to Canterbury is one of my pleasantest memories, because of the delightful hours we passed together in wanderings about the ancient town and in the cathedral, and in affectionate talk. I can see before me now the picture of him standing on the railway platform, watching my receding train, and waving his hand in a farewell that was doomed to be eternal—that is, so far as this incarnation is concerned.

Returning to London, I escorted Mrs. Besant to the “Hall of Science” to hear her farewell address to the Secularists. With a curious incapacity for introspection, the leaders of that party had passed a vote that she should not be allowed to lecture any more on Theosophy if she wished to continue to speak from the Secularist platform. The poor creatures did not see that they were virtually setting up a new orthodoxy—that of Disbelief—and arrogating to themselves disciplinary authority over the pretended Freethinkers of their party. Annie Besant had given to that movement nearly all its culture and idealism, had thrown over its crude iconoclasm the iridescent veil of her own refinement and eloquence: Mr. Bradlaugh was their Hercules and embodiment of strength, she

their Hypatia, embodiment of culture and winsome eloquence. They could afford to lose her least of all, and yet they were too blind to see that the inevitable result of their meditated tyranny would be to drive her out of their association into Theosophy, where independence of action and thought is not only tolerated, but enjoined.

MRS.[391]

I sat on the platform with her looking over the large audience of intelligent faces, and felt very sorry to think that these useful pioneers of a new era of religious activity were so foolishly losing their best friend. Mrs. Besant's, address vibrated with pathos as she defined the false position in which they sought to place her, and the imperative necessity that she should be true to the basic principle of their party by keeping perfect liberty of action in matters of conscience. Evidently a deep impression was made upon the majority; and I judged from the applause that if a poll of opinions had been taken she would have been asked to abide with the old friends with whom she had battled so many years against popular superstition and bigoted prejudice. But the critical moment was allowed to pass, since there was no one in the hall brave enough to rise and make the necessary motion; and so she and I passed out into the street, and, in the carriage on the way home, exchanged sympathetic views as to the future of the Secularist party.

From the fact that the address was published in full in the Daily Chronicle, and commented upon by, virtually, the whole British press, I am able to give a few extracts to show the general drift of her argument. She said that it was upon 28th February, 1875 that she had stood for the first time on that platform and spoken to a Freethought audience. She had written for the National Reformer under the pseudonym of "Ajax," a name which she had chosen because the words which were said to have broken from the lips of that mighty [392] hero, when the darkness came down on him and his army, were, "Light, more light!" And then she uttered this noble sentiment: "It is that cry for light which has been the keynote of my own intellectual life. It was and is so—wherever the light may lead me, through whatever difficulties. "She eloquently referred to the profound friendship which had existed between Mr. Bradlaugh and herself, and said that if there was one thing above all others which Charles Bradlaugh did, it was to keep the Freethought platform free from any narrowness of doctrine or belief recalled the stormy days of 1875-6 when their windows were broken, stones were thrown at them, and they walked the streets to and from the hall through brandished

sticks. She said that she had broken with Christianity in 1872, and broke with it once and for all; she had nothing to unsay, nothing to undo, nothing to retract as regards her position then and now; she stood on the same ground as heretofore, and in passing into the newer light of Theosophy, her return to Christianity had “become even more impossible than in any older days of the National Secular Society”. She sharply distinguished from each other two very different schools of Materialism; one of which “cares nothing for man, but only for itself; which seeks only personal gain, and cares only for the moment. With that materialism neither I nor those with whom I have worked had anything in common. (Cheers.) That is the materialism which destroys the glory of human life, a materialism which can only be held by the degraded; never a

MRS.[393] materialism preached from this platform, or the training schools which have known many of the noblest intellects and purest hearts. To the materialism of such men as Clifford and Charles Bradlaugh I have no sort of reproach to speak, and never shall. (Cheers.) I know it is a philosophy which few are able to live out—to work without self as an object is the great lesson of human life. But there are problems in the universe which materialism not only does not solve, but which it declares are insoluble—difficulties which materialism cannot grapple with, about which it says man must remain dumb for evermore. I came to problem after problem for which scientific materialism had no answer. Yet these things were facts. I came across facts for which my philosophy had no place. What was I to do? Was I to say that nature was not greater than my knowledge, and that because a fact was new it was an illusion? Not thus had I learned the lesson of materialistic science. When I found that there were facts of life other than as the materialists defined it, I determined still to go on—although the foundations were shaking—and not be recreant enough in the search after truth to draw back because it wore a face other than the one I had expected, I had read two books by Mr. Sinnett, and these threw an intelligible light on a large number of facts which had always remained unexplained in the history of man. The books did not carry me very far, but they suggested a new line of investigation, and from that time forward I looked for other clues. Those clues were not definitely [394] found until early in the year 1889. I had experimented then and before in Spiritualism, and found many facts and much folly in it. (Cheers.) In 1889 I had a book given me to review—a book written by H. P. Blavatsky, entitled *The Secret Doctrine*. I suppose I was given it to review because I was thought to be more or less mad on such subjects. (Laughter and cheers.) I knew on studying that book that I had found the clue I

had been seeking, and I then asked for an introduction to the writer, feeling that one who had written it might tell something of a path along which I might travel.”

After defending the character of Mme. Blavatsky and the Theosophical Society, she concluded with this powerful peroration:

“Every month which has passed since Madame Blavatsky left has given me more and more light. Are you, I would ask, quite wise to believe that you are right, and that there is nothing in the universe you do not know? (Hear, hear.) It is not a safe position to take up. It has been taken up in other days and always assailed. It was taken up by the Roman Church, by the Protestant Church. If it is to be taken up by the Freethought party now, are we to regard the body as the one and final possessor of knowledge, which may never be increased? That, and nothing less, is the position you are taking at the present time. (“Yes,” “Yes,” “No,” “No,” cheers and hisses.) What is the reason I leave your platform? Why do I do so? I shall tell you. Because your

MRS.[395]

Society sends me off it. The reason this is my last lecture is, because when the hall passes into the hands of the National Secular Society, I should not be permitted to say anything going against the principles and objects of that Society. (Hear, hear.) Now I shall never speak under such conditions. (Cheers.) I did not break with the great Church of England and ruin my social position in order that I might come to this platform and be told what I should say. (Cheers.) Our late leader would never have done it. (Cheers.) I do not challenge the right of your Society to make any conditions you like. But, my friends and brothers, is it wise? I hold that the right of the speaker to speak is beyond all limitation, save of the reason. If you are right, discussion will not shake your platform; if you are wrong, it would act as a corrective. (Cheers.) While I admit your right to debar me, I sorely misjudge the wisdom of the judgment. (Hear, hear.)

“In bidding you farewell, I have no words save words of gratitude. In this hall for well-nigh seventeen years I have met with a kindness which has never changed, a loyalty which has never broken, a courage which has always been ready to stand by me. Without your help, I should have been crushed many a year ago; without the love you gave me, my heart had been broken many, many years since. But not even for you shall a gag be placed on my mouth; not even for your sake will I promise not to speak of that which I know now to be truth.

(Cheers.) I should commit a treachery to truth and conscience if I allowed anyone [396] to stand between my right to speak and that which I believe I have found. And so, henceforth, I must speak in other halls than in yours. Henceforth, in this hall—identified with so much of struggle and pain, and so much also of the strongest joy nature can know—I shall be a stranger. To you, friends and comrades of so many years—of whom I have spoken no harsh words since I left you, for whom I have none but words of gratitude—to you I say farewell; going out into a life shorn indeed of many friends, but with a true conscience and a good heart. I know that those to whom I have pledged my services are true and pure and bright. I would never have left your platform unless I had been compelled. I must take my dismissal if it must be. To you now, and for the rest of this life, I bid farewell.”

Her concluding words were spoken with deep emotion, and it was very evident that the hearts of the majority of the audience were touched; tears could be seen in many eyes, and as she left the platform the hall rang again and again with deafening cheers.

CHAPTER XXIII

FROM STOCKHOLM TO KYOTO

(1891)

BARON HARDEN-HICKEY had been so expeditious with his translation of the Buddhist Catechism that I was able on the 31st of August—only three weeks after we had made our arrangement in Paris about its publication—to read the printer’s proofs in London.

On the 2nd of September I went to the Aquarium to see “Joseph Balsamo, the Boy Mesmerist,” who gave a striking, but revolting, exhibition of phenomena by suggestion upon a wretched sensitive. If anything can be a prostitution of a noble science, it is these public degradations of subjects by travelling, charlatan mesmerisers: the drinking of lamp-oil and eating of tallow candles under the delusion that they are delicious food, and the compulsory doing of acts which lower the sense of manhood, are such outrages upon the private rights of the individual that the most ardent advocate of mesmerism would not object to have them forbidden by law. For my part, I do not wonder that these mesmeric and hypnotic public exhibitions have been prohibited by the authorities [398] of different countries of Europe when I see what terrible after-effects sometimes follow the peripatetic “lecturer’s” demonstrations of his power of hypnotic suggestion. One of the perils of our times is the abuse of this mysterious faculty, and no one who has the least friendly regard for a relative or friend should abstain from warning him or her—especially her—of the danger incurred in lending themselves for such experiments. We have seen in our time women giving such exhibitions, one at least, a powerful mesmeriser, but this makes the risk no less, nor her offence the more excusable. There was at the Aquarium, at the same time, a Frenchman calling himself Alexandre Jacques, who was making a fifty days’ fast, under medical supervision. I saw him on the thirty-fourth day, and had quite a talk with him. He told me that he ate nothing, but took a herb powder which sustains life. He said that it was composed of common herbs, to be found almost everywhere. His weight was diminishing at the rate of 4 ozs. daily, but he appeared to be in good health. When the famous Dr. Tanner made his forty days’ fast at New York, some twenty years ago, under the strictest medical observation, night and day, some of the medical profession persisted in

declaring it a fraud, because they believed it an impossibility for a man to go so long without nourishment. But if anyone wishes to have such doubts removed, he need only go among the Jains at Bombay and see elderly women making this very protracted fast with great ease at a certain period of the year.

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They are supposed to gain great merit by this asceticism; and the ludicrous part of it is that this merit has a certain commercial value, and they sell it for solid rupees to self-indulgent co-religionists who do not feel like mortifying the flesh, but are quite willing to get merit vicariously! Is this very different from the once prevalent traffic in papal pardons, so briskly carried on at the time when Luther dashed his mailed fist against the Vatican door, or the paying of men in cassocks to pray souls out of purgatory?

A fortnight before the day fixed for my sailing for New York, our friends at Stockholm telegraphed a request that I would visit them before my departure; and as the prospect was most agreeable, I consented, and left London on 4th September for that place, viâ Hull and Göteborg. The passenger season had closed, and the stories that I had read about the dangers of that tempestuous North Sea, with schoolboy reminiscences of the maelstrom, made me think that I was going to run an exceptional risk in making the voyage, and I actually made my will before leaving London. When, however, I found that I was sailing on as smooth a stretch of water as heart could desire and under a bright sunshine, I felt as though I wanted to find some corner where I could hide my mortification. Without adventure I reached Stockholm on the third evening, and was greeted at the station by all our members, headed by the good Dr. Zander, who took me to his house. An indelible impression was made upon my mind during my three [400] days' stay by the sweet hospitality and charming naturalness of the Swedish people. It was a case of love at first sight; and now that, during the past summer, I have revisited Sweden and been in the other Scandinavian countries, the impression is strengthened. In all my life I never met such uniformly delightful people. Hospitality is with them as much a religious duty as it is with the Hindus; and I fully indorse the opinion expressed by a Swedish lady, in a recent letter, where she says: "In my country the very fact that a person is a foreigner entitles him to double consideration, hospitality, and politeness." Every hour of the day had its engagements, mostly public. There was a Branch meeting, at which I responded to an address of welcome; the next day, a lecture at the Hall of the Academy of Sciences, to an excellent audience; three

conversaciones! a supper every evening, and a farewell dinner and surprise party at Dr. Zander's house on the day of my departure. The pleasant recollections of the visit have been since marred by a disagreeable lesson as to the mendacity of hysterics, and the danger of being alone with such persons under any circumstances.

On the second day of my visit I was invited to an audience with his Majesty Oscar II, King of Sweden and Norway, at his palace outside the town. I found him a most cultured gentleman, gracious and unpretentious in his manners. His reception of me was all that I could have asked, and he kept me talking for more than an hour on Masonry, Symbolism, Religion,

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Spiritualism, and Theosophy, on all of which subjects he gave proofs of extensive reading and sound reflection. He at once relieved me of the embarrassment of standing, inviting me to sit with him at a small table, where each of us drew figures on paper, illustrative of the symbolical expression of religious and scientific ideas by different nations. His Majesty cordially invited me to stop a day or two longer at Stockholm, so that I might become acquainted with a person for the sanctity of whose character he entertained a great respect, but I was obliged to hurry back to London to continue my voyage, and we parted with cordial expressions of mutual good-will. Of course, it is universally known that King Oscar is one of the best linguists and most cultivated men in Europe, an Oriental scholar and a patron of learning, and the reader may imagine what pleasant recollections I must have of my interview with him in his own palace.

I returned to London viâ Copenhagen, Kiel, Hamburg, Bremen, Osnabrück, and Flushing, but when I went to claim my luggage I found that my trunk had been left behind en route, although booked through from Stockholm. This was a serious matter, for I was to sail from Liverpool in three days; to make things worse, my steamer and railway tickets, as far as Yokohama and Colombo, were in the trunk, together with half my clothes and some money. Telegraphing and worrying did no good, and I had to sail without it. The greatest annoyance was the behavior of the Messageries people, who actually would not give me [402] a duplicate ticket until I had got the Manager of the great London bank where I keep my sterling account to sign a guarantee. When I went to tell him about this preposterous demand, he said it was something novel in his experience, but as he happened to know me for an old customer, he kindly complied with the French company's demand. As for the American line, they granted me the duplicate

tickets without a moment's hesitation. I recovered the trunk ultimately at Colombo, on my way home from Japan.

My boat was one of the largest and swiftest of the "ocean greyhounds"; she rushed through the water like a swordfish at the rate of 20 miles an hour, even in the roughest seas. This was all very well for those who liked speed at whatsoever cost, but my recollection is that it was the most uncomfortable ocean travelling I ever did, for, what with the working of the engines and the thrashing of the propellers, the ship was in a constant vibration that was enough to upset the nerves of most people. Withal, she pitched and rolled so that barely a fourth of the passengers appeared at the table. I met some delightful people on board, whom I shall be very glad to see again, and happily escaped the usual call for a lecture: both the sick and the well were engaged in thinking much more of their stomachs than of their souls. The members of my own family, my friends Fullerton and Neresheimer, and others, met me on landing, and I was enjoying the prospect of getting speedily to my sister's house, but my unfortunate notoriety barred the way. A

[403] dozen reporters, representing the principal New York journals, wanted to interview me, and as this could not be done conveniently on the wharf, Mr. Neresheimer had engaged a drawing-room at the Astor House, and had placed small tables around the four sides for the convenience of the reporters. Thither I was taken, installed in a big chair, given a cigar, allowed to remove my coat, as it was a very warm evening, and then subjected to a cross-questioning about my doings within the twelve years since my departure for India, and, generally, the condition and prospects of the Theosophical movement. It was a most amusing episode, this interview at wholesale; but being an old journalist myself, I managed to give the young fellows the sort of "copy" they wanted, and the next morning my arrival was heralded by the whole press, and my portrait appeared in the five principal dailies. Of course it was very late before I could get to bed.

I found New York greatly changed in many respects; many of my old friends were dead, and many landmarks had disappeared. I, too, had changed in a marked degree, for after so many years of the placid intellectual life of the Orient, the mad quiver and rush of American life upset me greatly. I could not have realised that so radical a change would have come over me. My brothers wanted me to look at the giant buildings which had sprung up towards the sky and other so-called improvements; but I told them that I would not exchange my desk and library, and the restfulness of my Adyar home, if anyone should [404]

offer to give me the biggest of the buildings on condition that I should return to live at New York. Yet it was very sweet to meet so many old friends, some even of my school days, and the relatives whom I had not seen for so long. But I was not sorry when the time came for me to hurry across the continent towards the lands of the Rising Sun. My family was now the members of the Society; my friends, my working colleagues; my home, the Adyar Headquarters; my ambitions, aspirations, hopes, loves, and very life had passed into the Society; my country had become the wide world. Not that I loved America and my kinsfolk less, but that I loved the cause more.

My American visit was intended to be a mere transit, not a tour. It was now the end of September, and I had to be at home early in December to make ready for the Convention; meanwhile, I had some 15,000 miles of travel before me. While at New York I gave one public lecture to a very large audience, in Scottish Rite Hall, on Madison Avenue. The chairman, an amiable F.T.S., must have been unaccustomed to facing such crowds, for, intending to just merely introduce me, he wandered off into a discourse on Theosophy which must have taken close on forty-five minutes, and tired the audience very much. Meanwhile, I sat there like a simple auditor, and was half tempted, when I finally did get the floor, to say that as my friend had fully enlightened them about Theosophy, it was not worth my while to detain them any longer, and with that make my bow and retire.

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But as, clearly, that would not do, I went on with my address, and was very heartily applauded at the close. Then followed a pleasant experience, when one old friend after another came up to the platform and shook hands with me.

On the 28th I took the overland train of the Pennsylvania Road, and soon was spinning across the continent at the rate of 45 miles an hour. It almost seemed as though some tricky elementals of the luggage department had been following me from Stockholm onward, for, having lost one trunk between there and London, I now found that the other had been left behind at Chicago by mistake. Then we had an accident to our sleeping-car which was quite enough to stimulate the nerves of an excitable person; for in the night of the 2nd, eight of its wheels flattened out—fortunately without doing any harm to us--and we were transferred to an ordinary carriage, where we passed a very miserable time until morning.

I was met at Sacramento by Mrs. Gilbert and Dr. Cook, the President and

Secretary of our local Branch, and hospitably entertained at the house of the latter. Among my visitors was a gentleman who had been employed as a clerk in my office when I was Special Commissioner of the War Department. Some of the callers asked my advice on confidential personal matters, domestic and otherwise. It is one of the peculiar features of my tours that I am regarded as a sort of father confessor, to whom all are free to confide their secrets and ask for comfort in their [406] sorrows. One gets in this way not only an idea of the extent of misery that prevails in social life, but also of the weakness of will which is too common among people who have fixed their aspirations on the Higher Life, but find the path full of stumbling-stones. The satisfaction one has in lightening, by ever so little, this burden of private grief, more than compensates for the trouble given by the seekers after advice.

On the evening of Sunday the 4th I lectured in public on “Theosophy and H. P. B.,” and a conversazione followed. The next morning I made the short journey to San Francisco, and became the guest of that sympathetic and cultured gentleman, Dr. Jerome A. Anderson. The chief workers of the city called on me, and on the following day the Branch gave me a formal reception, with a friendly address, to which I responded. Mr. Judge, who had been making a tour on the Pacific Coast, was in San Francisco at the time of my arrival, also a guest of Dr. Anderson, and here practised—for the time being, most successfully—another deception upon me. It was in connection with the mysterious Rosicrucian Jewel, formerly belonging to Cagliostro, but in my time worn by H. P. B.¹ I say “mysterious” with reason, because the pure white crystals with which it was set had the occult property of changing their color to a dark green, and sometimes muddy brown, when she was out of health. I shall not dwell upon the details of his

1 [Now worn by Mrs. Besant.—ED.]

[407] falsehood, as it will have to be spoken of in connection with the transactions at London, when he was cited before a Judicial Committee which I convened to try him on the charges of malfeasance brought against him.

The ladies of our local Branch had organised a charming scheme of moral and religious instruction for children, to which they gave the name “The Children’s Hour.” A special exhibition of it was given for my information, and it delighted me very much. The motive was to impress upon the youthful minds the idea of the fundamental resemblance between the world religions, and the advisability of learning to be kind and tolerant to all men, of whatsoever race or creed. A

senior girl represented Theosophia, and others the Founders of religions—Krishna, Zoroaster, Gautama Buddha, Christ, Mahommed, etc. Each of these held a staff carrying a symbolical pennant. A simple yet excellent dialogue was framed, in which Theosophia put questions to each of the flag-holders, to give him or her the chance to quote from the Scriptures of the Founder of that religion verses which embodied the Theosophical spirit. The children wore pretty dresses, there was some little marching and other exercises, and all seemed to enjoy the occasion. It would be a good thing if this device were adopted throughout the whole Society, for it is calculated to be of great service in implanting Theosophical ideas in the youthful mind.

The, to me, most delightful incident of my San Francisco visit was a meeting with three brothers of [408] the Steele family, with whom I was brought into contact at Amherst, Ohio, in 1851-2-3, and whom I may almost regard as my greatest benefactors in this incarnation, since it was from them, and the other bright minds and noble souls connected with them in a Spiritualistic group, that I first learned to think and aspire along the lines which led me ultimately to H. P. B. and the Theosophical movement. The family had migrated to California, become great landed proprietors—rancheros—and attained to places of distinction in that State: one was a judge, another a senator, a third President of the great Society of the Grangers. The hours we passed together were full of unalloyed delight, and the life-pictures which had been concealed behind the veil of latent memory for forty years came out again, vivid and real. On the evening of the 7th I lectured at Metropolitan Temple on the same subject as at Sacramento; Mr. Judge was chairman, and we had on the platform a life-size photograph of H. P. B., standing on an easel. On the 8th I embarked on the “Belgic” for Yokohama, a host of T. S. friends seeing me off, and loading me with flowers.

The Pacific Ocean was true to its name, a calm sea and sunshine following me almost all the way across. We had a few rough days and some rolling of the ship, but not enough to cause much inconvenience. It seemed as though I had not finished with the meeting of persons who would bring back to me the memory of the olden days, for the surgeon of the

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“Belgic” proved to be the son of a charming lady whom I had known as a schoolgirl at New York many years before her marriage; moreover, he was the living image of his mother. When I came to recall the past I realised that but for

the advice of this lady and her elder sister, I should never have gone to Cleveland, Ohio, in 1851, whence I went to Elyria, thence to Amherst and the Steeles; those ladies, then, formed the first link between my home-life at New York and my spiritual enfranchisement at Amherst. By this I do not mean that I had ever been a follower of my parents' religion, or sectarian of any sort, but that, until I became associated with the Amherst circle, my mind had been lying fallow, waiting for the sowing of the seeds of Theosophical thought.

After a voyage of seven days we reached Honolulu, and stopped there twenty-four hours before continuing the journey. We went ashore and looked about the place, some of us going to see Dr. Trousseau's ostrich farm. The birds were kept in paddocks, with an avenue running through the middle, and wide enough so that persons passing through could not be reached by the iron beaks of the male birds, who are not at all friendly at certain seasons. The proprietor of the farm, with whom I had some conversation, expressed himself as well satisfied with the profits of the undertaking, saying that the yield of plumes fit for commerce was a good deal larger than the average. We sailed again on the 16th, taking our fine weather along with us. On the 19th I accepted an invitation given me [410] at the urgent request of a large missionary party on board to lecture on Theosophy, and thenceforward, throughout the voyage, this subject was very much talked about. On the 21st we crossed the 180th meridian of longitude, and thus, in a Pickwickian sense, blotted out Tuesday, it being Monday until noon, and then Wednesday. I had to laugh when I recalled the ingenious employment of this device by Jules Verne to make his eccentric hero get around the world in eighty days, and thus win the bet at the London Club, which depended on this result. The festive missionaries relieved the tedium of their voyage by a lot of hymn-singing.

We reached Yokohama at 7 p.m. on the 28th of October, the 20th day according to the calendar after leaving Frisco, but including the day which had been nominally obliterated. We were inexpressibly shocked to learn on arriving that on the morning of that very day one of the most disastrous earthquakes in the history of Japan had spread devastation over a wide area: thousands of buildings, including some of the strongest temples, had been destroyed, and thousands of persons killed. It was not a promising time for me to get the High Priests together to consider my Fourteen Propositions. However, I got them translated into Japanese by Mr. N. Amenomori, an excellent English scholar, of Yokohama. He completed the task the same day, so that I was able to leave on

the 31st for Kobé, en route for Kyoto. As the earthquake had broken up the railway, I went by the P. & O. S.S.

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“Ancona,” and the weather being delightful, had fine views of the coast and of Fugi San, the snow-capped sacred mountain, whose glittering cone, figures so very often in Japanese paintings. It was certainly one of the most charming journeys in the world—almost like fairyland. We reached Kobé at 1.30 p.m. on 1st November, and I put up at the Hiogo Hotel, at the waterside, where I had the honor and pleasure of meeting Professor John Milne, the world-renowned seismologist.

From what I heard I had good reason to fear that it would be very difficult for me to get the signatures of the Chief Priests of the sects to my Platform, as a number of them had left Kyoto for the scenes of earthquake disaster. However, I determined, since I was on the ground, to overcome all obstacles, in view of the immense importance of the object sought. I went on to Kyoto on the 2nd, and put up at my old inn, Nakumraya’s Hotel. I notified the two Hongwanjis and the Ko-sai-kai—the General Committee of all the sects, which I had induced them to form on the occasion of my former visit—of my arrival. My rooms were thronged with visitors the next and following days. Among the old acquaintances were Mr. Nirai, formerly a leading member of the Young Men’s Buddhist Committee which sent Noguchi as a sub-committee to Madras to personally escort me to Japan; and that highly influential and agreeable priest, Shaku Genyu San of the Shin-gon sect. He was a most enlightened man, open to all good suggestions [412] for the advancement of his religion, and travelled with me over the empire when I was there before. We had a very earnest discussion over the Fourteen Propositions, the wording of which he found perfectly satisfactory; but he put it to me why it was necessary for the Northern Church to sign these condensed bits of doctrine when they were so familiar that every priest-pupil throughout the empire had them by heart: there was infinitely more than that in the Mahayana. In reply I said: “If I should bring you a basketful of earth dug out of a slope of Fuji San, would that be part of your sacred mountain or not?” “Of course it would,” he answered. “Well, then,” I rejoined, “all I ask is that you will accept these Propositions as included within the body of Northern Buddhism; that they are a basketful of the mountain, but not the whole mountain itself.” That view of the case seemed to be quite convincing; and when I had argued at length upon the vital necessity of having some common ground laid out on

which the Northern and Southern Churches might stand in harmony and brotherly love, offering a united front to a hostile world, he promised to do his best to have my wish accomplished. He then left me to go and see some of his leading colleagues, and on the 4th returned with a favorable report and signed the document on behalf of the Ko-sai-kai, thus giving my scheme the imprimatur of the approval of the united sects, even although I should secure no other signatures. But I did, as personally, and through the medium of [413] Shaku San, the Chief Priests who were within reach of Kyoto could have the thing explained to them. Before leaving for Kobé on the 9th I had got all the sects except the Shin-shu to sign the paper. This latter sect, as the reader may remember, occupies an entirely anomalous position in Buddhism, as their priests marry—in direct violation of the rule established by the Buddha for his Sangha—have families and hold property; for example, a temple will pass from father to son. At the same time they are by far the cleverest sectarian managers in all Japan, drawing immense revenues from the public, and building superb temples everywhere. They are, par excellence, the most aristocratic religious body in the empire. They excuse their infraction of the monastic rules on the ground that they are samaneras, semilaymn, not full moenks. The principal men among them whom I needed to see were away in the earthquake districts, where they had suffered great losses; and as my time was extremely limited, and the people whom I saw would not give me a definite answer, I had to do without those signatures. However, as they were represented in the Ko-sai-kai, Shaku San's signature on its behalf virtually gave me the consent of the whole body of Northern Buddhists. My joy in achieving this result may readily be imagined.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE BUDDHIST PLATFORM SUCCESSFULLY INAUGURATED

(1891)

I THINK that I could hardly be accused of vain-glorious boasting if I should say that an event of such importance as that described in the last chapter deserved to be made much of by all Western Orientalists, especially such as devote themselves to Pali literature and the study of Buddhism. Certainly, its significance was recognised throughout the Buddhistic nations of the East. Yet, within the ten years which have elapsed since the signing, scarcely any notice whatever has been taken of it by the European and American scholars. I am afraid I shall have to ascribe this to a small-minded prejudice against our Society, out of which, they think, no good can come. Time, however, will set that right.

To get the signatures needed was not such a very easy matter after all; I had to pass through an experience of that procrastinating and preternaturally cautious policy which seems peculiar to the Chinese [415] and Japanese character. I wrote in my Diary: “There is a lot of polite humbugging going on about signing my Platform—idle excuses of all sorts.” But by the 7th of November things were looking decidedly better; in fact, I could quite well have been satisfied to take it away with me as it stood that evening. The next morning all was finished and the document complete. To celebrate the event, a dinner in the Japanese style was given me, at which 178 persons were present. If I quote the full text of the Platform, with the names of the signers, the document will be placed on permanent record, and my readers have the chance of judging for themselves as to its importance. Here it is:

“FUNDAMENTAL BUDDHISTIC BELIEFS

“I. Buddhists are taught to show the same tolerance, forbearance, and brotherly love to all men, without distinction, and an unswerving kindness towards the members of the animal kingdom.

“II. The universe was evolved, not created; and it functions according to law, not according to the caprice of any God.

“III. The truths upon which Buddhism is founded are natural. They have, we believe, been taught in successive kalpas, or world periods, by certain illuminated Beings called BUDDHAS, the name BUDDHA meaning ‘Enlightened’.

“IV. The fourth Teacher in the present Kalpa was Sakya Muni, or Gautama Buddha, who was born in a royal family in India about 2,500 years ago. He is [416] an historical personage, and his name was Siddhartha Gautama.

“V. Sakya Muni taught that ignorance produces desire, unsatisfied desire is the cause of rebirth, and rebirth the cause of sorrow. To get rid of sorrow, therefore, it is necessary to escape rebirth; to escape rebirth, it is necessary to extinguish desire; and to extinguish desire, it is necessary to destroy ignorance.

“VI. Ignorance fosters the belief that rebirth is a necessary thing. When ignorance is destroyed, the worthlessness of every such rebirth, considered as an end in itself, is perceived, as well as the paramount need of adopting a course of life by which the necessity for such repeated rebirths can be abolished. Ignorance also begets the illusive and illogical idea that there is only one existence for man, and the other illusion that this one life is followed by states of unchangeable pleasure or torment.

“VII. The dispersion of all this ignorance can be attained by the persevering practice of an all-embracing altruism in conduct, development of intelligence, wisdom in thought, and destruction of desire for the lower personal pleasures.

“VIII. The desire to live being the cause of rebirth, when that is extinguished, rebirths cease, and the perfected individual attains by meditation that highest state of peace called Nirvâna.

“IX. Sakya Muni taught that ignorance can be dispelled and sorrow removed by the knowledge of the four Noble Truths, viz.:

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1. The miseries of existence;
2. The cause productive of misery, which is the desire, ever renewed, of satisfying oneself without being able ever to secure that end;
3. The destruction of that desire, or the estranging of oneself from it;
4. The means of obtaining this destruction of desire.

“The means which he pointed out is called the Noble Eightfold Path; viz.,
Right

Belief; Right Thought; Right Speech; Right Action; Right Means of
Livelihood;

Right Exertion; Right Remembrance; Right Meditation.

“X. Right Meditation leads to spiritual enlightenment, or that development of
that Buddha-like faculty which is latent in every man.

“XI. The essence of Buddhism, as summed up by the Tathâgata (Buddha)
himself, is—

To cease from all sin,

To get virtue,

To purify the heart.

“XII. The universe is subject to a natural causation known as ‘Karma’. The
merits and demerits of a being in past existences determine his condition in the
present one. Each man, therefore, has prepared the causes of the effects which he
now experiences.

“XIII. The obstacles to the attainment of good Karma may be removed by the
observance of the following precepts, which are embraced in the moral code of
Buddhism, viz., (1) Kill not; (2) Steal not;

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(3) Indulge in no forbidden sexual pleasure; (4) Lie not; (5) Take no
intoxicating or stupefying drug or liquor. Five other precepts, which need not be
here enumerated, should be observed by those who would attain, more quickly
than the average layman, the release from misery and rebirth.

“XIV. Buddhism discourages superstitious credulity. Gautama Buddha taught
it to be the duty of a parent to have his child educated in science and literature.
He also taught that no one should believe what is spoken by any sage, written in
any book, or affirmed by tradition, unless it accord with reason.

“Drafted as a common platform upon which all Buddhists can agree.

“(Sd.) H. S. OLCOTT, P.T.S.

“BURMAH

“Approved on behalf of the Buddhists of Burmah, this 3rd day of February, 1891 (A.B. 2434):

“Tha-tha-na-baing Sayadawgyi; Aung Myi Shwe bôn Sayadaw; Me-ga-waddy Sayadaw; Hmat-khaya Sayadaw; Htî-lin Sayadaw; Myadaung Sayadaw; Hla-htwe Sayadaw; and sixteen others.

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“CEYLON

“Approved on behalf of the Buddhists of Ceylon, this 25th day of February, 1891 (A.B. 2434). Mahanuwara upawsatha puspârâma vihârâdhipati Hippola Dhamma Rakkhita Sobhitâbhidhana Mahâ Nâyaka Sthavirayan-wahanse wamha.

“(Hippola Dhamma Rakkhita Sobhitâbhidhana, High Priest of Malwatte Vihara at Kandy.)

“(Sd.) HIPPOLA

“Mahanuwara Asgiri Vihârâdhipati Yatawattç Chandajottyâbhidhana Mahâ Nâyaka Sthavirayan wahanse wamha.

“(Yatawattç Chandajottyabhidhana, High Priest of Asgiri Vihara at Kandy.)

“(Sd.) YATAWATTE

“Hikkaduwe Srî Sumangala Sripâdasthâne saha Kolamba palate pradhana Nayâka Sthavirayo (Hikkaduwe Srî Sumangala, High Priest of Adam’s Peak and the District of Colombo).

“(Sd.) H. SUMANGALA

“Maligâwe Prâchina Pustakâlâyâdhyahshaka Sûriyagoda Sonuttara Sthavirayo (Suriyagoda Sonuttara, Librarian of the Oriental Library at the Temple of the Tooth Relic at Kandy).

“(Sd.) S.SONUTTARA

“Sugata Sâsanadhaja Vinayâ chairya Dhammâlankârâbhidhâna Nayâka Sthavira.

“(Sd.) DHAMA’LANKARA

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“Pawara neruttika chariya Maha Vibhavi Subhuti, of Waskaduwa.

“(Sd.) W. SUBHUTI

“JAPAN

“Accepted as included within the body of Northern Buddhism.

“Shaku Genyu (Shin Gon Su Sect).

“Fukuda Nichiyo (Nichiren ,,).

“Sanada Seyko (Zen Shu ,,).

“Ito Quan Shyu.

“Takehana Hakuyo (Jodo ,,).

“Kono Rioshin (Ji-Shu ,,).

“Kira Ki-ko (Jodo Seizan ,,).

“Harutani Shinsho (Tendai ,,).

“Manabe Shun-myō (Shin Gon Su ,,).

“CHITTAGONG

“Accepted for the Buddhists of Chittagong.

“Nagawa Parvata Viharashipati.

“Guna Megu Wini-Lankara.

“Harbang, Chittagong, Bengal.”

The reader will observe that whereas the Fourteen Propositions are approved unreservedly by the Buddhist priests of Ceylon, Burmah, and Chittagong, they are accepted by those of Japan as “included within the body of Northern Buddhism”.

On the 7th of November I saw the funeral procession of Prince Kinni, uncle of the emperor.

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Shinto and Buddhist priests took part in the ceremony; plants and trees in tubs were carried before the corpse, and a great profusion of flowers. Then followed a battalion of the imperial guard, with officers in blazing uniforms; then diplomatic functionaries in full dress; then the pupils of the military schools; and bringing up the rear, citizens riding in jinrickshas.

On another evening I saw a public exhibition of the marvellous juggling for which the Japanese are renowned, but as it was substantially of the same character as that described in Chapter VII of the present Series, I need not dwell on details. I may say, however, that a second sight of the performance of some of the most wonderful tricks did not help me to a comprehension of the juggler's secrets.

After paying ceremonial visits to the High Priests of both Hongwanjis—the Higachi and Nischi (the former personage having the social rank of Duke)—and other Chief Priests of sects, and after giving another address at Chounin Temple before the Kosai-kai and a monster audience, I left Kyoto for Kobé on the 9th, with Hogen San, one of the young priest-students who had been sent in 1889, by my advice, to study Sanskrit and Pali under Sumangala, and Noguchi San, my old friend, and on the 10th embarked on the Messageries S.S. “Oxius” in a rain storm. We reached Woo-sung, the port of Shanghai, in the evening of the 12th. Most of the passengers went up to the city by water, a distance of fourteen miles, the next morning,

[422] and spent the day looking through the Chinese quarter—a most unpleasant excursion, by reason of the unnameable smells which almost suffocate one. We returned to the ship by moonlight, and sailed at 3 p.m. on the 14th for Hong Kong. His Excellency the French Ambassador to Japan and family were on board as passengers, and I had the great pleasure of becoming well acquainted with them. The four children had a most talented governess, a Polish lady, who had an admirable system of instruction. Her pupils were learning four languages simultaneously; but one language was assigned to each of four consecutive days, and they were allowed to speak, write, and read only that language. The parents lent themselves to this system in their intercourse with their children, and the result was that the latter were getting a thorough proficiency in each language.

Hong Kong was reached on the 17th, and we were all delighted with the appearance of that great commercial mart. I went by the funicular railway to the top of the “Peak,” and enjoyed a magnificent view of the harbor and environs. The next morning we sailed for Saigon, the coquettish-looking little French capital of their Cochin China possessions. As I had been there twice before, I stayed on board until evening, when I took a drive and walk with some Japanese passengers. We sailed for Singapore early on “the morning of the 22nd and reached there on the second day; at 5 p.m. we left again for Colombo. The

weather from Japan onward had been rather [423] rough, but it was fair with us from Singapore to Colombo, where we arrived at 1 p.m. on the 29th.

The High Priest Sumangala congratulated me warmly on my success with the Platform, and expressed the hope of a more friendly intercourse between the Southern and Northern Divisions.

A cruel report that Miss Pickett's death had been the result of suicide having been spread by certain malevolent persons, among them Dr. Daly, I felt it my duty to make a thorough inquiry, and, associating myself with Count Axel Wachtmeister as a committee, with Proctor Mendes, Mr. Peter d' Abrew, and Miss Roberts as interpreters, a number of witnesses were examined, and every effort made to arrive at the truth. The result was our entire conviction that it had been an accident occurring to her when she was walking in a fit of somnambulism. It was very gratifying to see with what affection her memory was cherished by the whole Buddhist community, her slanderers having nearly all been half-caste Christians, than whom no more rancorous bigots exist. The fact is that she had committed the unpardonable offence of making a public profession of Buddhism, and had come to undertake the education of Sinhalese girls of respectable families, whom the missionaries had been marking out as their prey for many years. As they dared not kill her—as once they tried to do to me—they spread the falsehood that she had killed herself.

Mrs. Maire Musæus Higgins, widow of Mr. Anthony Higgins, F.T.S., of Washington, D.C., had answered [424] an appeal in the Path, Mr. Judge's magazine, for help for the Women's Education Society from qualified lady teachers. No inducements of salary or luxurious living were held out—quite the contrary. Mrs. Higgins was then in the receipt of a salary of \$900 as a clerk in the Post Office Department of Washington, a sum amply sufficient for all her wants. She was a native of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, and daughter of a judge of the High Court. Having adopted teaching as a profession, she had passed all the examinations up to the highest, and was highly qualified for any teaching post. Her heart was touched by the appeal of the Sinhalese women, and she wrote me tendering her services without conditions. After due consideration and consultation all round, the offer was accepted and money sent her for her passage tickets out. I found her at Colombo, on my return from Japan, acting with the W. E. S. On the 7th of December I presided at an adjourned meeting of that Society. Mrs. Weerakoon resigned the Presidency, and Mrs. Higgins was elected Executive President. The accounts which were laid before the meeting

were found hopelessly confused and laid on the table. This is not at all to be wondered at, considering that, up to that time, Sinhalese ladies had never acted together as an organised body, nor had the least familiarity with book-keeping or accounts. Being aware of the inevitable difficulties that would assail Mrs. Higgins if certain of the ladies on the Managing Board of the Society were allowed to interfere with her household and school management,

[425] by reason of their ignorance, and, in some cases, illiteracy, I had Mrs. Weerakoon come forward in the presence of the audience and formally relinquish on behalf of the Society all right of meddling. This gave the new régime a fair start, and all would have gone on well until now if this sensible arrangement had been adhered to. But it was not, and the result was the ultimate withdrawal of Mrs. Higgins, after a long trial, and the starting by her of a girls' school on her own account. Of this I shall have to speak later. After a stay of ten days, I left Colombo for Madras in the P. & O. S.S. "Chusan". We anchored off Madras harbor after dark on the 12th, in a pelting rain. I landed the next morning, and received the usual hearty welcome from my Indian colleagues and Messrs. B. Keightley and S. V. Edge. At Adyar I found Miss Anna Ballard, an American journalist, who had been travelling professionally, and had come to make me a protracted visit.

From this time forward my time was fully taken up with editorial work, official correspondence, and preparations for the Annual Convention. An unprecedented number of European and American ladies came to that year's meeting. Among them, Miss F. Henrietta Müller, B.A. (Cantab.), that most ardent and eccentric lady reformer, who allowed her furniture to be sold in London for taxes as a protest against the denial of women's rights, who became, in India, a fervent worker with us for the revival of Eastern Philosophy, going so far as to adopt a young Hindu [426] as a son and make her will in his favor, and who, more recently, rushed back into the Christian fold, repudiating us, our Indian colleagues, and the movement in general. Withal, a kind-hearted and generous friend so long as the momentary mood lasted. That excellent young man and devoted son, the young Count Wachtmeister, was also among the delegates present. He is one of the most accomplished non-professional musicians I ever met, and I deeply regretted our not having a piano at Adyar, so that he might have delighted the Delegates by his skill.

The Convention met as usual at noon on 27th December, an exceptionally large number of countries being represented. Besides leading men from all parts

of India, we had people from Ceylon, Japan, England, America, Burmah, Tibet, and Sweden. It is always encouraging to the Hindus to see these foreigners coming from distant lands and personally testifying to the spread of our movement.

In my Annual Address, after an outlook over the state of the whole movement, I put on record my views as to the non-sectarian basis of our Society and the evil of intolerance; and as, within the past twelve-month (1900) even, I have had to defend that basis against a prevalent misconception in several countries, which was preventing excellent persons from joining us, I feel it a duty to quote my remarks on the occasion in question. I said:

“My belief is that if less intolerance towards Christianity had been shown hitherto by the Founders [427] of the Society and their colleagues, we should have suffered and made to suffer less, and would to-day have had a thousand Christian wellwishers where we have one. We may truly say we have had cruel provocation, but that does not really excuse us for lacking the courage to return good for evil, and so proving untrue to our ideal of brotherhood. So imperfect have we all been in our consistency of behavior, that, years ago, the Masters told us that being a Fellow of the Theosophical Society was not at all equivalent to being a real Theosophist, i.e., a knower and doer of godlike things. To return: it is, of course, no more important to humanity as a whole that Theosophy should be recognised and practised within the Christian than within the Hindu, the Buddhist, or any other Church: on the other hand, it is equally important; and our Society will not have fully proven its capacity for usefulness until it has kindly and patiently helped earnest and willing followers of each and every religion to find the key, the one only master-key, by which their own Scriptures can be understood and appreciated. I deplore our intolerance, counting myself a chief offender; and I do especially protest against and denounce a tendency which is growing among us to lay the foundations of a new idolatry. As the co-Founder of the Society, as one who has had constant opportunities for knowing the chosen policy and wishes of our Masters, as one who has, under them and with their assent, borne our flag through sixteen years of battle, I protest against the first giving way to the [428] temptation to elevate either them, their agents, or any other living or dead personage to the divine status, or their teachings to that of infallible doctrine. Not one word was ever spoken, transmitted, or written to me by the Masters that warranted such a course, nay, that did not inculcate the very opposite. I have been taught to lean upon myself alone, to look to my Higher

Self as my best teacher, best guide, best example, and only savior. I was taught that no one could or ever would attain to the perfect knowledge save upon those lines; and so long as you keep me in my office, I shall proclaim this as the basis, the only basis and the palladium of the Society. I am led to make the above remarks by what I have seen going on of late.”

With regard to H. P. B.’s sudden death, and the bringing of her ashes to Adyar, I said:

“The blackest sorrow of the year, or rather of all our years, was the sudden death of Madame H. P. Blavatsky, at London, on the 8th of May last. The awfulness of the shock was increased by its suddenness. She had been an invalid for years, it is true, but we had seen her more than once snatched back from the very brink of the grave, and at the time of her demise she had laid plans for continued work in the near future. Some building was being done by her order at the London Headquarters; she had pending engagements unsettled, among them a most important one with myself. Her niece saw her on the previous day, and made an appointment with her. In short, I do not believe she meant to die, or knew she would die [429] when she did. Generally, of course, she knew that she was liable to depart after certain work had been finished, but circumstances make me think she was surprised by a physical crisis, and died before she expected she would. If she had lived, she would have undoubtedly left her protest against her friends making a saint of her or a bible out of her magnificent though not infallible writings. I helped to compile her *Isis Unveiled*, while Mr. Keightley and several others did the same by *The Secret Doctrine*. Surely we know how far from infallible are our portions of the books, to say, nothing about hers. She did not discover nor invent Theosophy, nor was she the first or the ablest agent, scribe, or messenger of the Hidden Teachers of the Snowy Mountains. The various Scriptures of the ancient nations contain every idea now put forth, and in some cases possess far greater beauties and merits than any of her or our books. We need not fall into idolatry to signify our lasting reverence and love for her, the contemporary teacher, nor offend the literary world by pretending that she wrote with the pen of inspiration. Nobody living was a more staunch and loyal friend of hers than I, nobody will cherish her memory more lovingly. I was true to her to the end of her life, and now I shall continue to be true to her memory. But I never worshipped her, never blinded my eyes to her faults, never dreamt that she was as perfect a channel for the transmission of occult teaching as some others in history had been, or as the Masters would have

been glad to have found.

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As her tried friend, then; as one who worked most intimately with her, and is most anxious that she may be taken by posterity at her true high value; as her co-worker; as one long ago an accepted, though humble, agent of the Masters; and finally, as the official head of the Society and guardian of the personal rights of its Fellows—I place on record my protest against all attempts to create an H. P. B. School, sect, or cult, or to take her utterances as in the least degree above criticism. The importance of the subject must be my excuse for thus dwelling upon it at some length. I single out no individuals, mean to hurt nobody's feelings. I am not sure of being alive very many years longer, and what duty demands I must say while I can.

“And now, brethren and friends, I come to a matter of the deepest, saddest interest. H. P. Blavatsky's body was cremated by her order, often reiterated and at long intervals. Before leaving India for Europe for the last time, she executed what proved to have been her last Will and Testament, and the original document is on file here as provided by law. Its date is the 31st of January, 1885. The witnesses were P. Sreenivasa Row, E. H. Morgan, T. Subba Row, and C. Ramiah. It contains a clause to the effect that she wishes her ashes to be buried within the compound of the Headquarters at Adyar; and another requesting that annually, on the anniversary of her death, some of her friends should assemble here and read a chapter of The Light of Asia and one of Bhagavad-Gita.

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In compliance with her sacred wish, therefore, I have brought her ashes from London; across the Atlantic, across the American continent, across the Pacific, from Japan to Ceylon, and thence hither, that they may find the last resting-place she longed for, the holiest tomb that a servant of the Indian sages could have. Together we came, she and I, from New York to India, over seas and lands, in the beginning of 1879, to re-light the torch at the temple-door of Gnyânam: together have we come now—I living, she a memory and a handful of dust—again in 1891 Parted are we in body, yet united in heart and soul for our common cause, and knowing that we shall one day, in a future birth, again be comrades, co-disciples and colleagues. My private duty towards her is fulfilled: I now turn over to the Society the honorable custody of her ashes, and as President shall see that her last wishes are fulfilled so far as feasible.”

I then removed a silken covering, and exposed a closed, handsomely engraved Benares vase, in which were the ashes of Madame Blavatsky. All present rose to their feet and stood in solemn silence until the mortuary urn was re-covered.

When it came to a discussion as to the disposal of the ashes, my suggestion for the building of a mausoleum or dagoba within our compound met with general disapproval. The subject of the disposal of the ashes of the dead having never before been mooted by me, I was greatly struck—and, I must confess, equally pained—to find how absolutely antagonistic were the [432] views of Indian and Western peoples on this question. In the opinion of my Hindu colleagues, to have planted Madame Blavatsky's ashes in or near our premises would have defiled them so that no orthodox Hindu could come there without going through purificatory ceremonies afterwards. In the course of the discussion, they put it to me whether a believer in the Higher Self ought to regard the dust of the body which the ego's personality had occupied as anything better than refuse to be got rid of as soon as possible, preferably by the Hindu method of casting it into a running stream or into the sea. My answer was, that since it was also their custom to preserve in tombs the corpses of recognised Yogis, it seemed to me a shame and a mark of ingratitude that the ashes of one who had been possessed of not only the knowledge but also the transcendental powers of an advanced Yogi, and who had so dearly loved India, and so unselfishly worked for the spiritual welfare of the Indians, should not be buried, as she had requested in her Will, at the Headquarters. Finding at last that my arguments would not avail to overcome their deep-rooted prejudices, and feeling personally hurt at what I conceived to be cold ingratitude, I finally consented to the adoption of a resolution to the effect that I should have full power to dispose of the ashes as I thought best. My private conviction was that at the bottom they were willing to have me do what I liked, provided that I did not bring the matter to their notice, and so compromise their caste responsibilities in case they [433] should knowingly allow me to carry out H. P.B.'s wishes.

It should be remembered that for years I had been trying to disembarass myself of the responsibility of having the Government bonds belonging to the Society vested in my name, for no one could foresee the certainty of my escaping the accidents of travel, and so leaving the money to be entangled in my private affairs and subject to the risks of legal complications. Again and again I had brought it forward at Conventions, and this time got a resolution passed for

the execution of a Trust Deed. In due course this document was drafted and executed, and was duly registered in the office of the Registrar of Deeds at Saidapet.

Many lectures were given before the Convention by Delegates, and addresses at the public celebration of our sixteenth Anniversary at Pachaiappah's Hall. After a most successful session, throughout which excellent feeling prevailed, the Convention adjourned sine die on the 29th.

Advantage was taken of the presence of a number of ladies at the Convention to get them together and discuss the question of female education in India. Various suggestions were made, but, owing to the ignorance of the ladies as to the real status of woman in the Hindu household, they were nearly all impracticable. Finally a suggestion of mine was adopted, that an address should be issued by the ladies to the Hindu public with a view to ascertaining the feasibility of organising a Women's Educational League for India,

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Such a movement having been successfully begun in Ceylon, it appeared possible that a similar one could be started in India, with some modifications adapted to the different conditions of domestic Indian life. The practical difficulty in the way of any such movement would be the lack of ready-made leaders, the restrictions upon women consequent upon the widespread prevalence of the zenana or purdah system being extremely embarrassing. Of course, the choice of Brahmo ladies in that capacity would be quite unthinkable outside their own small and entirely unorthodox community; orthodox ladies would probably never accept their leadership, any more than they would that of any European lady who was a recognised Christian, for a suspicion would at once arise that it was a new trick of the missionaries to gain converts, or open the way for the breaking down of caste. That no such difficulty would attach to a movement managed by professedly Theosophical white ladies is plain enough when we see the light in which Mrs. Besant is regarded in the Hindu family. Recognising this, it has for many years been a cherished plan of mine to get out from Western countries lady members of our Society like Miss Palmer, Mrs. Higgins, Mlle. Kofel, Miss Weeks, and others who have had training as teachers, and who would come out with the intention of devoting themselves exclusively to this work of creating a Women's League. This, however, is a matter for the future, for it requires special capital and a thoroughly digested programme before I should consent to have it begun.

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Among the interesting personages at the Convention was a Lama of the Tibetan Buddhist Monastery of Peking. He brought me the following memorandum from Babu Sarat Chandra Das, the Tibetan Translator to the Government of Bengal:

“Lama Tho-chiya, of a Manchurian family, belongs to Yung-ho-kung, the great Buddhist Monastery of Peking, which I visited in 1885.

“He is a friend of His Excellency Shang Tai, the present Chinese Imperial President (Amban) of Lhasa.

“During his stay here, Lama Tho-chiya was my guest. He now proceeds to Buddha Gaya with only 20 rupees, which I have put into his pocket. He is deserving of help in every way. He has come thus far from Manchuria, travelling on foot.”

The Lama's portrait may be seen in the annual group photograph of 1891, seated between Miss Müller and Mr. Keightley, and it will be noted how delicate, refined, and spiritual are his features, and how little they resemble the Mongolian type.

On the last day of year, Dr. Emma Ryder told me that, while practising at Bombay, she had come to know that Mme. Coulomb and the missionaries had arranged a scheme by which Mrs. Besant was to be dragged into court on a pretext, so as to reopen the old scandal against H. P. B.; moreover, that that woman was malicious to a degree. The plot, however, if ever made, came to naught, for Mrs. Besant was not molested in any way.

Mr. Keightley and I sat the old year out and shook hands for luck on the threshold of the New Year. My [436] journeying in the year 1891 footed up to 43,000 miles by sea and land. Of course the most conspicuous event of that past twelvemonth was the death of Mme. Blavatsky, upon the 8th of May, in the 7th month of the 17th year of our association in this work.

CHAPTER XXV

NOTICE OF RESIGNATION, AND WHAT IT LED TO

(1892)

LAST year was one of constant travel, the present one (1892) was one of comparative repose, a tour to Arakan and Rangoon viâ Calcutta and Darjeeling, in the Buddhist interests, comprising my whole activity of the kind. The last of the Parsi and Indian delegates left us on the 1st January; the visiting European ladies went a few days later. Mr. Keightley started on the 11th for a projected tour towards Bombay and the north. On the 12th I wrote to H. M. the King of Sweden and Norway, and sent him two Travancore chakrams (small coins) and two illustrated books in Tamil and Telugu, containing the sign of the interlaced triangles or six-pointed star—this question of the wide employment of the symbol from the most ancient times in the East having been discussed between us at my audience at Stockholm.

The new edition of the Buddhist Catechism had attracted the notice and won the approval of one eminent European Orientalist, since I received at this [438] time a copy of *L'Estafette*, a Paris journal, with a two-column article of M. Burnouf's, reviewing the work in a most appreciative manner. He contrasted the simplicity and reasonableness of the Buddha's metaphysic with that of the Christian Church, to the disadvantage of the latter, and went so far as to say that the influence of our Society was becoming more and more noticeable throughout Europe: the production of the Catechism he considered a great event.

It will have been seen from what is written in previous chapters how much my mind was exercised about the evident probability of a new sect springing up around the memory of H. P. B. and her literature. From week to week things seemed to be going from bad to worse: some of my most fanatical colleagues would go about with an air "of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit; as who should say, I am Sir Oracle, and, when I open my lips, let no dog bark!" One would have thought that H. P. B. had laid upon their shoulders the burden of the whole Himâlayan Mysteries; and when one ventured to challenge the reasonableness of something which they were quoting, they would answer with a sort of restraint of the breath: "But, you know, she said so"—as if that closed the debate. Of course they meant no harm, and, perhaps, to a certain extent, were

really expressing their awe of the departed teacher; but all the same it was a most pernicious tendency, and, if unchecked, was calculated to drag us into a sectarian pitfall. I bore it as long as I could, and at last, believing that the truth alone

NOTICE OF RESIGNATION,[439] would give my dear colleague her rightful place in history, that “An honest tale speeds best, being plainly told,” I began, as my Diary states, on the 16th of January, “a series of historical reminiscences of the T. S. and H. P. B. under the title of ‘Old Diary Leaves’.” From that time forward until now there has been no necessity for time to hang heavy on my hands, because whatever might not be occupied with the day’s current business could always be usefully employed in hunting up facts for this historical narrative. It was such a happy inspiration, as events have shown, that I am quite ready to believe that the thought was put into my head by those who watch, unseen, over our movements. Certainly the creation of the Blavatsky sect became impossible: after nine years she is now fairly estimated, and the solid appreciation of her is continually gaining in strength.

But let no one suppose that this vicious tendency towards hero-worship has been rooted out from our natures, for a new idol is being fashioned in the form of that dear, unselfish, modest woman, Annie Besant. If the walls around our Society were less resistant, her blind admirers would be already digging out a niche in which to place the idol for worship. Needless to say, one has only to be familiar with Mrs. Besant’s speeches and writings to have overwhelming proofs that such an attitude towards her is most distasteful. Many years ago she deliberately sacrificed the world to work for her fellow-men, and from the first moment until now she has begged her hearers to regard the [440] thought, and not the speaker. It could not have been more concisely expressed than in the following sentences in the last paragraph of her magnificent lectures on “Dharma”. “After this imperfect presentation of a mighty subject, may I say to you: listen to the thought in the message, and not to the speaker who is the messenger; open your hearts to the thought, and forget the imperfection of the lips that have spoken it.” All in vain her protests and appeals—an idol they must have; and H. P. B. having passed out of reach, they are clustering around the next personage available. Not even workers of lesser knowledge and nobility of character escape this euphemistical tendency. Until the great exposure came, Mr. Judge was looked upon at Avenue Road as a greater mystic than them all, they mistaking his bogus credentials as real indorsements by the Mahatmas. And so with others—Mr. J.’s successor, for example, who could never have obtained a

hold upon the excellent people who had been led away by the Judge illusion but for his having cast the mantle of his deceptive glamor around her. I could name others still, among our prominent workers, who are in peril from a like adulation. Let us hope that they may see their danger before their heads get turned, as have those of some callow youths of the East and West who have been prematurely forced into the fierce light of notoriety. I never, now, see a young Indian or Sinhalese going out to the Western lands to lecture without feeling the sad conviction that they must inevitably be spoilt by the inflation of their vanity.

NOTICE OF RESIGNATION,[441]

During the month of January I passed through another crisis, which ended in my again tendering my resignation of office. Exaggerated reports had been spread about me; the Judge influence was paramount in London, a scheme had been devised for sending out Mr. C. F. Wright to Australia to undermine my authority and get the Branches there, under his leadership, to join the American Section, and be entirely under Judge's control. Every other possible thing was done to reduce my position to that of a sort of cipher or figurehead; so I met the thing halfway with my resignation. I took all the necessary measures to make the transfer of authority to Mr. Judge, then Vice-President, practicable. An explanatory circular, accompanying copies of my resignation, was sent to the Sections, and on the 4th of February I went to Ootacamund to make the final arrangements for taking up residence there. As before, protests and appeals poured in from all sides, influential members threatened to resign, some even tendered their resignations. This time these did not shake my resolution. But on consulting counsel about the steps to be taken for relieving me of responsibility for the cash and securities of the Society standing in my name, it became evident that it would be a matter of time, and would require much thought; so I modified the terms of my resignation so as to make it take effect from the time when these property matters, including the unsettled business of the Hartmann estate at Toowoomba, should be arranged.

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Among the offers of loving help received were three invitations—from my friends Prince Harisinhji, M. Parmelin, of France, and H. H. the Rajah of Pakur—to let them support me for the rest of my life. Meanwhile, my documents were travelling all over the world, and I was fully determined to vacate the Presidentship at the earliest possible moment. But suddenly there came an interference from a quarter which could not be ignored. Just before daybreak, on

the 10th of February, I received clairaudiently a very important message from my Guru: its impressiveness was enhanced by the fact that he told me things which were quite contrary to my own belief, and hence it could not be explained away as a case of auto-suggestion. He told me (a) That a messenger from him would be coming, and I must hold myself ready to go and meet him; (b) That the relationship between himself, H. P. B., and myself was unbreakable; (c) That I must be ready for a change of body, as my present one had nearly served its purpose; (d) That I had not done well in trying to resign prematurely: I was still wanted at my post, and must be contented to remain indefinitely until he gave me permission to abandon it; (e) That the time was not ripe for carrying out my scheme of a great International Buddhist League, and that the Mahâ-Bodhi Society, which I had intended to use as the nucleus of the scheme, would be a failure; (f) That all stories about his having cast me off and withdrawn his protection were false, for he kept constant watch over me, and would never desert me.

NOTICE OF RESIGNATION,[443]

As regards the first point, I shall show, at the proper time, how exactly the predicted messenger came; as regards the second, this was a great surprise, for H. P. B. had been behaving in such a way about me, and had made such reckless assertions about the influence of the Masters having been withdrawn from Adyar, that I really supposed that all was at an end between us; and as I had not heard directly from my Guru for some time, I did not know but that he was so displeased with me that he had withdrawn his protection. As regards the third, it seems likely that the sudden and, as I have expressed it, unexpected death of H. P. B. made it necessary that I should be given the necessary health and strength to make my body last very much longer than, perhaps, seemed indispensable. Certainly, my physical force seems to be increasing instead of diminishing at the present time. As regards the attempt to resign, I was not prepared for the view that was taken by the Guru. It seemed as though my leading colleagues were both willing and anxious to get rid of me. The position taken in the fifth point of the message surprised me, for at that time the prospects of the Mahâ-Bodhi Society were good, subscriptions for the acquisition of the Buddhistic sacred places were coming in, the interest was extending to Siam and Japan, and I was convinced that my scheme of international union could be carried out. As regards the last and most precious point in the message, no one will doubt its having filled my heart with joy; for, however faulty I might [444] have been, at

least I had kept as the one paramount aim of my efforts the giving of ungrudging and loyal service to my Guru. This event, the reader will please keep in mind, occurred on the 10th of February: we shall now see what effect it produced on Mr. Judge and his followers when brought to their notice.

So far as I can make out from my Diary, I notified Mr. Judge of this clairaudient message, by the overland mail of 18th February. On the 3rd of March I wrote a long and important letter to Mr. Judge and the General Council, declaring that I could not consent to his being both Acting President of the T. S. and General Secretary of the American Section, as this would give him three votes out of a possible five in the General Council. Meanwhile the situation at New York remained unchanged, letters coming to me almost weekly, discussing the details of my retirement; not a word said about my remaining in office, but in every letter he was asking me to nominate him for the full term of his life. On the 2nd of April a cable from Judge told me that I need not be anxious about the moving of Headquarters, and that he should give up the General Secretaryship as soon as possible. On the 16th of April I cabled Judge that I could not retire on the 1st of May, as nothing had as yet been arranged about the Brisbane and Adyar financial affairs. I do not know what ideas had been working in Mr. Judge's mind, nor how far he had consulted his colleagues about his indispensable relinquishment of the General Secretaryship; but on the 21st of April,

NOTICE OF RESIGNATION,[445] about a month after he would have received, in due course of mail, my letter about the wishes of my Guru, he cabled me to stop where I was, i.e., to remain in office, as he had very important news from The Lodge, and there would be a great change in his policy on April 24th—the date of the opening of the Convention of the American Section. What that change was may be seen in the tone of the resolutions, drafted by him, presented by a third party, and unanimously adopted by the Convention: every idea they contained, almost every word in which they were expressed, came from him, and was anticipated in a rambling fraudulent Mahatma letter, which he sent me four days before the meeting of the Convention. Included in it is the following bit of information to me, about instructions presumably received by him from a Master: “He (Judge) has been recently ordered.... to change his policy, for he sees that it is not time, nor right nor just nor wise, nor the real wish of The Lodge, that you should go out, either corporeally or officially. But he is now in a very strained position because of the people to deal with in other lands

than the one he is in (meaning our people at London). He will cause it to be done as follows at the meeting in April (the American T. S. Convention); and has before this prepared for it a resolution to be passed, declaring, first, that your resignation has been received; second, that the meeting notes that all the Branches have in this land voted for him as the successor; that the meeting, as in duty bound, declares the vote of the [446] Section to be for the person selected by the Branches; fourth, that, however, that vote is to be operative only in case that the old leader (myself) cannot be induced to remain at the demand of the most powerful Section, and that he is directed to find out, to wait until the other Convention, to write to the old leader and ask him to revoke, to sway the others in July to do the same, and in all ways to try to bring that about.” The comical aspect of this affair is in the fact that this change of his policy is “ordered” in the bogus authoritative letter received by him, as pretended, at least a month after his receipt of my letter telling him about my clairaudient message!

Now Mr. Judge went to London for the July Convention, as official representative of his Section, and also as Vice-President, and my putative successor. Instead of obeying his pretended orders “to sway the others in July,” he kept silent, and allowed the European Convention, in ignorance of the wishes of the Master, to accept my resignation, and vote for him as succeeding President. Mrs. Besant, Mr. Mead, and their colleagues got their first intimation of this from my Executive Notice of 21st August, 1892, in which I announced my revocation of the letter of resignation and resumption of active duty; incidentally mentioning the circumstance of the clairaudient message, and of Mr. Judge’s alleged message on April 20th. Mrs. Besant, in embodying this case of double-dealing in one of the charges made by her against Judge, says: “This startled the London workers, as it made them think that they had unwittingly

NOTICE OF RESIGNATION, [447] acted against the Master’s will, and G. R. S. Meaq wrote to Colonel Olcott—’The order you quote from is quite sufficient; and if we had had a ghost of an idea of the existence of such an order, the resolutions passed would have been different. Judging from W. Q. J.’s letter, he is as ignorant of this quoted matter as we were.’”

Their suspicions being aroused, they jointly asked Mr. Judge to explain, and several letters passed. Their contents may be read in the pamphlet *The Case against W. Q. Judge*, and show a system of prevarication and bald falsehood which was enough to destroy all confidence in his word. He denied that he had had a specific line of policy indicated to him, and sweeps away the pretended

letter of instructions by writing to Mrs. Besant: “I was told by—(a Master) vaguely some days ago that I ‘would have to change my policy’. No more. Apparently left to me and time.” His whole case throughout shows that he was possessed by an ambition to get the Presidentship and keep it for life. To effect this he employed every possible means to influence the minds of the leading workers in both Western Sections, forged documents and false messages included. Poor man! he forgot that “Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall”.

The discriminative reader will not overlook the fact that the action of Mr. Judge and the American Section entirely contradicts and makes absurd the resolutions of 1895, when the American Convention [448] passed, by a preponderating majority of our American Branches, a vote to secede from us, and declared that there never had been any de jure Theosophical Society outside the fragment of the original body at New York.

CHAPTER XXVI

MEDIUMS, MENDACITY, AND OTHER MATTERS

(1892)

THE predicted coming of a messenger from the Great White Lodge, and the order to hold myself in readiness to go and meet him, put not only me, but others to whom I told it, in a flutter of excitement. The Master had fixed no date, and so all I had to do was to keep my trunk packed, ready to start on receipt of a telegram. My surmise was that this messenger would be Damodar, and that he would turn up from across the Himâlayas, at Darjeeling, whence he had started on his memorable journey in search of the Ashram. So I wrote to Babu Sreenath Chatterji, our active colleague at that hill station—whose house had always been a sort of dharma-sala or traveller's shelter for Tibetan Lamas passing between Tibet and northern India—asking him to be on the look-out, and giving him a code by which he could telegraph me when occasion required. With her usual impetuosity, Miss Müller went there so as to have the first innings with the messenger; so did others, and quite an active correspondence by [450] mail and telegraph went on between them and myself. Days were fixed for the expected arrival, and when they failed, others were substituted; but the messenger came not, and the enterprising watchers at last grew tired of waiting, came away, and then intimated to me that no such message had probably been given, but it was only my own illusion. The same was thought and said at London and New York, and in the long-run my news was quite discredited. Meanwhile I said nothing, kept my trunk packed, and waited. I waited more than eighteen months, and when, though my trunk was still packed, I had put off the arrival to the ides of March, the messenger came. I shall come to that at the proper time.

We have some queer visitors at Adyar. Elsewhere I have described the visits of Indian ascetics. My entry for the last day of February records that of a contortionist of the North Arcot District, named Subramanya Aiyar, who handled his physical body after a fashion which would have insured him a handsome living at Western circuses, music-halls, and side-shows. The most sensational of his feats was the reversal of his head, so that his face looked at us from between his shoulders. In that position he spoke and ate plantains: really a man to be held in honor among

The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads
Do grow beneath their shoulders.

Another inconsequential thing that he did was to dislocate his shoulder and bring that arm around his neck, so that it would hang down parallel with the

MEDIUMS, MENDACITY,[451] other arm. I know there is no Theosophy in this, but it is just a bit of realism that helps to make up the picture of our simple life at Adyar.

One of the small annoyances which I tried at this time to remove was the growing habit of adopting for new Branches names previously chosen by existing ones. Such duplications inevitably breed confusion, as similar things do where titles of books are plagiarised. It is unfair for a senior Branch, as, for example, the original Blavatsky Lodge, which has made its name known all over the world, to have an old Branch like the Bombay T. S., whose charter dates back to 1880, and which had begun to make itself known by Mr. Tookaram Tatya's useful, classical publications and reprints, suddenly wiping out its reputable past, and continuing work under an improperly appropriated title. In an Executive Notice which I issued in that month of March, I enumerated other cases of this copying of titles, viz., "two Olcott T. S.'s (Kanigiri, India, and Sydney, N.S.W.); two Siddharthas (Weligama, Ceylon, and Vicksburg, Mass., U.S.A.); two Tatwagnanas (Jessore and Tipperah, India); two Krishnas (Guntur, India, and Philadelphia, U.S.A.); an Aryan (N.Y.), and an Aryan Patriotic (Aligarh, India); a Satya (Los Angeles, U.S.A.), and Satya (Lucknow, India), and so on. So long as a Branch sleeps, its name is unnoticed; but when it grows active, then its title, if copied after some other, becomes a perplexity." I then added the following remarks, which are as pertinent at the present time as they were then:

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"The President calls attention to the matter in the hope that henceforth the General Secretaries of Sections and the responsible Director of the Headquarters Record Office will refuse charters to any Branches applying for enrolment under borrowed or accidentally duplicated titles. Experience also dictates that the choice of fancy and complimentary names in place of local ones, which at once designate the town or city where the Branch is situated, is an inconvenience; but where several Branches are formed in one city, the oldest should adopt the city's name, and the others different ones. As regards names already duplicated, the

proper course would seem to be that the first chartered should retain its name, and the later ones take others not already registered at these Headquarters.

“To close the subject, once for all, the undersigned recommends that, so far as practicable, the calling of Branches after individuals should be avoided. At best, it is but a species of hero-worship and fosters vanity. As for the Founders and the fifteen other persons who were present when it was voted to form this now great organisation, the whole Society and its results are their best and only permanent memorial.”

As we have been celebrating the anniversary of H. P. B.’s death now for eight years, and as, undoubtedly, the ceremony will be continued, it may be as well to put on record the Executive Notice of 17th April, 1892, which led to the observance of the event. It was worded as follows:

MEDIUMS, MENDACITY,[453]

“In her last Will, H. P. Blavatsky expressed the wish that yearly, on the anniversary of her death, some of her friends ‘should assemble at the Headquarters of the Theosophical Society and read a chapter of The Light of Asia and (extracts from) Bhagavad-Gîtâ; and since it is meet that her surviving colleagues should keep green the memory of her services to humanity and her devoted love for our Society, the undersigned suggests that the anniversary be known among us as White Lotus Day, and makes the following official order and recommendation:

“1. At noon, on 8th May, 1892, and on the same day in each succeeding year, there will be held a commemorative meeting at the Headquarters, at which extracts from the before-mentioned works will be read and brief addresses made by the Chairman of the meeting and others who may volunteer.

“2. A dole of food will be given in her name to the poor fishermen of Adyar and their families.

“3. The flag will be half-masted from sunrise until sunset, and the Convention Hall decorated with White Lotus flowers.

“4. Members living outside Madras can arrange for their food by applying to the Recording Secretary at least one week in advance.

“5. The undersigned recommends to all Sections and Branches throughout the world to meet annually on the anniversary day, and, in some simple, unsectarian, yet dignified way, avoiding all slavish adulation and empty compliments,

express the general [454] feeling of loving regard for her who brought us the chart of the climbing Path which leads to the summits of Knowledge.”

Copies of this were sent at once to the London and New York Headquarters, thence it spread to the Branches, and now I presume each of our hundreds of Branches throughout the world annually renews the recollections of the character and services of H. P. B.

Since her death the mediums have been taking unwarranted liberties with her personality, making her materialise at their séances, write them communications, and even write a volume of posthumous memoirs. At about the time of which I am writing, the American and British papers contained many paragraphs about her spook having appeared at some American mediums' circles, and there has recently come into my possession a book which it is pretended she, as a spirit, dictated to G. W. Yost, a spirit, inventor of the Yost typewriter, it being written out on one of his instruments procured for the purpose, and placed in a sort of cabinet several feet distant from the nearest living spectator. Under these conditions, it is affirmed, the typewriter wrote out this entire book, by itself, automatically, so far as could be seen. At stated times the members of the circle would meet, some phenomena would occur, and then the clickety-click of the typewriter would go on for hours together. Apparently the thing was all fair and there was no collusion. This makes it all the more queer that such a hopelessly absurd and transparently mendacious narrative of H. P. B.'s life,

MEDIUMS, MENDACITY,[455] motives, and feelings, and her impressions about her colleagues in the Theosophical movement, should have been compiled. One can trace, from Mr. Sinnett's books and mine, from the Theosophist and other sources, the origin of nearly all the portions which bear the remotest semblance of verisimilitude; while the compiler, whether “a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd,” has put things into her mouth which she was quite incapable of saying, and made her cast insults upon her dearest friends which she would never have uttered. Given the bona-fides of the parties concerned, it is one of the most instructive phenomena in modern spiritualism.

To sensible Theosophists all these pretended apparitions and communications from H. P. B. will seem both false and cruel, in view of the joint notification which she and I published in our magazine, that after our death neither of us would, under any circumstances, appear to or communicate through a medium, and that our friends were authorised and requested to denounce as fraudulent any such pretended phenomenon. By turning to the Theosophist for March, 1883, the

reader will find, in an article entitled “Under the Shadow of Great Names,” what Madame Blavatsky and I said about this. After noticing various fraudulent platform sermons and books ascribed to deceased leading spiritualists, the editors say: “The future has a gloomy look indeed to us when we think that, despite their best endeavors to the contrary, the Founders of the Theosophical Society are quite as liable as either of the eminent gentlemen above mentioned to an [456] involuntary postmortem recantation of their most cherished and avowed ideas... While it is yet time, both the Founders of the Theosophical Society place upon record their solemn promise that they will let trance-mediums severely alone after they get to the ‘other side’. If, after this, any of the talking fraternity take their names in vain, they hope that at least their Theosophical confrères will unearth this paragraph and warn the trespassers off their astral premises.” This warning embodies the very deep feeling entertained by both of us in regard to these mediumistic communications, which are not offered to the public upon their intrinsic merit, but under the glamor of borrowed names.

I have been led into this discussion by my Diary notes about the pretended appearance of Madame Blavatsky to the American medium, and also by an entry which reminds me that just before dawn on the 14th of March my Guru’s voice told me that I “had no occasion to worry about H. P. B.’s condition, as she was now safe, and her bad and good record was made up and could not be changed”. Under all these circumstances, I feel perfectly warranted in saying that since her death Madame Blavatsky has neither shown herself nor spoken to or through any spiritualistic medium, and that the book of her posthumous memoirs is an absolute fraud. By whom committed I cannot say, but in all probability by some one of those irresponsible “controls” which make poor mediums the channels of their mendacity. One of

MEDIUMS, MENDACITY,[457] the most shameless outrages of the kind that has come to my notice is the frequent appearance of materialised or semi-materialised shapes under the semblance of H. P. B. and one of our Masters, which come to a certain very noted female medium, and by the help of which she has been enabled to make some very excellent persons blindly accept her as the recognised agent and mouth-piece of these two personages. Some years ago there was at Boston a lady medium who, while sitting in her chair, and perhaps knitting or sewing, would be suddenly enwrapped in an astral mask or shell, which would entirely change her personal appearances; instead of looking like herself, she would be transformed into a bearded man, or a woman of a different

age, complexion, and features from herself. The case was reported and commented upon in *The Banner of Light* of that time. Similarly, the medium to whom I have just referred will suddenly take on the semblance of H. P. B. and speak as her; sometimes the form of H. P. B. will be seen standing behind her chair and nodding assent to what she says; again, it will be the form of the Master, who is made to play this harlequinade. I recollect reading a published letter from Mr. Peebles about a medium in a Western State who was able to cause materialised forms to appear on a public platform, among them that of Jesus Christ, who, according to Mr. Peebles, stood there while he himself was speaking, and bowed assent to the good things he said! Now these two cases seem identical, and I leave the sensible reader to decide whether he believes [458] either of these nodding apparitions genuine, or whether they are just what H. P. B. used to call “psychological tricks”.

On the 6th of May I went to the Chingleput Registrar’s office, had H. P. B.’s Will opened and recorded, and took an official copy of it.

As the writing of “Old Diary Leaves” proceeded, I had to confront the question whether I ought to tell the story of H. P. B.’s second marriage, the one at Philadelphia, which happened while I was making her a visit. Personally, I was convinced of its necessity, for I intended my historical narrative to be absolutely trustworthy; and if I, from mistaken sentimentality, suppressed so important a fact, I felt sure that it would be caught at by her enemies and the worst possible construction be given to an event which is itself innocent of wrong-doing, however ill-advised it might seem to me and others. I therefore presented the case to two persons—her sister Mme. Jelihovsky and Mr. Judge, who acted as her attorney in the subsequent divorce proceedings—asking their opinions. Their replies left me free to exercise my discretion; and while I was waiting to take up the compilation of Chapter IV of my work, there appeared in an American paper a most virulent and savage attack on her reputation in connection with this very affair, giving publicity to names and dates. Of course, after this, my duty was plainly to tell the story in a calm, dispassionate way, yet as a friend disposed to do her the justice which others had denied her, which I did,

MEDIUMS, MENDACITY,[459] as the reader will find on referring back to the chapter in question.³²

The preparation of my mountain cottage at Ootacamund being far enough advanced, I left Madras for the hills on the 17th of May, and was much struck

with the coincidence, to which Mr. S. V. Edge called my attention, that this was the 17th day of the 7th month of the 17th year of the Society's existence. To go from the stifling heat of the plains, where the mercury was then standing at 104, to this mountain retreat, 7,000 feet above sea-level, where the thermometer marked only 56°, and heavy clothing and fires in the rooms were indispensable, is a pleasure beyond words. It has been the opinion of all who live in it that "Gulistan," though small, is the very ideal of snug comfort, and that the outlook is simply superb. The cottage stands on the shoulder of a hill, with the peak of Snowdon towering a thousand more feet above it; it is sheltered from blustering winds by a grove of eucalypti on the north and east sides, and the hill rising behind it effectually protects it from gales from that quarter. Looking from the windows of the drawing-room and library, the great panorama of the Mysore Plain lies out like a map, while around the house are hedges of cluster roses and beds of lilies, heliotrope, roses, geraniums, verbenas, and many other flowers, and climbing honeysuckles and roses ascend to the verandah roof. My original idea was that "Gulistan" should be the home for us two Founders [460] in our old age; but as things have turned out, H. P. B. never saw it, and my visits have hitherto been few and far between, by reason of my unremitting official duties. On coming there I took with me H. P. B.'s writing-table, her armchair, carved Bombay rosewood cabinet, and other familiar objects that would make her feel at home, and that keep the memory of her ever present when I am there. Repairs, constructions, changes, and improvements were pushed ahead by a gang of masons and carpenters, under my superintendence. Simultaneously with these building operations, I occupied myself with the very heavy task of sorting and arranging the correspondence and documents of sorts about the Society's affairs which had been accumulating for years, and never systematised in consequence of lack of time. There must have been several thousands of them, and the work was so troublesome that I was obliged to hire an English-speaking Hindu to help me.

Our cause in Spain at this time suffered a most serious loss in the untimely death of Señor Don Francisco de Montoliu y de Tagores, F.T.S., of Barcelona. So far as our propaganda in Spanish-speaking countries was concerned, the blow was of only less severity than the departure of H. P. B. to the whole Society. Thanks to his rare genius, industry, and self-sacrifice, our literature was beginning to be spread and be welcomed throughout Spain, Mexico, Cuba, Central and South America, the Philippines, and the West Indies. He had translated into classical Spanish Isis Unveiled and

MEDIUMS, MENDACITY,[461] other important Theosophical works, and was publishing the former by subscription in monthly numbers. From his aristocratic and bigoted Roman Catholic family he met with angry opposition, and yet threw himself into the arduous work of our Society with generous self-abandonment and quenchless zeal. Every one of his letters to me breathed the holy influence of unselfishness and a courage not to be daunted by opposition. Looking through the whole Society, I could pick out no one more devoted to conscience, more ardently loving for mankind, more free from local and sectarian narrowness. His death was entirely unexpected. An unanswered letter of his was lying on my writing-table when the touching official and personal notice of the calamity came to me from our beloved friend, his colleague Señor Don José Xifré. The circumstances of his deathbed were mournfully tragic. “He left us,” said Señor Xifré, “on 10th May after a week’s illness, caused by catching a cold in his chest, which turned into typhoid fever—the result, I fear, of nervous exhaustion from over-work.” Señors Xifré, Roveratta, and Bosch were present to the end, at the wish of our dying brother, in spite of the insults heaped upon them and him by the family and the Jesuit priests. “The death,” said Señor Xifré, “was admirable, an example which none of us can ever forget.” Despite all the dictates of propriety and deference to the wishes of the dying Theosophist, the priests made a sectarian ceremonial, which seems to me to have been, under the circumstances, nothing [462] better than a profanation of true religious feeling, and then spread the cruel falsehood that the victim had been “converted”—the usual dodge of the clergy to cover defeat in the case of nearly every freethinker. Our watchful Fellows with difficulty managed to save the more important among Montoliu’s T. S. documents; the priests—poor, blind fools, who have learnt nothing from history—seized the rest and burnt them to ashes. Far from sitting idle in blank despair, our surviving Spanish comrades instantly took up the torch as it dropped from dear Montoliu’s dead hand, and have ever since kept actively at work.

I had an amusing visit one morning from a Salvation Army “captain”. The Army has a sanitarium at Ootacamund for their people, which they have called “Cheerful Cottage,” and this man was recuperating there. The object of his call was, of course, to get a contribution. Seeing at a glance that he was an honest fanatic, whose sincerity entitled him to kindly consideration, I asked him in, had a substantial meal prepared for him, and afterwards gave him a cigar and a little money. We had an interesting chat about the Army and its prospects in India, and he put me a number of questions about Theosophy, which showed that he did not

have even a rudimentary idea of any philosophy, let alone that of India. He told me that he was the son of an English agricultural laborer, which, of course, made his efforts to do good in his own simple way all the more creditable. Our interview was very friendly, although

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I made no attempt to conceal the fact that I was not a Christian, and that I did not at all think that it was a good thing to convert Hindus from their own splendid religion; therefore, that I would not give the Army any money for that branch of their work, but that I would gladly help them in their “rescue work,” and that if they could devise any plan for converting the self-styled Christians in India to Christianity, they might count on me for my share of the expense. He laughed at that, and said that, so far as his experience at Ootacamund was concerned, he would say that I had behaved towards him more like a Christian than any of them. When taking leave and directing himself towards the door, he suddenly turned and, as if asking me in a friendly way to have a drink, said: “Colonel, shall we have a bit of a prayer?” It was so funny that I had to laugh, and said: “No, thanks; I can pray myself in two or three languages!”

Mr. Edge—who had come up for a change—and I amused ourselves at this time with the Tarot cards, and certainly got some strange prognostications. In one memorandum of the 26th of June, which, at my request, Mr. Edge put into writing and signed, and which is pasted in my Diary, I find a prophecy which seems to have pointed directly to the action of Mr. Judge. What other interpretation can be given to these words: “There is serious trouble and danger from somewhere, and a woman has a hand in it; there are folly and deception to be feared which will give rise to enmity and trouble—this seems serious; there [464] is moral death for someone—perhaps a foolish affair on the part of a leading member; at all events, some act of suicidal folly.” There is also the following prognostic: “A sacrifice on the part of someone is indicated, and the Society will benefit thereby”: to which of the sacrifices that have been subsequently made by individuals for the benefit of the Society this points I shall not undertake to say. Mr. Edge and I noticed one very curious thing, viz., that time after time, and in succession, the card which we agreed should represent my Guru would turn up when I cut the pack. Of course there is a great deal of nonsense in these divinations by cards, coffee-grounds, and other agencies, but there is also a great deal of the other sort. The faculty of what the late Major Buckley called “conscious clairvoyance” very frequently comes into play, and

truly remarkable revelations are often given. For instance, at this moment in Paris, a lady who earns a very handsome living by reading fortunes in coffee-grounds, and the noble army of card-reading fortune-tellers, would never have been kept in profitable practice if their prognostications had not been often verified.

On the 2nd of July Mr. Keightley came from Madras and joined us two in discussing the situation of affairs in all parts of the world. I had calls from a number of pleasant residents of the station, and received every civility from the then Governor, Lord Wenlock, and Lady Wenlock, the latter inviting me to her At Homes, and his Excellency sending me

MEDIUMS, MENDACITY,[465] cards for her Majesty's Birthday Ball. Government House at Ootacamund is the hot-weather resort of the Governors of Madras, who spend fully half the year in the lovely surroundings of this queen of Indian hill-stations.

CHAPTER XXVII

BUDDHIST CEREMONY AT DARJEELING

(1892)

ON a sunny day in July there came to me on a visit, which made it seem all the sunnier, my dear friend Prince Harisinhji, of Bhaunagar State. He has given me so many proofs of affection during the past twenty-odd years that I feel almost as sure of him as of myself, and I think that if I should die, I should have no more sincere mourner. His loyalty of heart and simplicity of nature are in vivid contrast with the characters of most Indian princes whom I have met, and I often wish that his fellow-graduates of the Rajkumar College reflected as much credit as he upon that educational institution. On the day after his arrival Messrs. Keightley and Edge left me for work in the plains, and a week later the Prince himself was most unwillingly compelled to return to his home, as the Karbhari (Minister) of a Rajput State had arranged a marriage between his young prince and Harisinhji's daughter. This left me alone, with ample time to do my literary work.

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Among Ceylon Buddhists the burning question at that time was the necessity for adopting measures for defeating a bold stroke of legislation in the missionary interest which forbade the giving of grants-in-aid to any school that might be opened within a quarter of a mile of any existing registered school. On the face of it this seemed innocent enough, as the prohibition would work to the advantage of any Buddhist school that might first occupy a desirable village. But, in point of fact, while the Buddhists were somnolently indifferent to the education of their children, the missionaries quietly pre-empted all the most desirable localities at the chief centres of population; so that the Buddhists would—if this iniquitous Act were passed—be compelled to choose between sending their children to Christian schools, or opening and supporting their own schools without a penny of Government aid. Considering that the greater part of the Government revenue in Ceylon is derived from taxation of Buddhists, the injustice of the proposed Buddhist Boycotting Bill is evident. This was the more apparent since at that time there were only twenty-five Buddhist schools registered, as against above a thousand of other denominations. Of course the

missionaries, having command of capital, and also having the foresight given by experience, profited to the fullest extent by the apathy of the Buddhists. The latter did not suspect the nature and extent of the plot until they were rudely shaken out of their sloth by my public appeals and denunciations. Things have mended a good deal since that [468] time, and our 25 schools have increased to more than 200; but we still have great difficulties to overcome, among them the chief being the lack of working capital as things go now, any sum required for emergent work has to be collected by subscription, and, naturally enough, these constant demands are somewhat onerous. Yet, all the same, the Sinhalese people have shown a most commendable generosity and unflagging interest in the progress of our revival movement.

A rather dramatic event occurred at Darjeeling in the month of July in the meeting of H. Dharmapala, as agent of the Chief Priest of Ceylon, with important representatives of the Tibetan and Cis-Himâlayan Lamas, who had gathered together at Darjeeling at that time. Miss Henrietta Müller contributed to the Theosophist for August (1892) an interesting account, from which, in view of their picturesque and historical interest, I make the following extracts:

“Mr. Dharmapala had been commissioned by the chief Buddhist monks of Ceylon to convey to the Lamas of Tibet some relics of Buddha and a few leaves from the sacred Bo-tree (*Ficus religiosa*), now growing at Buddha-Gaya—the place sacred to millions of Buddhists—and also a Buddhist flag.

“A curious coincidence has arisen in connection with this flag. It was found that the Buddhists of Ceylon had no sacred flag except that used by Buddhists of other countries. It was only in 1885 that Colonel Olcott, in consultation with the Chief Priests, designed this flag, in accordance with the instructions contained [469] in the Buddhist sacred books. It consists of five vertical bars, colored blue, yellow, crimson, white, and scarlet, and terminated by a final bar, combining all the colors in the same order. This design was pronounced by the Lamas at the meeting to be almost identical with the flag of the Grand Lama of Tibet.” [Miss Müller is in error in saying that I devised the Buddhist flag; the credit for this goes to the members of the Colombo T. S. Of course I was consulted after the colors were chosen, and all I did was to prescribe the shape in which the flag should be made.—H.S.O.]

“It was arranged that a procession bearing these relics should pass through the town, starting from Lhasa-Villa, the residence of Pandit Sarat Chandra Das, C.I.E., the renowned Tibetan traveller and scholar, to the residence of Rajah

Tondub Paljor.

“The procession, in starting, was headed by the Tibetan band, which was playing the Tibetan air ‘Gya-gar-Dor-je-dan’ (‘Flourish Buddha-Gaya’). It was followed by the flag-bearer on horseback, in the Sikkim military uniform, bearing the above-mentioned sacred flag. Next came the Venerable Lama, Sherab-gya-tcho (the Ocean of Learning), head of the Goom Monastery, carrying the casket of relics; after him came Mr. H. Dharmapala, riding on a dark bay horse, dressed in the orange-colored garment of the order of Upâsakas. After him came Pandit Sarat Chandra Das, also riding; he was followed by a number of Lamas on horseback and dressed in their characteristic robes—the loose cloth coat with wide sleeves, silken [470] sash, and the remarkable high pointed ‘red cap’ of their school.

“The procession wended its way through the narrow winding roads of Darjeeling, collecting great crowds as it went. In the middle of the town the procession was met by a party of Lamas, representatives of the Darjeeling Monastery; they were accompanied by the temple band, comprising cymbals, hautboys, and horns. At the gate of the Rajah’s residence the procession was met by the two chief Lamas of Sikkim, who conducted it to the meeting-room; this had been decorated with Tibetan silks and hangings and painted tapestries, illustrating scenes from the sacred books.

“In front of the low table, and occupying the chief position in the room as the head of the meeting, sat the young Prince, son of the Rajah of Sikkim. He was a healthy-looking boy of 13 years of age, with features of marked Mongolian type, and of sallow complexion; his expression and his manner throughout the meeting was solemn, grave, and dignified. He is being especially educated by Lamas brought from Tibet for the purpose, and prepared by them for the high position he is to fill as the Hierarch of Sikkim of the Red Cap Order.

“Rajah Tondub, President of the Darjeeling Maha-Bodhi Society, sat on his left, and instructed the boy in the method of proceedings. On the arrival of the procession, the casket of relics was handed by the old Lama to the Rajah, who conveyed it to the young Prince.

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“The principal Lamas sat on the right and the Chiefs on the left of the Prince. At the table, facing the Prince, sat Mr. H. Dharmapala, Pandit Sarat Chandra Das, Srinath Chatterjee, and myself. The proceedings of the meeting were

conducted by Lama Ugyen Gya-tcho, Secretary of the Society, a man of great intelligence and frank, open countenance, with a commanding figure and genial, pleasant manners. He was the companion of Sarat Chandra Das during both his expeditions into Tibet. Among the chiefs above mentioned was the Dewan Phurbu, President of the Sikkim Council; among the priests I noticed the Head Lama of Pema Yongche, the chief State Monastery in Sikkim. In the first place the Secretary introduced the leading members of the procession to the Prince, at the same time explaining the character of the relics. Some introductory remarks were then made by Pandit Sarat Chandra, whose formal address to the meeting, written in Tibetan, was read by the Secretary; speeches were made, too, in the Tibetan language by Lama Sherab Gya-tcho, who gave a résumé of the rise, progress, and downfall of Buddhism in India, and its extension in Tibet and Ceylon; he congratulated his countrymen assembled on the arrival of this important Buddhist mission from Ceylon. He reminded his hearers that this was the first public meeting for the extension of Buddhism ever held by the people of Tibet and Ceylon, all friendly communication on religious matters having been entirely interrupted between the two countries for at least eight or [472] nine hundred years. He was followed by the Lama of Pemayangtche, who emphasised the importance of the occasion, enlarged upon the character of the mission, and showed what great blessings might be expected to ensue from it, more especially to Sikkim. Mr. Dharmapala then followed.

“Pandit Sarat Chandra Das then spoke, and described the three schools of Buddhism prevailing in Tibet and Ceylon.

“At this stage of the proceedings the young Prince, taking the casket of relics in his hands, raised it to his forehead in a reverential manner; at the same moment the assembled Lamas commenced chanting in very deep bass tones an invocation to the higher influences, consisting of a prayer for their presence and for their aid in the cause. The Lamas were all seated in the position of meditation during this chant, and their hands were folded or inter-locked in front of them in the form of a mudra. During the chant the Secretary placed in the hands of each Lama a small quantity of rice, the purpose of which was to purify, in the same way as, and in the place of, water. Every now and then each Lama would unlock his hands and sprinkle some of the rice over the room. When the chant was finished, the Secretary took the open casket and handed it to every one in the room who desired its benediction.

“The ceremony concluded, Mr. Dharmapala presented one of the relics and a

Bo-tree leaf to the Principal of the Sikkim State Monastery, the other [473] three being destined for Tibet. These were to be carried by messenger from Darjeeling all the way to Lhasa, and delivered into the hands of the Grand Lama of Tibet.

“Then came the Rajah’s speech. He is a strong-built man, above 50 years of age, with a shrewd, intelligent countenance, at once grave and humorous. He conveyed the thanks of himself and the meeting to Mr. Dharmapala, and expressed his lively appreciation of the important duty which they, in thus meeting together, had been performing, and of the benefits which were likely to accrue therefrom. His speech was well delivered, and was received with evident approval by all present.

“By request, I then conveyed the thanks of the meeting to the Rajah, and expressed the great pleasure I felt at having had an opportunity of being present on such an interesting occasion. The meeting then adjourned.”

It is a pity that, so far as we know, in spite of his undoubtedly good intentions, nothing has come out of Dharmapala’s religious cavalcade.

The resemblance of the Ceylon-invented Buddhist flag to the standard of the Dalai Lama is a very striking fact. It may be remembered that I have said elsewhere that Prince Oukhtomasky told me that the high priest of a Mongolian monastery had told him the same thing. As I am not a believer in chance, I am inclined to think that the Colombo Committee did not choose this particular device without an unsuspected prompting [474] from those mighty personages who occupy themselves with the interests of the Buddhist religion. Evidently, it was as great a desideratum to have this striking symbol of the religion, as to find a common platform of belief on which all Buddhist nations and sects could unite in brotherly spirit. I have every reason to believe that the Lamas of Tibet entertain a brotherly feeling for all their co-religionists; and that if it were possible to bring the leading men of the Southern Church into a council with them, Buddhist unity would speedily become an established fact. I shall recur to this matter when describing my own interview with the Tibetan Ambassador, who came to Darjeeling and stopped there some months while certain important negotiations were going on between the Chinese and British-Indian authorities. Dharmapala’s Darjeeling affair came to nought through lack of an organised plan for carrying it out into practical results. The more noise and tamasha one makes at the beginning of an enterprise, the greater becomes the mortification to see it come to nought through one’s own mismanagement or incapacity. Earnestness is a very good thing, but to ensure success it must be supplemented by other

qualities.

The second Annual Convention of the European Section was held at London on the 14th of July, and on the 16th Mr. Mead cabled me that it had been a great success. It is extremely interesting to read the reports of the activities of the year, as they prove, in a most conclusive manner, the earnest zeal which had [475] been shown by the Sectional and Branch officers. During the preceding twelve months 16 new lending libraries had been opened in Europe; about 1,000 open meetings had been held in connection with the Lodges; between 200 and 300 lectures had been given in public halls; and the H. P. B. press had printed enough sheets of paper to make, if in one piece, a strip 54 miles long and 1 yard wide; the publications of books and magazines, English and Foreign, amounted to 156. Among the methods of propaganda adopted by the Section was one which reflected the greatest credit upon the astuteness of our colleagues, and one which did more, probably, than any other to give vogue to Theosophical ideas. It was the formation of a group of thirty-three ladies and gentlemen, possessed of the talent for writing, under the management of the Baroness de Pallandt, F.T.S., whose business it was to keep a close watch upon the press, and profit by every attack upon or every friendly word said for us, to have written a short article to the same paper defending or commending us and our views, and giving information as to what books to read, and where they were procurable. The Baroness, for the Committee, subscribed to one or more cutting agencies, which sent in daily all newspaper-cuttings necessary to keep her informed as to the trend of public opinion. She would then apportion them among her thirty-two associates for action. Naturally, most of the notices of us were unfriendly, sometimes even actionable, but, thanks to that instinct of fair play which is peculiar [476] in a marked degree to the British people, every attack gave us the right of reply, and so worked to the advantage of our Society in the long run. I see, by the Convention report under notice, that this press group “had contributed no less than 2,005 articles and letters to the public press, this being exclusive of hundreds of others from members not in the list of the group.”

The drafting of the Deed of Trust of the Society’s property, to convey it to the Board of Trustees ordered by the last Adyar Convention, and the filing and probate of H. P. B.’s Will, required my presence at Madras, and so I went there on the 16th of August, and returned to “Gulistan” after an absence of three weeks. Besides the above-named documents being attended to, I executed a power of attorney to Judge Paul, of Brisbane, my attorney, giving him full

powers to sign all necessary papers and exercise his best judgment in the matter of the transfer of the Hartmann estate to the natural heirs, as agreed between us while I was at Toowoomba. It proved ten times more difficult for me to strip myself of this unwelcome bequest than for my attorneys to arrange for my obtaining possession of it. The heirs themselves were solely to blame for the long delay, as nothing could be done until they should settle their own private disputes over the question whether they should or should not bring an action against the executors for breach of trust. Of course, until that was determined, the executors would not sign a paper or take a step in the premises. The case actually dragged along six [477] years and the final closing up of the transaction occurred only a month before my second visit to Brisbane, viz., in 1897. Meanwhile had occurred the great panic in real estate which ruined so many Australian banks, business houses, and private individuals; house and land property values dropped almost to zero; and although I had relinquished to Hartmann's children even the small one-fifth share which was originally and joyfully conceded to the Society, I am afraid that their family disputes made them lose a large part of the £5,000 at which the estate was valued in 1891.

By the overland mail of 2nd September I received a letter from Monsieur C. Parmelin, of Havre, asking me whether he ought to give the rest of his money to the Society, as he had already given it Fcs.30,000. There was a tone of bitterness in it, I remember, and an indication that some of our people were rather urging him to do this. I strenuously counselled him to do nothing of the sort, and said that I should never consent to his giving another franc until his succession to his mother's estate, in the course of nature, made him free to dispose of his original inheritance as he might choose without injury to himself.

As J. W. Bouton, the publisher of *Isis Unveiled*, owed the estate of H. P. B. several hundred dollars for copyright, and as, under her will, this property was now mine, I obtained from the United States Consular Agent at Madras an official certificate on a copy of the will, and sent it to Mr. Judge to collect the money [478] from Bouton. This he did, and I then gave his Section half of it—some \$300—and divided the rest among our different other headquarters. Since that time, although the book has been in constant demand, I have not been able to collect another dollar.

On 21st September I received, at "Gulistan," a letter from Mr. Judge begging me not to force an inquiry into the bogus letters and the "Lahore brass." He put it on the ground that, if I should publish the fact that I had had the little brass seal

engraved (not at Lahore—that is where his pretended Mahatma letters proved their falsity, for the engraving was done at Delhi), it would reflect discredit upon me. I told him, however, that my part in the transaction was quite innocent, and that I intended to expose any person who had been making dishonest use of the seal.

As the time was approaching for my promised visit to Calcutta, Akyab, and other parts of Arakan, I returned, October 1st, to Madras to put things in order. Among my literary duties was the sad one of writing an obituary notice of my true and beloved friend, W. Stainton Moses, M.A., the acknowledged leader of the Spiritualists. When I last saw him at Canterbury he was suffering from the sequelæ of influenza, and he told me that he should not be surprised if it should carry him off. His only anxiety was lest he might not live to finish two or three books he had planned out in his mind. I tried my best to persuade him to fly from the horrible winter climate of London, and come and work up his materials into [479] books at Adyar—a favorite project that he and Massey and I had discussed for years. But he could not see his way to it, for he had his work cut out for him at the West in the Spiritualist movement, and he said he must die at his post. He was a man to love, respect, and trust; a friend that one could ever count upon in all emergencies. He had a commanding influence among Spiritualists, one due to the elevation of his personal character quite as much as to his ripe scholarship and his thorough acquaintance with the literature and different aspects of psychical science. His views were broad and catholic upon those subjects, and, but for the bigotry of the majority of Spiritualists, he and I would have gone far towards our establishing those friendly relations between our two parties that in reason should subsist. In an earlier chapter I have mentioned the proposal he made me in 1888, that if I would manage to keep H. P. B. in a gentle mood towards Spiritualists, he would use his best influence with the latter to come to a more brotherly understanding with the Theosophists. We agreed to make the trial, and H. P. B. fell in with my wishes: he, on his part, began writing benevolently about us in *Light*. We used to see each other often that season in London and compare notes. What the sequel was may be read in the following extract from my obituary notice of him: “His very first kind words about us brought him a shoal of protests, charges of treachery, taunts and jibes; no bigoted sectarian church could have been more intolerant. He read me extracts from some [480] of the letters, printed some in *Light*, and at last told me, sadly, that he should have to give it up, or he should lose all his influence with his party. It was the knowledge of this fact, corroborated amply by the brutal treatment she had

personally received from leading Spiritualists, that helped to make H. P. B.'s later criticisms upon modern Spiritualism so bitter. If all Spiritualists had been as broad-minded as Stainton Moses, and a tenth part as practically versed in Psychology as H. P. B., there would be now a close alliance between them and ourselves, to our mutual advantage.”

In the first volume of these OLD DIARY LEAVES I give a full account of S. M.'s relations with H. P. B. and myself, his partially successful attempt to reach us in his Double; and one of the illustrations in the book shows how H. P. B. revealed to me, in one of the most remarkable pictures ever made, his psychical evolution. It is a thousand pities that we could not have drawn together, in a bond of mutual good understanding, our two great parties, for it would have vastly increased our power to fight Materialism, our common foe.

I mention in the obituary in question that among H. P. B.'s frequent phenomena was her power to cause an oily attar of great fragrance to exude from the palm of her hand. Stainton Moses very frequently had this same exudation, it being sometimes so powerful as to scent the room in which he sat. So, as I was persuaded that he was getting help from our own Masters, I one day, as a matter of curiosity, got [481] H. P. B. to cause the attar to impregnate a flock of fine cotton-wool, which I did up in silk, sewed in a cover of oil-silk, packed and sealed in a little box, and sent to him. He wrote me back that the perfume was identical with that which was so familiar to him. I do not remember whether I have before now stated the fact that when he and I were together in 1891, and looked over his collection of psychical curios, we opened this package and found the perfume still lingering there, after the lapse of about fourteen years. This transpiration of fragrant odors is frequently observed by sensitives at the time when some one of our leading orators is addressing an audience from the platform; sometimes the intimation of the presence of an inspiring current from the White Lodge towards the speaker comes in the form of a bright light, aureole, or nimbus about the speaker's person; and sometimes those who have a fair degree of clairvoyant lucidity can see in this divine light the radiant figure of one of the Masters. This is not the dull and vulgar phantasmal image known at spiritualist séances as a materialisation, but a figure of light, the glorious outshining of a perfected human being.

CHAPTER XXVIII

TO MEET THE AMBASSADOR OF THE DALAI LAMA

(1892)

THE projected journey to the provinces of Arakan and British Burma above referred to was to be made in the interests of Buddhism as represented in the Maha-Bodhi Society, and Dharmapala was to accompany me. I have been amused in looking over my papers of that period to see the reason why. The Arakanese people had heard so much of my work in Ceylon that they wanted me to come and help them in the same way, and wrote to that effect in strong and complimentary language, but—and this is the humorous part of the affair—as they had never had any religious dealings with a white man other than a missionary, and had never seen or heard of a white Buddhist before, their Oriental suspiciousness was excited and their leaders wrote Dharmapala that they wished him to come with me. At a meeting of the Buddhist community of Akyab it was “enthusiastically” decided to telegraph me to come at the beginning of October, the end of the Buddhist Lenten season.

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“The Colonel’s presence alone,” writes one of our friends to Dharmapala, “would not be enough to popularise the projects of the Maha-Bodhi Society. You have to consider that our priests and laity have had no experience whatever, whether with white or European priests or Buddhists, so you have to come and tell us how faithfully and earnestly the Colonel has worked for the Buddhist movement. Our priests have power over the people in spiritual affairs, so you have to tell Colonel Olcott to embrace every opportunity for making friends with our priests.” In another letter the writer thus describes the character of his people: “They are liberal and generous, they usually display their joy in outbursts of enthusiasm, devotion, energy, and generosity to the fullest extent, especially when it is a question of the interests of their country or their religion. On the other hand, they are suspicious and wary about strangers.”

Their invitation having been accepted, the local Arakanese editors prepared the way with fervent articles in their English and vernacular journals after this fashion: “He is well worth hearing, and has all the ancient lore of the Buddhist

religion at his fingers' ends... All the Poongyees (Buddhist monks) and chief priests of the town and district ought to do all they can to welcome and assist this great European High Priest of Buddhism.... In fact the Colonel knows more than the Brahmin High Priests about the Laws and Institutes of Manu, and all ancient Scriptures and religions of Hindustan and Burma"—which, if [484] not at all true, is at least enthusiastic enough in all conscience, and carefully hides the “wary and suspicious” side of the national character! No fair-minded man could blame them for this precautionary mental attitude, since there having been no precedent to be guided by, it was but natural that they should wait for me to show them my character before taking me in their embrace.

Reaching Adyar on 1st October, I hurried through a mass of official work that lay on my desk. Among the interesting letters that awaited me was one from a learned practical psychologist in the West Indies, telling me of some researches he had been making into the spiritual life-history of a certain German mystic, about a certain book of his upon the trail of which my friend had come, and the fact that just at the moment when his effort at concentration was exhausting the last of his nervous forces, a certain messenger-elemental of the class that is used by the Adepts as messengers showed himself and said that he “had been sent by—to tell him to communicate with Olcott, as he had a part in these investigations”. My friend then made two attempts to reach me on the astral plane and succeeded in seeing me, but I was so absorbed in some pressing work that he could not get me to listen to him. He ought not to have felt surprised at that, for his experiment was made at an hour which was 10.30 p.m. to him, but to me was in the morning, after the day's office work had begun. This difference in latitude ought to be, but usually is not, kept in mind [485] by friends who wish to consult me on the super-physical plane. Yet, on the other hand, I often receive letters from acquaintances, and even non-members of the Society, giving me grateful thanks for benefits, physical or moral, received at our meetings in the watches of the night, when we are freed temporarily from the prison-house of the flesh. Among these have been a number of cases where, the correspondents say, they have been cured by me of their diseases, which, when we met in the body during my recent tour, I absolutely refused to deal with, in obedience to the injunction laid upon me by my Guru. This is interesting, as showing that what may be forbidden on the physical plane may be permissible on the astral.

On 13th October I sailed for Calcutta in the “Goorkha,” and reached there on the 16th, finding at the house of my old friend Dr. Salzer the cordial welcome

which he gives habitually to his guests. The opportunity of being in Calcutta was taken to visit the museum with Dharmapala, and examine the ancient stone figures which show how intimate was once the connection between Buddhism and Hinduism. Among them is one of the eight-armed goddess Durga, in her aspect of Ashta-bhuji, and in her usual attitude of a Dea Victrix, but, carved in the royal tiara which she wears, and on the keystone of the arched frame around the statue, is the image of the Buddha, seated for meditation. Among others similarly carved, some in the collection in the Calcutta museum, some in the Brahmanical caves of Ellora, are representations of [486] Indra and his spouse, Indrani. These were important discoveries, as proving the once intimate association of the sister religions of Brahmanism and Buddhism, and I am much obliged to Dharmapala for calling my attention to them.

On 17th October he and I left for Darjeeling for a meeting between the Ambassador of the Dalai Lama of Lhasa and myself, which had been arranged. Reaching there on the following day, I was received as a guest by my friend Babu Chhatra Dhar Ghose. I found at his own cottage, hard at work with a learned Tibetan lama, Babu Sarat Chandra Das, C.I.E., the intrepid and successful Indian traveller to Lhasa and Tashi Lhunpo, the seats of the Dalai and Tashi Lamas respectively. He gave us some of the Tibetan buttered tea, of which we have all read so much. Its taste was more that of weak beef-tea or bouillon than of any infusion of leaves of the tea plant that I ever drank.

The next morning we had a glorious view of the sky-piercing summit of Kinchinganga, that giant peak whose altitude is almost twice that of Mont Blanc. The morning was passed by us with Sarat Babu, whose conversation about his Tibetan experiences was most interesting and instructive. At 4 p.m. the audience with the Ambassador came off, Sarat Babu and his old colleague and travelling companion Lama Ugyen Gyatso kindly serving as interpreters. His Excellency was a handsome young man, of the distinct Mongolian ethnic type, with fair complexion, a gentle expression of face, small well-shaped hands, and a [487] bearing of the personal dignity which usually marks aristocratic birth. On his head he wore a silk-covered turban with a foundation of some stiff material; it was shaped like a truncated cone, the base upward, the narrower end fitting close to his intellectual head; a bunch of silken strands hung from it, like a thick tassel, down his neck. The white crêpe under-coat which he wore showed like a collar at his throat and had very long pendent sleeves; over it was a rather close-fitting surcoat of heavy black brocaded silk, also with long sleeves. In his left ear only

he wore a pendent jewel of jade and gold, some 6 inches in length; there was none in the other ear. His small feet were shod in Chinese satin shoes with thick felt soles. His bearing was dignified, his motions graceful, his voice refined. He comes naturally by his beauty and intelligence, as his grandfather was the Regent of Tibet at the time of the visit of Fathers Huc and Gabet, the missionary priests of the congregation of St. Lazarus, in the year 1845. In his book,³³ Abbé Huc thus records his impressions of the statesman: “The Regent was a man about 50; his large, open countenance, the whiteness of which was remarkable, had a majestic, truly royal expression; and his black eyes, shaded by very long eyelashes, were full of gentleness and intelligence. He was dressed in a yellow robe, lined with marten fur; a diamond earring was suspended to his left ear; and his long hair, black as ebony, was gathered [488] at the top of his head by three little gold combs. His large red cap, encircled with pearls, and surmounted by a red coral ball, lay on a green cushion by his side.”

His treatment of the missionaries during their stay of a month and a half at Lhasa was most friendly and honorable, and when they were expelled from Tibet through the intrigues of the Chinese ambassador, they parted with mutual regret. It is my opinion that his grandson, my acquaintance of Darjeeling, was a person of like character. With that instinctive regard for age which is characteristic of the Oriental peoples, he saluted me most respectfully, gave me a seat of honor, and expressed his pleasure in meeting one who had done so much for Buddhism. His reception of Dharmapala was equally friendly.

In the course of our long talk of nearly four hours, he asked me many questions about the state of our religion outside Tibet and China, and how the teachings of the Buddha were appreciated in the countries of the West. He assured me that if it should ever be my fortune to visit Lhasa I should receive an affectionate welcome; it was not within his power to arrange for such a journey, but he would report to his Government all that had been said, and it would give the Tibetans great pleasure. As an interlude, buttered tea was served to us. The plans and work of the Maha-Bodhi Society greatly interested him, and he congratulated Dharmapala on the usefulness of his labors; the Dalai Lama would be delighted to hear all he should tell him. Certain religious presents, sent through [489] Dharmapala by the High Priest Sumangala and the Japanese priest-students then living in Ceylon, he thanked us for, and promised to send them on to Lhasa at once by special couriers along with his despatches. In return for something of a similar kind which I myself begged his acceptance of, he

gave me a very fine gilt bronze statuette of a sitting Bodhisattva, made at Lhasa, and containing in its interior a folded strip of paper on which the Dalai Lama had himself written a mantram invoking the protection of the gods for the ambassador, from all evil influences, and stamped it with his own seal. This unique present is, of course, in the Adyar Library, together with his Excellency's signed portrait. At the close of our interview he accompanied us to the garden gate, shook hands with us in Western fashion, and expressed his deep regret that my engagements elsewhere would prevent our meeting again.

Though so young a man in appearance, he was, I was told, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Tibet, a cabinet office but recently created. His rank was that of "Kalon," his name Sheda Pishi Pai. Among his numerous suite of intelligent-looking men was one to whom the ambassador introduced me, with the remark that he was a very learned Pandit well versed in Tibetan literature. When we saluted, he looked me square in the eyes with a look full of meaning, saying to me almost as plainly as if in words that he knew all about me and that we were old friends—on the other plane. I responded similarly, whereupon he stretched out his hand, took and pressed mine, and [490] said in Tibetan—which the high-born Lama Ugyan Gyatso interpreted—that he was very sorry that we could not have had a long talk about religious matters. The next morning Dharmapala and I left Darjeeling.

We reached Calcutta on 21st October at noon, and devoted the afternoon to a further study of the Indo-Buddhist statues in the Calcutta museum. The following day was spent at the rooms of the Asiatic Society, in consultation with Pandit Haraprasad Sastri about details of Buddhist history, and the next with another learned Brahmin Pandit, Hari Mohan Vidyabhûshan, on the same subject.

There was at Calcutta, at the time spoken of, a growing feeling of hostility among the Bengal Hindus against Buddhism, which had been stirred up by the activity of the Maha-Bodhi Society, and which, in the best interests of religion, it was prudent not to allow to spread; so I had been invited to give a public lecture in the Town Hall, in the hope that a kindlier spirit might be aroused. It came off on the evening of 24th October in presence of a monster audience, which included most of the better educated and influential men of Bengal. The chair was taken by Babu Norendranath Sen, F.T.S., Editor of the Indian Mirror, the leading Indian daily newspaper, President of our Bengal T. S. from the date of its formation, and one of the oldest and staunchest Indian friends of H. P. B. and

myself.

His introductory remarks about myself were most flattering, even running into exaggeration, but one might well forgive it all for the sake of what he said [491] about the love-bond between the Indians and myself; and to me, that thought always sets my heart to beating. Alluding to my offer to retire from office and give way to a younger man, and to my having withdrawn my resignation at the entreaty of friends, the chairman said: "His retirement would not only have been a heavy blow to the Society, but also a serious loss to all India, for whatever of religious or spiritual progress... this country had made in recent years was mainly, if not solely, due to Colonel Olcott's untiring efforts. He had been for the last twelve years the standard-bearer of light and life for the Hindus." Now we Western people, with our cool blood, are not great admirers of Oriental superlatives, and even after ten years our Bengali brother's sentences glow like red-hot iron; but many years of residence in this part of the world have taught me to find the sincerity which is often hidden under compliments that would make Europeans and Americans stare. The precious fact to me is that the Orientals love me and I love them, and would not now live elsewhere than in India for any consideration. In reading the chairman's compliments, it must be remembered that Mrs. Besant's first visit to India was made in the winter of 1893-4, and that during the previous fourteen years I had been the busiest of the Society's lecturers in this country. Norendra Babu's panegyric, therefore, quite antedated the present state of things, when that dearest of women and friends is being held closest of us all to the Indian heart.

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A very striking fact in connection with Mrs. Besant is that she has completely removed the uneasy feeling which had previously prevailed that H. P. B. and I were hoping to convert the Hindus to Buddhism, and that the Society was more Buddhistic than eclectic. By her splendid presentation of Indian philosophy, and her undisguised personal preference for it as a religious system, she has made the most orthodox followers of Brahmanism friendly to us, and won the practical support of many of the most important Indian princes for her Central Hindu College. If H. P. B. can still overlook the field of our activities, she must surely be astounded at what she can see going on at Benares. Thus "in a mysterious way" move the Great Ones "their wonders to perform".

The title of the lecture under notice was "The Kinship between Hinduism and Buddhism," and the testimony of history was invoked to prove the assertion. It

was shown that for fifteen centuries the two religions had prospered side by side in sisterly good-feeling, and that the Buddha himself and his great follower the Emperor Dharmasoka had enjoined upon the professors of Ârya Dharma—miscalled Buddhism—to show equal respect to the Brahmins and to Buddhist monks. If Buddhism had practically disappeared from Hindustan, save and except in the parts bordering on Arakan, it was due to the cruel iconoclasm of victorious Muslim invaders, and to no other cause. The history of the holiest of Buddhist shrines, Buddha Gaya, was sketched, and the fact noted that for six hundred years, viz.,

[493] from the thirteenth century to the nineteenth, it had been left to crumble unwatched and uncared for; to fall into ruin in the wild jungle which had grown on and about the holy spot where fifty generations of worshippers had recited their five precepts, and for whom Buddha Gaya had been the objective point of pilgrimages from all countries of the Buddhistic world. Thanks to the pious liberality of the late King Mindoon Min of Burmah, and to the co-operation of the Government of Bengal, the temple grounds had been excavated, and the ruined shrines and ambulatories exhumed from under thirty feet of dust, which had buried them out of sight of man. Pilgrimages had then been resumed, and the possessor of the fief, a Saivite Mahant, seeing pecuniary profit derivable from their offerings, had vigorously asserted his proprietary rights, and more or less desecrated the images and buildings. The chief object in the formation of the Maha-Bodhi Society was explained to be “primarily to recover possession for the Buddhists of the most sacred of their shrines... where the Lord Gautama Buddha acquired Sambodhi, or the divine knowledge... In addition to this, it is contemplated to recover possession of other Buddhist shrines, to erect or purchase a Dharmasala or pilgrims’ rest-house in Calcutta, and building for a Normal College, at which Buddhist students from Japan, China, Tibet, and other Buddhist countries may be taught Sanskrit and Pali. This, together with an organised propaganda of Buddhist literature and ideas largely in Western countries, and [494] the unification of the various schools of Buddhism in Buddhist nations, is the scheme of the Society in full, and without reservation”.³⁴

One by one, the malicious misrepresentations of Buddha’s teaching and of the spirit of his followers and the falsehoods about the Ârya Dharma having been driven out of India by Srî Sankarâchârya, were exposed and confuted; the parity of the philosophies of the Vedânta and of the Buddha in certain important details was shown; the significance of the blending of the symbols of the two religions,

as seen in the sculptured images above referred to, was pointed out; the distinction between the Digambaras and the Bauddhas, and the fact that all the venom of the orthodox Hindu Pandits was aimed at the former and not at all against the latter, was demonstrated by various quotations from orthodox Hindu books: in short, it was very clearly shown that the prevalent hatred of Buddhism and Buddhists was a silly mistake, unwarranted by the facts of history and revolting to common sense. I notice one paragraph in the printed report of the lecture which I am tempted to cite, because the necessity for the reaffirmation of the Society's eclectic policy recurs from time to time. In fact, I have just received from America a vigorous protest against the latest [495] attempt to set up a dogmatic theocracy in our ranks. I might not have given the Calcutta lecture at all if some of my Hindu colleagues, and even non-members, had not tried to frighten me off from the public defence of Buddhism. In the course of the lecture I said: "That was quite enough to determine me to speak and to tell the whole truth. I have not a single drop of slave blood in my veins, and I abhor the attempt to curtail a freeman's right to freethinking. I ask no Hindu to give up his religion, nay, I believe that religion to be so noble in its concepts and so elevating in its moral influence that I say that he who is carried away by the petty spite of sectarian bigotry into trying to make it intolerant is a false Hindu, a traitor to its indwelling spirit. The Theosophical Society has tolerance and brotherhood for its corner-stone: it is an angel of peace and good-will among men; it offers a free platform for the study and elucidation of all religions; itself as a body preserving a strict neutrality and professing no sectarian dogma. As its President, I have helped the Hindus, the Parsis, and the Muhammadans of India and the Buddhists of other countries to understand their respective creeds, and so long as I am compelled to retain office shall that impartiality be strictly preserved. The Hindu members of the Society who have wished me to abstain from discussing Buddhism in India have virtually wished me to act in a spirit of cowardly selfishness, and to dishonor my official pledge."

During my recent tour (1901) around the world, I have everywhere battled for the same principle, and [496] more than once have said that when the majority of my colleagues wish to turn the Society into a sect of hero-worshippers, to abridge personal liberty of thought and speech, and to give to some book written by somebody the character of an inspiration, they will have to find another President. The more widely known these views can be made, the better it will be for the Society, and the more stable will its foundation become. What right have we, poor pigmies, to dictate what our neighbor shall or shall not believe, or to try

to make his retention of membership among us depend upon his accepting the teachings of a book or a book-writer?

Upon a paragraph in the Srimat Bhagavat, in which is embodied a prophecy, the bitterest opponents of Buddhism in India pretend to find warrant for their ill-feeling. In the course of my lecture I cited this passage (1st Skandha, Adhyâya 3), which reads as follows: “At the beginning of Kali Yuga, to throw a Moha (illusion) upon the enemies (Aúuras) of the Úuras (gods), Buddha son of Anjana will take birth at Gayâ.” Of course it will be seen that this has no reference whatever to Gautama Buddha, who was not born at the beginning, but in the 2478th year of Kali Yuga; was not the son of Anjana, but of King Suddhodana; was not born at Gayâ, but at Kapilavastu and was not named Buddha, but Siddhartha! “Remembering,” as I say in my lecture, “that the term Buddha, and the sectarian designation Bauddha existed in India long before the advent of the historical Gautama Buddha, you will observe that if there was [497] any ancient prophecy such as the above, it may have referred to some other personage who may have appeared about the beginning of the present Kali Yuga.”

Happily for the information of scholars, the Vishnu Purana (book iii, 18) contains a description of the mâyâ moha or deceptive appearance assumed by Vishnu when he appeared as Buddha, and in which he is described as a naked mendicant, digambara, with his head shaven, and carrying a brush of peacock feathers. Did anyone ever see any Buddhist sculptured image which represented the Lord Buddha as either naked or carrying a bunch of peacock feathers, or can such a description be found in any Buddhist book? Certainly not: the Teacher is always represented as clothed in the ample robes of a Bhikshu, and carrying nothing in his hand save his begging bowl: why, in the Mahâvagga of the Vinâya Pitaka, he forbids his Bhikshus to even speak to a naked ascetic. A very elementary acquaintance with Indian religious history teaches us that the reference is to a Jain ascetic, who also went by the name of a Buddha, and it was between this class and the orthodox Hindus that were carried on bitter quarrels and cruel reprisals. On the wall of the sacred tank in the temple at Madura, in a series of painted panels, are depicted the contests ordered by a certain Rajâh between the Jaina priests and a Saivite sanyâsi, to test the divinity of their respective books, by the ordeals of faith-healing, of fire, and of water. The result was the overthrow and discomfiture of the unfortunate “Bauddhas,” and the painter has [498] shown us what brutal punishments were visited upon them. Some were impaled and left for birds of prey to pick out their eyes; the

decapitated heads of others were ground into mince-meat in huge oil-mills; many others were put to the sword. These defeated Bauddhas correspond in appearance with the descriptions of the Bauddhas given in the denunciatory passages of the Srimat Bhagavat and the Vishnu Purana, in being half-naked and carrying peacock plumes in their hands. But I need not pursue quotations from the lecture in question, which can be read by such as still entertain for the Buddhists those feelings of hatred which are due solely to ignorance; it was necessary to give as much as I have to show what remedy was needed for the state of things which existed in Bengal at the time of which we are writing, viz., ten years ago. It would be a misfortune for India if the present gratifying revival of Hinduism under the auspices of leading members of our Society should be weakened by a stirring of the old embers of hatred towards the Buddhists.

On the day after the lecture I made calls upon some of my friends, and Dharmapala and I dined at the house of a well-known and pious Burmese lady, Mrs. Oung, where we met Dr. Waddell, the author of that celebrated book on Northern Buddhism, *The Buddhism of Tibet*.

My rooms were thronged with visitors on the next day, and on the next, 27th October, we sailed for Chittagong in the S.S. "Kola". The number of our saloon passengers was seven.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE CAVES AND JUNGLES OF HINDUSTAN

IN FICTION AND REALITY

(1892)

WE were fortunate enough to have a sunny and smooth passage, which made us all enjoy each other's society. The journey was broken at Chittagong, which we reached on 29th October at 7.30 a.m. The morning was spent by Dharmapala and myself in writing out for publication, as a pamphlet, the lecture referred to in the last chapter. Delegations of Boruahs (Maghs) and Hindus came aboard to pay their respects, and at their urgent request I went ashore, and at 5.30 p.m. lectured at the Government College building on "The High Morality of Hinduism and Buddhism," my audience of about 800 persons comprising sections of both communities. We sailed the next morning for Akyab, and reached there on the 31st, receiving on the wharf a most cordial welcome from the leading gentlemen of the place, in which Dharmapala fully shared. On being settled in our quarters, we first paid ceremonial visits to the four most influential priests of the local section of the Buddhist Sangha. The rest of the day [500] our rooms were thronged with callers, and in the afternoon the General Committee came and I sketched out our plans for the Buddha Gaya movement. On the following day I called on Major Parrott, Commissioner of Arâkân, who invited me to dine with him on the next Sunday.

The next morning (November 2), accompanied by Messrs. Mra Oo, Extra Assistant Commissioner; U Tha Dwe, A.T.M.; Chan Tun Aung and Too Chan, Pleaders; and other influential Akyab gentlemen, and by Dharmapala, I went in a steamboat to Urittaung, a village 27 miles up the river, to a pagoda festival. We were taken to the rest-house on the river bank, an airy structure, open at the sides and with a corrugated iron roof; the floor was covered with durries or cotton carpets, on which our beds were made in the absence of bedsteads. The pagoda is on a steep hill, and is reached after a hard climb. Near it is a new pagoda of smaller size. We were told that the Buddha Rasa, the spiritual rays which indicate a concentration of the Buddha's spiritual influence, and which I believe I have described in connection with a Buddhist temple in Ceylon, are sometimes

seen. The next day was the great festival of pilgrimage, and the holy spot was thronged with pilgrims. We had taken with us, as objects of interest for the Arakanese, a stone medallion of the Buddha, which we had obtained at Buddha Gaya, and the artistic bronze image given by the Dalai Lama to the Tibetan Ambassador, and by him presented to me. Naturally, these rare objects excited the [501] reverential feelings of the pilgrims. I lectured on Maha-Bodhi to an attentive throng, and received more than Rs. 80 in small coins. My remarks were interpreted by one of the gentlemen of our party. Our purpose had been previously explained by a priest named Uthargarah, Sayadaw, whose temple is at Kyoukphyu. He was a most eloquent and impressive speaker whose equal I had not heard save in the case of the great Sinhalese orator, Megittuwatte. We returned to Akyab the next day in a heavy rain.

On the 5th I lectured privately to a company of Maghs (Boruahs) of Chittagong, and persuaded them to organise a committee to collect subscriptions for the Maha-Bodhi Society. The same afternoon I lectured on Buddhism to a very large audience at the Government College: the Commissioner, Major Parrott, and most of the Europeans of Akyab were present. A preliminary meeting of Elders was held the next day; and after a lecture to a large native audience in a bamboo shamianah, the local Branch of the Maha-Bodhi Society was formed. In the evening I met a number of European gentlemen at dinner at the Commissioner's house. There was another dinner the next day given me by the inhabitants of the ancient village of Ohdan, now one of the thirteen wards included within the Akyab Municipality. It was a grand function, and the food was all cooked and served in the native fashion. Later in the day I lectured on the Bodhisattvas and Arhats, and also on the way by which the Prince Siddhartha became Buddha.

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A lecture was also given by Dharmapala. The council of the new Branch Maha-Bodhi Society met on Tuesday and agreed on details. In the evening I dined with Elders of Rupa village, another Akyab ward, and collected over Rs. 400 for the M.-B. Society. The next morning I visited a sick gentleman who gave me Rs. 100, some others of the family added a smaller sum, and his daughter offered me, with every mark of reverence, a pair of massive gold earrings in lieu of money, which she asked me to sell for the benefit of the fund. This was my first experience of the sort since I began collecting funds in the East, but I had it from the best authority that large numbers of jewels were thrown by Burmese

women into the melting-pot when the great bell at Shway Dagôn was cast. If I could have afforded it, I should have bought the earrings myself and given them to some zealous lady colleague in the West.

Two or three days later I drove into the country with Mr. Hla Tun U to see an aged and learned bhikku who had read my Buddhist Catechism and wanted to talk with me. He was very enthusiastic about the book, and also about our Maha-Bodhi scheme; he hoped the book would find its way into every Burmese household. On Sunday the 13th I helped to pull a colossal statue of the Buddha which was being removed from a temporary to a permanent site, and it would have done some of my sybaritic colleagues good to have seen me tugging at the rope with the shouting crowd. That evening I lectured at Lamadaw village, and made a collection of Rs. 2,100. This was my last day but [503] one at Akyab; early the next afternoon I addressed the boys at the Government High School and dined with a European friend.

I found the Arakanese all that they had been depicted in their countryman's letter quoted above—generous, enthusiastic, patriotic, religious, and—suspicious of foreigners. But my reception throughout was most cordial and all that could have been desired, and I left the country feeling that if Dharmapala followed up our initial effort, large sums might be realised towards the carrying out of the Maha-Bodhi project. I have reports in various newspapers of the substance of my lectures, but it is not worth while to quote from them, as they were simply devoted to the usual presentation of Buddhistic doctrines and a summarised view of the present state of Buddhism throughout the world; the whole ending with an appeal to the Arakanese to band themselves together to help on the meritorious work of the Maha-Bodhi Society. As regards the country, I may as well cite a paragraph from the Encyclopædia Britannica (vol. ii, p. 305), which gives the following interesting particulars:

“The natives of Arâkân trace their history as far back as A.D. 701, and give a lineal succession of 120 native princes down to modern times. According to them, their empire had at one period far wider limits, and extended over Ava, part of China, and a portion of Bengal. This extension of their empire is not, however, corroborated by known facts in history. At different times the Moghuls and Pegus carried their [504] arms into the heart of the country. The Portuguese during the era of their greatness in Asia gained temporary establishment in Arâkân; but in 1783 the province was finally conquered by the Burmese, from which period until its cession to the British in 1826, under the treaty of

Yandaboo, its history forms part of that of Burma. The old city of Arâkân, formerly the capital of the province, is situated on an inferior branch of the Koladyne river, Its remoteness from the ports and harbors of the country, combined with the extreme unhealthiness of its situation, have led to its gradual decay subsequently to the formation of the comparatively recent settlement of Akyab, which place is now the chief town of the province. The old city of Arâkân lies about 50 miles north-east of Akyab, in 20° 42' N. latitude, and 93° 24' E, longitude. The Maghs, who form nearly the whole population of the province, follow the Buddhist doctrines, which are universally professed throughout Burma. The priests are selected from all classes of men, and one of their chief employments is the education of children. Instruction is consequently widely diffused, and few persons, it is said, can be found in the province who are unable to read. The qualifications for entering into the priestly order are good conduct and a fair measure of learning—such conduct, at least, as is good according to Buddhist tenets, and such learning as is esteemed among their votaries.” Alas! why cannot these Western (perhaps ex-missionary) writers refrain from such wanton insults?

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On the 14th evening, I went on board the steamer “Kasara,” which was to take me to Rangoon. My inclination to revisit Rangoon was greatly strengthened by an urgent letter which I received from the Secretary of the Thatham Hita Kari Association, who wrote that the Society “was like a ship without a helm or chart,” and needed my advice. They were organising to open schools for children and print Buddhist Scriptures.

I think I have mentioned, in connection with my first visit to Rangoon in 1885, in company with Mr. Leadbeater, that I protested against the false idea for merit prevalent among the kind-hearted Burmese. They were at the time of my visit collecting a public subscription of Rs. 100,000 for regilding the stately and graceful dome of Shway Dagôn. I thought it an unnecessary extravagance, since, when ascending the river to Rangoon, the dome still shone from afar like a hill of glittering gold, and I thought the people might well postpone for two or three years this large expenditure. I had conversed with the Elders about the state of religious literature and the familiarity of the people with their sacred works, and knew that the most pressing claim on popular liberality was the publication of the Tripitikas, so as to bring them within the reach of at least the monks attached to the poorer kyaungs (monasteries). So I raised my voice in protest, and told the

people that for one-fourth the sum they would spend on the gilding, the three Pitakas could be copied out from the engraved marble slabs in the little [506] kiosks built by the late king Mindoon Min and published. My words fell on some receptive ears, and the organisation of this book-printing and school-opening society was the result.

The next morning Dharmapala and many friends came to say good-bye, and as the clock struck 7 the steamer left the wharf. I had travelled so much about the coasts of India and Ceylon that I was not surprised to find in our jolly skipper the officer who had commanded the vessel on which Leadbeater and I went from Madras to Colombo several years before. From Akyab to Rangoon was a voyage of 60 hours. On arrival (November 18), I was met by many Burmese gentlemen and taken to the hospitable mansion of one of the best men I have met in the East—generous, courteous, pious, and honorable—Mr. Maung Hpo Myin. Miss Ballard, of Chicago, who had a freak at that time for becoming a Buddhist nun, was stopping there. Among my many visitors was the Burmese nobleman who had kindly interpreted my French address to the assembled High Priests at Mandalay into the vernacular. Every visitor to Rangoon has seen and admired the graceful architectural structure of the Soolay Pagoda. I lectured there on the Sunday evening on “The Sacred Shrines of the Buddhists” to a very large audience. I am able to recall my remarks by reading an article from the Rangoon Gazette, which I find copied into the Journal of the M.-B. Society for February, 1893; and as the arguments are not stale, and are just as necessary for the Burmans [507] to heed now as they were then, I will give some extracts. Says the editor’s report:

“He wanted the Burman Buddhists to understand that he had no more sympathy with them than he had with the Buddhists of Ceylon, Japan, China, and Tibet, and all the other countries, nor had he the least inclination towards one sect more than to another. There was for him only one Buddhist sect, and that was Buddhism; and there was only one Buddhist doctrine, and that was what was taught by their Lord Buddha.

“Having compared at length the interest shown by the Christians in their religion with the feebler interest displayed by the Buddhists in Japan, China, Ceylon, Siam, Burma and other parts, the lecturer said that among all the nations of the world it was agreed by foreigners who had travelled about Burma that the Burmans were the most generous of people in regard to their religion, and some of the most respected Christians, like Bishop Bigandet and others, had borne

testimony to that fact, and praised the Burmans for their piety and religious enthusiasm. But then all intelligent foreigners had also agreed in making one reproach to the Burmese Buddhists, and that was that they misunderstood what true merit was. They were wasting enormous sums of money in building many more kyaungs and pagodas than were necessary. What was more meritorious was to follow the Precepts of their Teacher with regard to the spread of their religion, and to see that their children were being religiously [508] brought up as Buddhists. Why not build pagodas and kyaungs in other places where there were none, and especially in the most sacred places belonging to Buddhists, such as Buddha Gaya, Kapilavastu, Kusinârâ, and Benares? He thought that much of the money that was spent on the beautiful structures in Rangoon would have been better spent in the places he mentioned. In Buddha Gaya, for instance, there were many images that were buried 20 feet in mud, and there were others scattered over the ground on which the dhobies washed their dirty clothes, and people used them for the backs of fireplaces and for curry-stones. He asked them to think of this; and when they heard that someone had made up his mind to build a pagoda, to go to him and mention the word Maha-Bodhi, and tell him that the shrines of Buddha were being desecrated, and that money was wanted for them, and not for building the pagoda. He asked them to understand that no Buddhist did his duty who confined his liberality to his own village, to his own country, to his own family, and to his own nation; but only that man did his duty who used all his endeavors to see that the Dharma which they considered so precious and necessary for all mankind was spread through the four quarters of the globe. They must do this in a businesslike way. They must have a committee in Rangoon to receive the money, and he would see that it was applied to the proper purposes.

“Arâkân had promised to raise Rs. 50,000. Only a few days ago he had visited three out of thirteen villages [509] of Akyab, and they had given him in cash Rs. 4,000. He wanted at least one lakh to begin the work; and what he proposed to do was first to have at Calcutta a Buddhist College or School where they could train preachers to go to different countries, after learning the foreign languages which they would have to use. The next thing he wanted was to establish a rest-house where Buddhist pilgrims could stay on their way to Buddha Gaya. He wanted also to establish in Calcutta a small temple, to found a library, and to have a literary fund, so that they might get the books translated, printed, and circulated. He wanted to put at each one of the sacred shrines a kyaung and a rest-house. The other day, in Akyab, a Buddhist lady was so interested that she

gave him a heavy pair of earrings, and they were sold for Rs. 73. He was told that when a bell for a pagoda was required to be made and more gold was needed, the ladies would melt their jewelry. But the bell they wanted to cast was the bell of Dharma, whose sound would not be heard merely a few rods about the place, but all over the world—that sweet sound which was preached to them by the gospel of their Lord. They could only carry on their work by having an International Society.”

On the Monday, at a meeting at the house where I was stopping, a branch of the Maha-Bodhi Society was formed, and Rs. 1,000 subscribed towards the fund, and Maung Ohn Ghine was elected Treasurer. At 8.15 on Tuesday morning I lectured on “Theosophy” at the premises of the Maduray Pillay School,

[510] and in the evening lectured on “Buddhism” in a cattle-yard, where there was a convenient shed. On the Wednesday I gave my last lecture in Rangoon at a Burmese school, and recommended the adoption of the Ceylon policy of opening Buddhist schools for the bringing up of their children under the influence of their ancestral religion. I also recommended the founding of a Burmese Maha-Bodhi journal. At about half-past two I sailed for Madras in the steamship “Palitana”.

After a charming passage of nearly four days, I got back to my blessed home again after an absence of forty-five days, and found it looking lovely, as it always is. His Excellency Lord Lansdowne, the Viceroy of India, being in Madras on tour, I availed of the opportunity to exchange notes with his private secretary about the ownership of Buddha Gaya, and on the evening of the 28th of November, on the invitation of the Governor of Madras (Lord Wenlock), attended a ball at Government House given in honor of the Viceroy and the Marchioness of Lansdowne.

One of my first bits of literary work was to write a review notice of H. P. B.’s posthumous book, *The Caves and Jungles of Hindustan*, translated by her niece, Mrs. Vera Johnston, from her articles in the *Ruski Vvestnik*, a very important Russian magazine. Mrs. Johnston’s work was superbly done, and, as I say in my article, “so admirably and lovingly that one might really suppose she had taken it down from H. P. B.’s own lips”. On looking over the article, I cannot see [511] the least thing to which the most affectionate friend of Madame Blavatsky could have taken exception, for the tone throughout is appreciative. And yet it provoked a protest from the late Mr. Judge, on the score that I treat the work for what it really is, a series of magnificent romances of travel built up on souvenirs of a prosaic journey made by us two, a Hindu friend, and our servant Babula. A

part of the narrative was, she told me, suggested by souvenirs of a former journey of hers from Southern India to Tibet, when she was really in the company and under the protection of the Adept whom she personifies under the sobriquet of Gulab Singh. These facts being unknown to the general reader, many, perhaps most, fancied that the book was a narrative of actual travel, and on my recent tour I have been asked by some such superficial readers to tell them how I felt in some of the crises depicted by her! This book reveals the possession by her of a literary brilliance, a fascination of style, and a gorgeousness of imagination equal to almost anything that exists in literature. Sometimes, pace the visit to a Witch's Den, where horrors cluster around one, her stories were composed out of a mere nothing, while those of the City of the Dead in the Vindhya Mountains, the Caves of Bagh in Malva, the Isle of Mystery, and others, were grounded upon nothing whatever that happened to us throughout our journey. I once met at Colombo a party of Russian gentlemen who had actually come to India in the hope- of getting some such thrilling adventures as those she describes in the [512] book! Of course, the fictitious superstructure erected over her tiny facts would be palpable to every well-educated Hindu, yet, all the same, one cannot admire enough her amusing exaggerations. What must the Bombay reader who has ever visited Karli Caves think of her tale of beetling crags, goat-paths, and deep chasms in the story of our visit to Karli Caves? Our actual sleeping-place was a small cavern on the side of the hill to the right of the carven cave-entrance, and to it ran a broad, easy path, up which one might ride on elephant or horse-back. But this is what she makes of it:

“A path, or rather a ledge cut along the perpendicular face of a rocky mass, 200 feet high, led from the chief temple to our vihâra. A man needs good eyes, sure feet, and a very strong head to avoid sliding down the precipice at the first false step. And help would be quite out of the question, for the ledge being only two feet wide, no one could walk side by side with another. We had to walk one by one, appealing for aid only to the whole of our personal courage. But the courage of many of us was gone on an unlimited furlough. The position of our American Colonel was the worst, for he was very stout and short-sighted, which defects, taken together, caused him frequent vertigoes. To keep up our spirits, we indulged in a choral performance of the duet from Norma, ‘Moriâ in sieme,’ holding each other's hands the while, to ensure our being spared by death or dying all four in company. But the Colonel did not fail to frighten [513] us nearly out of our lives. We were already half-way up to the cave when he made a

false step, staggered, lost hold of my hand, and rolled over the edge. We three, having to clutch the bushes and stones, were quite unable to help him. An unanimous cry of horror escaped us, but died away as we perceived that he had succeeded in clinging to the trunk of a small tree which grew on the slope a few steps below us. Fortunately, we knew that the Colonel was good at athletics, and remarkably cool in danger. Still the moment was a critical one. The slender stem of the tree might give way at any moment. Our cries of distress were answered by the sudden appearance of the mysterious sadhu with his cow.

“They were quietly walking along about 20 feet below us, on such invisible projections of the rock that a child’s foot could barely have found room to rest there, and they both travelled as calmly; and even carelessly, as if a comfortable causeway were beneath their feet instead of a vertical rock. The sadhu called out to the Colonel to hold on, and to us to keep quiet. He patted the neck of his monstrous cow, and untied the rope by which he was leading her. Then, with both hands he turned her head in our direction, and clucking with his tongue, he cried ‘Chal’ (go). With a few wild goat-like bounds the animal reached our path, and stood before us motionless. As for the sadhu himself, his movements were as swift and goat-like. In a moment he had reached the tree, tied the rope round the Colonel’s body, and put him on his [514] legs again; then, rising higher, with one effort of his strong hand he hoisted him up to the path. Our Colonel was with us once more, rather pale, and with the loss of his pince-nez, but not of his presence of mind.

“An adventure that had threatened to become a tragedy ended in a farce.”

The rest of her story is equally comical and baseless. One who did not know her intimately can hardly believe that the same hand had written *The Secret Doctrine*; *Isis Unveiled*; and this *Caves and Jungles* book, and her *Nightmare Tales*. I felt a grim satisfaction in seeing that unsympathetic journals like the *Times* and its bigoted namesake, the *Methodist Times*, which begrudged a word of praise for her more serious books, were captivated by these effervescences of her fancy. As I say in the review notice: “She is beyond their reach, but this beginning of a change of public verdict is sweet to her family and friends, who knew her greatness and loveliness all along, and who felt that a bright star had passed into eclipse when she died. And this is but the beginning of what will be seen as time and Karma work out their changes, and the fulness of this woman’s power, knowledge, and sufferings becomes revealed”—woman to those who only knew her in her tempestuous, rebellious, brilliant, painracked female body.

Ah! if the world ever comes to know who was the mighty entity who labored sixty years under that quivering mask of flesh, it will repent its [515] cruel treatment of H. P. B., and be amazed at the depth of its ignorance!

Among the incidents of the last quarter of 1892 was the formal expulsion of a man calling himself by the pseudonym of Alberto de Das, a member of the Spanish group of our Society at Madrid. He was the most accomplished and audacious “confidence man” of whom I have ever had any personal knowledge. He had a taste for starting mystical societies with high-sounding titles, himself figuring as an adept and inspired agent of the White Lodge, associating himself with a local group long enough to win their confidence, spread our teachings around that center, and—exploit his colleagues and the public. His real name appears to have been Alberto Sarak. In my recent visit to Buenos Aires I found that he was only too well remembered, having got away with some \$15,000 of money obtained from his colleagues in a local Branch which he had been instrumental in founding. This was after his expulsion in Spain, and flight from his creditors in Europe. He got his authority to form the Branch by addressing me officially under an assumed name, in a letter which was admirable as to both composition and sentiments. I have in my possession one of his bogus membership diplomas, in: which he entitles himself “Delegate of the Supreme Occult Council of the Mahatmas of Thibet”. He also passed himself off as a doctor, In due course, after gathering together the Branch and starting a magazine, he flitted to Brazil, whence, after two or three months; [516] he actually returned to Argentina, and with amusing hardihood called himself a Persian Ambassador, or some such title, and had the impudence even to call upon the Consul-General of Persia to give him free transportation to Chile! Of course he did not get it, and so again transferred his industries to the West Coast of South America, where, I have been told, he was thrown into prison, at the suit of some new victim. The picturesqueness of this man’s operations to some extent gilds his rascality, and makes him worthy of so much notice as the, present. When I made the acquaintance of the dupes of this adventurer at Buenos, Aires, who are the members of our several Branches there, I found them to be a superior class of persons, most of them occupying responsible public positions. I found, also, that the review started under Sarak’s auspices was a. most creditable publication, exercising a. decided influence for good. This was to me an interesting proof, additional to others which I had previously obtained, that even the worst of persons may come into our movement, and, whether unconsciously or not, contribute to its prosperity.. How curious all this is to the student of

karmic law; and how it shows that if a wicked person yields to even a momentary good impulse, he may engender good Karma that will go towards balancing his account of moral responsibility! ³⁵

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It had been arranged with Mrs. Besant that she should visit India in time for the Convention of this year, and Mr. Keightley had received something over &s. 2,000 towards the estimated expenses of Rs. 5,500, but early in the autumn it was made evident that we could not count upon her presence—so much desired—at the Convention at Adyar. The report of the general dissatisfaction having reached Mrs. Besant, she issued from Avenue Road a circular, dated 21st October, 1892, in which she explained that—apart from the question of expenses—she was constrained to put off her visit to India because of her having had placed in her hands work that she was bound to carry out in the West: she hinted that circumstances might permit her to visit us the next year, but she could make no definite promise. At any rate she hoped soon to stand face to face with her Indian brethren, adding that to her, India and the Indian peoples seemed nearer than the nation to which by birth she belonged. “In heart,” wrote she, “I am one with you, and to you by my past I belong. Born this last time under Western skies for work that needs to be done, I do not forget my true motherland, and my inner nature turns Eastward ever with filial longing. When Karma opens the door, I will walk through it, and we will meet in the body as we can already meet in mind.” We all now know the work that had been given her to do in Europe, or at least some of it, to wit, to carry out judge’s schemes to prevent my meeting with her, and by comparing notes, jointly discover the heartless [518] trickery he was playing on her, and the treachery to the he was then plotting. He cynically abused that trustful confidence which this golden-hearted woman had been led to repose in him, and used her as his cat’s-paw to work out his ambitious schemes.

CHAPTER XXX

FORESHADOWINGS OF THE JUDGE CONTROVERSY³⁶

(1892)

THE present chapter brings us to the close of the year 1892, which, as it will have been seen, bristled with interesting events. As at the present time of writing (1902) just a decade has passed, it will be instructive to make a brief comparison of figures which show the growth of the Society within that period. Take, for instance, the number of charters which had been issued from 1875 to the end of 1892, viz., 310, and compare them with those issued up to the end of 1901, viz., 656, and we find that our number has increased by 346 charters, which is 36 more than had been chartered within the first seventeen years of the Society's existence, a very striking fact to notice.

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Next, as to the number of countries in which we were then operating, viz., 18—India, Ceylon, Burma, England, Scotland, Ireland, France, Austria, Sweden, U.S. America, Greece, Holland, Belgium, Russia, West Indies, Australasia, Philippine Islands, and Japan—to which we now add 24 others whose names have been enumerated in my Presidential reports of the past two years. Then in the Adyar Library, in which we then had in the Oriental department 3,381 manuscripts and printed books, and in the Western section about 2,000 volumes, in all 5,381, our report of last year shows that we had in the Oriental department 2,754 manuscripts and 3,356 printed books, while the number in the Western department has risen to 6,016 volumes. Glancing at my Buddhist work in Ceylon, we find Mr. Buultjens reporting that he has “about 3,000 boys and 1,000 girls in the different schools connected with the Society,” while in his report for last year Mr. D. B. Jayatillaka, B.A., the present General Manager of Buddhist Schools, reports that he has under his management 150 schools, with a total attendance of 19,000 children, excluding those under the control of our Galle Branch, which are not properly reported, and some fifty-odd Buddhist schools under private management. As to our total membership, it has more than doubled.

Although attention has been called before to the fact that the history of our

Society proves that its strength is quite independent of personalities, I think that it is profitable to emphasise this instructive truth from time to time on occasions like the present, when [521] we are engaged in historical retrospection. Our ever-to-be-revered H. P. B. died in 1891, yet, despite the foreboding of our Cassandras and Jeremiahs, the strength of the movement does not appear to have been lessened in the slightest degree thereby. Take the charter statistics of 1890, 1891, 1892, and what do we find but that up to the close of the first of these three years 241 charters had been issued, up to the close of the next—the year of her death—279, and up to the end of the third year 310? This shows that even under the staggering blow of her sudden removal the Society went on its way as unimpeded as the stately frigate is by the ripple that spends itself against her bow. For my part, the knowledge of this law gives me constant pleasure; for I thus know that when my time, or even Annie Besant's, comes to leave this plane, the only shock that will be felt will be in individual hearts, and not in our corporate entity.

On the 3rd of December I relieved my mind of the burdensome sense of the risk we were running in keeping the Society's property standing in my individual name, and so making room for unpleasant legal complications after my death. The Trust Deed, which for several years I had been asking my legal colleagues to draft, was finally completed, and on the day in question was signed by Messrs. Keightley and Edge, two of the Trustees, and myself. By the next foreign mail the document was put into circulation among the other Trustees, and ultimately, after some months, returned to me fully signed.

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On the 10th of December an interesting visitor arrived in the person of Mr. Alexander Russell Webb, F.T.S., who had resigned his office of Consul-General, U.S.A., at Manila on being converted to Islam, and had now definitely taken up missionary work. On the next day he gave an excellent lecture on Islam to an audience comprising many of the leading Muhammadans of Madras. Although importuned by them to take the chair, I refused, because, as I represented to them, it was a very poor compliment to a man who had made such large worldly sacrifices to join their religion, and had come so far to see them, to put a non-Mussulman into the chair at his first public meeting in India: the least they could do was to select for that office their most respected co-religionist. Mr. Webb did not make a success of his propaganda. A well printed and illustrated newspaper, the Moslem World, which he started in America, came to grief after a short

existence; he quarrelled with important men, and at the Chicago World's Parliament of Religions aroused great indignation among American women by giving currency to some not very complimentary Muslim views of woman's status in society. A curious feature of his case is that, up to within a few months of his acceptance of Islâm, he had been a strenuous advocate of Buddhism at Manila; and when I asked him at Adyar to explain the discrepancy, he said that although he had become a Muslim, he had not ceased to be an ardent Theosophist, and Islam, as he understood it, was distinctly in accord with our Theosophical views, as also were [523] Buddhism and the other religions. In short, his Islam was that of the Sufis. I fancy that the cause of his failure in his new field was that very thing, for the Sufis are in the minority in the world of Islam, and the esotericists among them are not the ones who carry the heaviest purses and are most concerned in the practical direction of religious affairs.

His position after his adoption of the Islamic faith must have been a very unpleasant one, since his new co-religionists are notably suspicious of outsider converts, while in repudiating the faith of his own people he cut himself off from them pretty effectually. His *Moslem World* during its very short career was a most creditable specimen of typography and its pictorial illustrations highly artistic. But it soon became evident that his hopes of Eastern sympathy and support would not be fulfilled, and so his paper had to stop.

My time during the rest of the month was largely given to the gathering of materials for my *OLD DIARY LEAVES*, in addition, of course, to the usual office business, and nothing of a sensational kind occurred until the 22nd, when Mr. Walter R. Old, of the London working staff, arrived and joined our Headquarters organisation. Almost immediately there was an interchange of confidences between us, which for the first time opened my eyes to the treacherous policy that Mr. Judge had been following up with regard to the Society and myself in the matter of his relations with the Masters. I cannot tell how shocked I was to discover his lack of principle, and to find that my [524] previously more or less vague suspicions fell far short of the reality. Without making any pretensions to exceptional goodness, I certainly never did anything to warrant him in making, in a forged letter, my own Teacher and adored Guru seem to say that, if Mrs. Besant should carry out her intention of visiting India she might run the risk of my poisoning her! Let any of my honorable colleagues picture to themselves how they would feel if such cruel and baseless imputations were made against their character. Well, the poor man, with his wicked hopes all

baffled, and his plan of universal control come to naught, has gone to his account, and the laws of Karma will settle it with him. Mr. Keightley and Mr. Edge were taken into our counsels, and helped to compare the documents mutually submitted by Mr. Old and myself. On the arrival of the Delegates to the Convention at the usual time, we submitted the papers to our respected colleague Judge Khandalavâla, of Poona, who decidedly advised me to prosecute the case, as it was too serious a menace to the Society's prosperity to allow it to go on.

The case of W. Q, Judge is one of the saddest I ever had knowledge of. If he had only been content to go on like the rest of us workers, doing his best for the upbuilding of the Society, and abstaining from vain pretences of special divine commissions which drove him into a course of deception, he would have left a name behind him that would have adorned our register. His brain was fertile in good practical ideas, and to his labors almost exclusively was due the rapid and [525] extensive growth of our movement in the United States; the others, his colleagues, but carried out his plans. And to think that while writing, in a forged script and under a borrowed name, to Mrs. Besant that I might try to poison her, he had the audacity to say in his official report to our Convention of 1892, in the name of the Executive Committee of the American Section, T. S., when referring to my withdrawal of my resignation of the Presidency: "I can say from my knowledge of this Section, which is intimate, that no one in the whole Section regrets your decision. The American Section therefore offers to you the reiterated assurances of its loyalty and its determination to cooperate with you and every other member of every Section in carrying forward the work of the Society until we shall have passed away, and others arisen to take our places in the forward movement." Alas! and alas! that the "passing away" of himself and some others was out of the light of our Society's splendid aura into the darkness of Secession, amid the fogs of ingratitude, treachery, and deceit!

At that year's Convention there were representatives of the United States, England, Ceylon, and nearly all parts of India. In my Annual Address the cancellation of my resignation and my resumption of official duty was, of course, announced, and, with a premonition of what the future had in store for us, I uttered the following warning: "Now that our mutual interest in the movement is once more identical, I feel myself obliged to warn you against entertaining the foolish [526] belief that, because all outward prospects seem bright and encouraging, we need not keep ourselves braced up to meet other staggering blows from unexpected quarters. Do not let us imitate the fatalistic

indifference of the vigneron, who forget the titanic energies that work far beneath the surface because the grape ripens on the sunny slopes of Etna. So long as human beings group themselves together in bodies like ours to help the race to struggle upward towards the noblest ideal, so long will the success of those efforts be limited by the less or greater moral imperfection of the aggregate membership. Knowing my own failings and to some extent those of my chief colleagues, I count upon nothing less than the occasional recurrence of these crises of which we have had several in times past. The one necessary thing is for each true man to stand firm and keep steadfast, whatever betide. Our cause is good, our ideal high, our work brings us present joy and future hope, and we are co-workers with the Greatest Sons of Man.”

The fact is, that from the beginning of our Society we have had obstruction from both pessimists and optimists among our colleagues; time alone will educate us to follow the middle course and work for success in perfect confidence.

In the same Address I announced, with a protest in the name of the whole Society, that the General Secretary of one of the Sections had neglected to send in his official report, thus making a break in the continuous history of the movement, which was [527] productive of present, and would be of future, annoyance. As one of our younger and most active Sections sent in an incomplete report for the Convention of last December (1901), I think that it will be profitable to repeat in this connection something that I said on that occasion: “My Annual Report, therefore, assumes a special historic value and great importance, as it is the only means by which the members and Branches of the Society have brought before them a complete view of the Society’s work as a whole. Its reading at our present gathering has been continued in accordance with the precedent of former years, but is merely a preliminary to its formal issue. For it must be remembered that the gathering I am now addressing is a purely personal one, and in no sense a representative Convention of the whole T. S. To-morrow you will be organised as the Convention of the Indian Section; to-day it is simply a gathering of Theosophists, to whom I am reading my Annual Report before despatching it to all parts of the world.

“Hence it is of the utmost importance that the General Secretary of each Section should furnish me with a full official Report to be incorporated in my Annual Report of the whole Society.... It is only by viewing our work from the standpoint of the Federal Centre, the real axis of our revolving wheel, that the

net loss or gain of the year's activity can be estimated.”

The close of the year 1891 and the succeeding year ushered in a period of great literary activity. During this time appeared Mrs. Besant's first and second [528] Manuals, H. P. B.'s Glossary, Mr. Mead's Simon Magus, Mr. Old's What is Theosophy? Mr. Fullerton's admirable Indianapolis Letters, M. Edouard Coulomb's Le Secret de L'Absolu, Mr. H. S. Ward's A.B.C. of Theosophy and Karma, Mr. Brodie-Innes' True Church of Christ, and eighteen translations of works into Urdu, Swedish, Dutch, Spanish, French, etc. It is fair to say that this was the commencement of that condensed and popular presentation of the profound teachings of Theosophy which has brought them within the reach of the world's great reading public. While some of the works were simple and elementary, others, like Mr. Mead's Simon Magus and Pistis Sophia, were marked by critical research and scholarship. The author, moreover, thus began to lead the way of thoughtful Christians into those ancient green fields and pastures of primitive Christian culture where alone can be found the real beginning of modern Christianity. However prejudiced orthodox Christians may be against the name Theosophy, nothing is more certain than that, long after his death, the name of Mr. Mead will be cited as one of the most trustworthy authorities with regard to the Christian origins.

Anglo-Indians are very fond of amusing themselves at the too prevalent habit among Hindus of promising large things, but forgetting to redeem them. This is often noticeable in the matter of public subscriptions, but I have been fortunate enough to encounter very few examples of bad faith. One, however, which I laid before the Convention of 92, was very disagreeable.

[529]

Our colleague and President of the local Branch, the late Maharajah of Durbangha, had telegraphed me during the Convention of 1886 a promise to give the Society “Rs. 25,000 in hard cash,” in lieu of the annual subscription of Rs. 1,000 he had been making to us; but, for some unaccountable reason, and without vouchsafing an answer to official letters and telegrams, he had both failed to give the promised lump sum or even his annual subscription. It was to prevent the idea taking root in the public mind that we had been thus substantially helped that the matter was now brought to the notice of the Convention.

Mr. Old, known by the nom de plume of “Sepharial,” has a very widely

spread reputation as an expert Western astrologer, so I was anxious to arrange, if possible, an experiment on a large scale to test the respective merits of Western modern astrology and the Eastern ancient system, Mr. Old to handle the one, and some English-knowing Indian astrologer the other. My plan failed, however, because—would be it believed?—I could not persuade any Hindu expert to give his services without pay! The ultimate fame and great profit he would derive when his abilities had been conclusively proven none could see; and so, as I had no money to spend, I had to leave this really important problem to be taken up later by somebody who is more fortunately situated.

The Convention of 1892 is notable for the first appearance at Headquarters of that dearest and most respected colleague, Dr. English, who attended as [530] delegate for the Women's Education Society of Ceylon. He had arrived at Calcutta shortly before that in a sailing-ship, he, his daughter, and their old friend Miss Allison, and coming on by steamer to Colombo, had offered their services, free, to Mrs. Higgins in her Buddhist Girls' School. Mrs. English, whose sympathetic heart had long been beating for the neglected girls and women of Ceylon and India, had started with her husband, but, unfortunately, died on the way out, leaving him to mourn her irreparable loss. He has at least had the consolation of knowing that he has won the respect and friendship of all the colleagues who have come into touch with him.

Dr. English, Mr. Old, Mr. Buultjens of Colombo, and Judge N. D. Khandalavâla, whose testimony was freely given that "his own religion he had found simpler and more easily understood by the study of Theosophy, and that since he first met the Founders in 1880 he had found them earnest, devoted, sincere, and frank," were the speakers, with myself, at the anniversary celebration in Pachaippah's Hall on 28th December, and the whole Convention was as successful as the friends of the Society could have asked or expected.

And so closes the story of the doings of 1892, which passes into the Book of Judgment of Chitragupta, Record-keeper of the Akâsha.

Notes

[←1]

See Theosophist, vol. xvi, pp. 173 and 305.

[←2]

[It is worthy of note that since these lines were penned the feat of Sarat Chandra Das has been emulated, if not surpassed, by that of the Shramana Ekai Kawaguchi, whose marvelous sojourn in Tibet is related in his work, Three Tears in Tibet, of which the Morning Post writes that it is strongly reminded of Chandra Das's book, though the pupil has "put his notes together with more literary skill than his mentor". The author visited Sarat Chandra Das at Darjeeling before commencing his great adventure, and, through the help of the veteran explorer, was put in touch with a neighboring Lama, from whose family he acquired colloquial Tibetan.—ED.] [1910].

[←3]

[The recent work of Sven Hedin, and his impressions of the Tashi Lama, should not be overlooked by those interested in this subject.—ED.] [1910].

[←4]

See Theosophist, vol. ix, p. 703, and xi, p. 409.

[←5]

From the time of her leaving Adyar I had sent her £20 monthly until the reserve fund of the Theosophist was exhausted, when I notified her that unless she came back and shared my crusts she would have to find some other means of support; I could go no further.

[←6]

See Volume III of this Series.

[←7]

“Heaven knows,” she writes, "that my only dream and aspiration is to return to die in India. But the T. S. must not be convulsed again."

[←8]

This idea will, of course, be rejected by the average meteorologist without a second thought, yet that does not decide the matter, since the observations of Hindu weather students during many generations are far more weighty than any crude negations of modern people who are ignorant alike of their theory and their data. At the moment of writing there appears in a Ceylon paper (copied into the Indian Mirror of December 5, 1899) the report of an interview with two German scientists, Dr. Benedict Friedlander, Professor of Biology, and Dr. A. Ewers. Dr. Friedlander had just spent two years in scientific researches in the South Sea Islands, and, among other wonders of Nature, had settled the long-mooted point as to the origin of the palolo worm. He found that these curious creatures rise, headless, to the surface of the water on two days in every year, viz., those of the third quarters of the moon in October and November at 4 a.m., and disappear shortly after sunrise. On no other day can one be seen. He told the reporter that he was endeavoring to find out "if there is any similar phenomenon here"—that is, the influence which the positions of the moon have upon organic life. Modern science rejects the theory as a rule, but the palolo worm is a fact, recognised by a great number of observers, and also by one of my adversaries, who had to own that I was right and he wrong. There is no explanation of the fact, except as an hypothesis. But men of science have found out by a method of statistics that the moon does have an influence on certain phenomena, and there is little doubt that the moon has an influence on some things which science is not yet fully aware of. Another of my purposes is to find out the popular belief of the Eastern people in connection with the influence of the moon. Of course I shall not accept popular beliefs as matter of fact, but as starting-points for further research. This is all that Judge Gadgil or any other enlightened Hindu would ask; and since this eminent German biologist has made so bold a step in advance, we may hope that some painstaking meteorologist of his country will take the hint offered in the present notice of the Baroda statistics, and win renown for himself by making them "the starting-point for further research".

[←9]

"We must here remind our readers that in the case of some hysterical subjects there are regions in certain parts of the body, termed by Chambard erogenic zones (Chambard, *Études sur le Somnambulisme provoqué*), which have some analogy with the hysterogenic zones, and simple contact with these, when the subject is in a state of somnambulism, produces genital sensations of such intensity as to cause an . . . These phenomena have often been displayed unknown to the observer, who might be liable to the gravest imputations, unless he had taken the precaution, indispensable in such cases, of never being alone with his subject. When we add to this fact the possibility of suggesting to the somnambulist the hallucination that some given person is present, it is easy to see what culpable mystification might occur . . . The excitement of the erogenic zone has no effect unless it is made by a person of the opposite sex; if the pressure is made by another woman, or with an inert object, it merely produces an unpleasant sensation." (*Animal Magnetism*, by Binet and Fêrê, *Int. Nat. Sci. Series*, vol. lx, pp. 152, 153.)

[←10]

A Frenchman, subsequently expelled from the Society.

[←11]

Cf. Professor Buchanan's *Psychometry*; Professor Denton's *The Soul of Things*; and a useful pamphlet compilation, *Psychometry and Thought-Transference*.

[←12]

Cf. *Feudal and Modern Japan*, by Arthur May Knapp. Boston: L. G. Page & Co., 1897.

[←13]

Op. cit., 217.

[←14]

Extract from report of C. W. Leadbeater in *Theosophist*, February, 1889.

[←15]

Encycl. Brit. (ninth ed.), vol. xiii.

[←16]

Advance Japan, London, 1896, W. H. Allen & Co., Ltd.

[←17]

For an exposition of the views of this religious body consult “A Shin Shu Catechism” in Theosophist, vol. xi, pp. 9 and 89, by an officer of the Hongwanji.

[←18]

Anecdota Oxoniensis, Aryan Series, vol. i, part ii, Oxford, 1883.

[←19]

Cf. article “Buddhist and Indian Rosaries,” by S.E. Gopalacharlu, Theosophist, xi, 671.

[←20]

Cf. Buddhist Catechism, footnote, page 56 (33rd ed.). “In the Digha Nikâya the Buddha says: Hear, Subhadra! The world will never be without Arahats if the ascetics (Bhikkus) in my congregations well and truly keep my precepts.”

[←21]

Besides the schoolmaster, the priest has, of course, been as active as he can to root out from the Irish character the simple belief in nature spirits, as the following story from Blackwood’s Magazine shows. When neither argument nor persuasion prove efficient they resort to that most potent of all measures, the destruction of objects, such as images, books, temples, symbols, etc., around which what they regard as popular superstitions may centre. What the Irish priest did in this instance was done by the Lord Archbishop of Goa to the Tooth Relic of the Buddha when it fell into his hands, although fabulous sums were offered by Buddhist monarchies for its ransom. So, also, through all times history has recorded the like futile endeavors of paramount powers to extirpate popular beliefs. Such mental

prepossessions can never be destroyed by force; hence we see the old “pagan beliefs” lingering among the lower classes of most nations throughout. On Inishkea, a particular family handed down from father to son a stone called the Neogue (probably part of some image), with which the owners used to make the weather to their liking. One day a party of tourists visited Inishkea, heard of the Neogue, saw it, and wrote about it in the papers. The priest in whose parish Inishkea lay either had not known of this survival of paganism, or thought that no one else knew of it, but when the thing was made public he decided to act. So he visited the island, took the Neogue and broke it up into tiny fragments and scattered them to the four winds. The priest was sacrosanct, but the islanders vowed vengeance, and an unfortunate man of science, who had lived some time among them, was pitched upon as certainly the person who had made the story public. This man, after some time, returned to complete his investigations at Inishkea, and was warned of danger; but he laughed at the idea, and said the people were his very good friends, as indeed they had been. However, he was hardly out of the boat before they fell upon him and beat him so that he never completely recovered—indeed, died in consequence of his injuries, some years later. Probably a like fate would befall anyone who touched the cursing stone on Tory, which was ‘turned on’ the ‘Wasp’ gunboat after she brought a posse of bailiffs there to levy county cess; and, as everyone knows, the ‘Wasp’ ran on Tory and lost every soul on board. Only the other day (10th ultimo) I heard that a fish-buyer stationed there displeased the people; the owner of the stone ‘turned it on him,’ and a month after the buyer’s wife committed suicide.”

Of course, I am not in a position to pass any opinion on the alleged efficacy of the weather breeding and cursing stones mentioned, but that it is possible for a trained magician or sorcerer, as the case may be, to impart to an image either beneficent or maleficent potencies is beyond question. The process—an elaborate one, and of a mesmeric character—is universally known throughout India under the name of Prâná Pratishta. It is, in fact, the infusion into the inert mass of a portion of human vital aura, and the fixing of it there by an effort of concentrated will-power. The degree of power imparted, and its permanency, will entirely depend upon the degree of spiritual training reached by the operator. For this reason the temple in which the idols have been “consecrated” by the great adepts of the olden time, such as Sankarâchârya, Râmânujâchârya, Madhvâchârya, and the

others more ancient than they, are far more revered than any set up by Brahmins of subsequent date, who are believed to have little or no spiritual power, however learned in the letter of the Shastras they may be.

[←22]

Cf. Theosophist, vol. xi, p. 335.

[←23]

So old a mesmerist as I could never be blind to the possible efficacy of any- well conducted ceremony by the priest or lay exorcist of any religion or school of occultism whatsoever, however small might be my belief in the interference of superhuman entities for the profit of any given faith. So, with benevolent tolerance, I let whoever likes make whatever puja he chooses, from the Brahmin to the Yakkada and the ignorant fishermen of the Adyar river) my friends and protégés.

[←24]

[Mr. E. D. Fawcett did bring out a book which bore the title The Riddle of the Universe. This has recently been followed by a volume of the philosophy of his riper experience, The Individual and Reality, Longmans, 1909.—ED.]

[←25]

[This was written in 1900, and does not refer to the existing formula.-ED.]

[←26]

Burma as It was, as It is, as It will be. London, 1886.

[←27]

The local bank rate was 8½ per cent.

[←28]

“Religious and Other Notes on Queensland Aborigines,” Theosophist for July, 1891. p. 605.

[←29]

See report in Theosophist of November, 1891.

[←30]

How nonsensical it does seem to see these sceptical scientists, without having taken the trouble to make mesmeric experiments and accumulate facts, dogmatising about simple mesmeric phenomena like this of attraction! Literature has preserved scores of certificates by competent observers as to the truth of this law, from the time of Mesmer onward. No one would dare challenge the scientific status of the late Professor Gregory, of the Edinburgh University, and he tells us that he can vouch for the fact “that a magnetiser can strongly affect a person who is not only in another room, in another house, or many hundred yards off, but who is utterly unaware that anything is to be done”. Dr. Edwin Lee in his admirable book on Animal Magnetism, and Magnetic Lucid Somnambulism (p. 54), says that the attraction of the subject towards the magnetiser makes him “follow the direction of the hand of the magnetiser—even when he is out of sight of the patient—as a piece of iron fixed on a pivot will follow the course of the magnet”. M. Charpignon, Rev. Mr. Sandy, Dr. Calvert Holland, Rev. C. H. Townsend, Dr. Elliotson, and many others confirm this statement.

[←31]

Or, perhaps, a hypersensitive perception of auras. A proof of this tactile sense has been obtained by most mesmerisers by having their subjects pick out, from amongst other similar objects, a coin, a letter, or any other thing which has been touched by them, especially when the touch has been made with mesmeric intent. Among other respectable authorities who have recorded this fact is Mr. Macpherson Adams, who published an account of experiments with M. Richard’s clairvoyant, Calixte, in The Medical Times for October 15, 1842. Calixte could select a coin which had been touched by his magnetiser, from several others. And then we know the entirely familiar experiment of having a dog select a handkerchief or glove which has been handled by his master and hidden away with other like objects.

[←32]

[O. D. L., vol. i, p. 55.--ED.]

[←33]

Recollections of a Journey through Tartary, Thibet, and China, by M. Huc; trans., New York, 1852.

[←34]

[It is perhaps worthy of note that as this volume is being made up for the press the present occupant of the presidential office, Mrs. Besant, writes in the Theosophist an account of her presence on the occasion of the handing over to the representatives of the Buddhists of Burma the recently recovered relics of the Buddha by the Viceroy of India in Calcutta. See Theosophist, April, 1910.—ED.]

[←35]

[More recently (1908) this enterprising person turned up in Paris in one of his adept" roles, and was exposed by Mrs. Laura Finch in the Annals of Psychic Science, which she then edited. —ED.]

[←36]

The passages in this and subsequent chapters, referring to Mr. W. Q. Judge's part in the events narrated, express the view of Col. Olcott, and are published in the form in which they have appeared in the first and subsequent editions. There has been some discussion in The Theosophical movement in regard to them, but the Publishers feel that they should not edit Col. Olcott's statements in any manner.